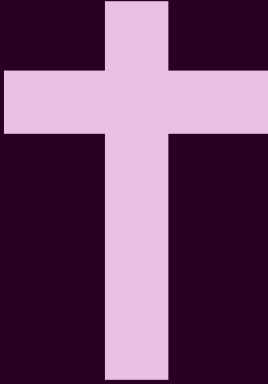


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Matthew

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

¹ This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³ Judah the father of Perez and Zerah (by Tamar), Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴ Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵ Salmon the father of Boaz (by Rahab), Boaz the father of Obed (by Ruth), Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse the father of David the king.

David was the father of Solomon (by the wife of Uriah), ⁷ Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, ⁸ Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah, ⁹ Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, ¹⁰ Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah, ¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

¹² After the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, ¹³ Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, ¹⁴ Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud, ¹⁵ Eliud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, ¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to Christ, fourteen generations.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ happened this way. While his mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph, her husband to be, was a righteous man, and because he did not want to disgrace her, he intended to divorce her privately. ²⁰ When he had contemplated this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to

take Mary as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² This all happened so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled: ²³ “*Look! The virgin will conceive and bear a son, and they will call him*

Emmanuel | strong="G1694",” which means “*God with us.*”

²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep he did what the angel of the Lord told him. He took his wife, ²⁵ but did not have marital relations with her until she gave birth to a son, whom he named Jesus.

2

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem ² saying, “Where is the one who is born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³ When King Herod heard this he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ After assembling all the chief priests and experts in the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem of Judea,” they said, “for it is written this way by the prophet:

⁶ ‘*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are in no way least among the rulers of Judah, for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.*’ ”

⁷ Then Herod privately summoned the wise men and determined from them when the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and look carefully for the child. When you find him, inform me so that I can go and worship him as well.” ⁹ After listening to the king they left, and once again the star they saw when it rose led them until it stopped above the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star they shouted joyfully. ¹¹ As they came into the house and saw the child with Mary his mother, they bowed down and worshiped him. They opened their treasure boxes and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² After being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back by another route to their own country.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³ After they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to look for the child to kill him.” ¹⁴ Then he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and went to Egypt. ¹⁵ He stayed there until Herod died. In this way what

was spoken by the Lord through the prophet was fulfilled : “*I called my Son out of Egypt.*”

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he became enraged. He sent men to kill all the children in Bethlehem and throughout the surrounding region from the age of two and under, according to the time he had learned from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “*A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud wailing,
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she did not want to be comforted, because they were gone.*”

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹ After Herod had died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ saying, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹ So he got up and took the child and his mother and returned to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. After being warned in a dream, he went to the regions of Galilee. ²³ He came to a town called Nazareth and lived there. Then what had been spoken by the prophets was fulfilled, that Jesus would be called a Nazarene.

3

¹ In those days John the Baptist came into the wilderness of Judea proclaiming, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” ³ For he is the one about whom Isaiah the prophet had spoken:

*“The voice of one shouting in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make his paths straight.’ ”*

⁴ Now John wore clothing made from camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his diet consisted of locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then people from Jerusalem, as well as all Judea and all the region around the Jordan, were going out to him, ⁶ and he was baptizing them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You offspring of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore produce fruit that proves your repentance, ⁹ and don’t think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that God can raise up children for Abraham from these stones! ¹⁰ Even now the ax is laid at the root of the trees,

and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water, for repentance, but the one coming after me is more powerful than I am – I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clean out his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the storehouse, but the chaff he will burn up with inextinguishable fire.”

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John to be baptized by him in the Jordan River. ¹⁴ But John tried to prevent him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?” ¹⁵ So Jesus replied to him, “Let it happen now, for it is right for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John yielded to him. ¹⁶ After Jesus was baptized, just as he was coming up out of the water, the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my one dear Son; in him I take great delight.”

4

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After he fasted forty days and forty nights he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written, ‘*Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God**.’” ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the highest point of the temple, ⁶ and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written, ‘*He will command his angels concerning you*’ and ‘*with their hands they will lift you up, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*’” ⁷ Jesus said to him, “Once again it is written: ‘*You are not to put the Lord your God to the test.*’” ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their grandeur. ⁹ And he said to him, “I will give you all these things if you throw yourself to the ground and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: ‘*You are to worship the Lord your God and serve only him.*’” ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and began ministering to his needs.

Preaching in Galilee

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been imprisoned, he went into Galilee. ¹³ While in Galilee, he moved from

Nazareth by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali,
 14 so that what was spoken by Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled:

15 “*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
 the way by the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles -
 16 the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light,
 and on those who sit in the region and shadow of death a light
 has dawned.*”

17 From that time Jesus began to preach this message:
 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

The Call of the Disciples

18 As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon (called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen). 19 He said to them, “Follow me, and I will turn you into fishers of people.” 20 They left their nets immediately and followed him. 21 Going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. Then he called them. 22 They immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus’ Healing Ministry

23 Jesus went throughout all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of disease and sickness among the people. 24 So a report about him spread throughout Syria. People brought to him all who suffered with various illnesses and afflictions, those who had seizures, paralytics, and those possessed by demons, and he healed them. 25 And large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan River.

5

1 When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. After he sat down his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to teach them by saying:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.

- 10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them.
- 11 “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things about you falsely on account of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad because your reward is great in heaven, for they persecuted the prophets before you in the same way.

Salt and Light

- 13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people.
- 14 You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.
- 16 In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven.

Fulfillment of the Law and Prophets

- 17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish these things but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth pass away not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter will pass from the law until everything takes place. 19 So anyone who breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever obeys them and teaches others to do so will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness goes beyond that of the experts in the law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Anger and Murder

- 21 “You have heard that it was said to an older generation, ‘Do not murder,’ and ‘whoever murders will be subjected to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that anyone who is angry with a brother will be subjected to judgment. And whoever insults a brother will be brought before the council, and whoever says ‘Fool’ will be sent to fiery hell. 23 So then, if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your gift. 25 Reach agreement quickly with your accuser while on the way to court, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the warden, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 I tell you the truth, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny!

Adultery

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘*Do not commit adultery.*’ ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to desire her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away! It is better to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into hell. ³⁰ If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is better to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into hell.

Divorce

³¹ “It was said, ‘*Whoever divorces his wife must give her a legal document.*’ ³² But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Oaths

³³ “Again, you have heard that it was said to an older generation, ‘

Do not | strong="G3756" break an oath, but fulfill your vows to the Lord break an oath, but fulfill your vows to the Lord. ³⁴ But I say to you, do not take oaths at all – not by heaven, because it is the throne of God, ³⁵ not by earth, because it is his footstool, and not by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Do not take an oath by your head, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. ³⁷ Let your word be ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no.’ More than this is from the evil one.

Retaliation

³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*’ ³⁹ But I say to you, do not resist the evildoer. But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him as well. ⁴⁰ And if someone wants to sue you and to take your tunic, give him your coat also. ⁴¹ And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and do not reject the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love for Enemies

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘*Love your neighbor*’ and ‘*hate your enemy.*’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be like your Father in heaven, since he causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors do the same,

don't they? ⁴⁷ And if you only greet your brothers, what more do you do? Even the Gentiles do the same, don't they? ⁴⁸ So then, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6

¹ "Be careful not to display your righteousness merely to be seen by people. Otherwise you have no reward with your Father in heaven. ² Thus whenever you do charitable giving, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in synagogues and on streets so that people will praise them. I tell you the truth, they have their reward. ³ But when you do your giving, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your gift may be in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

Private Prayer

⁵ "Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray while standing in synagogues and on street corners so that people can see them. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. ⁶ But whenever you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. ⁷ When you pray, do not babble repetitiously like the Gentiles, because they think that by their many words they will be heard. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ So pray this way:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored,

¹⁰ may your kingdom come,

may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

¹⁴ "For if you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you your sins.

Proper Fasting

¹⁶ "When you fast, do not look sullen like the hypocrites, for they make their faces unattractive so that people will see them fasting. I tell you the truth, they have their reward. ¹⁷ When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others when you are fasting, but only to your Father who is in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

Lasting Treasure

¹⁹ “Do not accumulate for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But accumulate for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. If then your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Do Not Worry

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t there more to life than food and more to the body than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds in the sky: They do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you more valuable than they are? ²⁷ And which of you by worrying can add even one hour to his life? ²⁸ Why do you worry about clothing? Think about how the flowers of the field grow; they do not work or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these! ³⁰ And if this is how God clothes the wild grass, which is here today and tomorrow is tossed into the fire to heat the oven, won’t he clothe you even more, you people of little faith? ³¹ So then, don’t worry saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² For the unconverted pursue these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But above all pursue his kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ So then, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Today has enough trouble of its own.

7

¹ “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. ² For by the standard you judge you will be judged, and the measure you use will be the measure you receive. ³ Why do you see the speck in your brother’s eye, but fail to see the beam of wood in your own? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye,’ while there is a beam in your own? ⁵ You hypocrite! First remove the beam from your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck

from your brother's eye. ⁶ Do not give what is holy to dogs or throw your pearls before pigs; otherwise they will trample them under their feet and turn around and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

⁷ "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹ Is there anyone among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you then, although you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! ¹² In everything, treat others as you would want them to treat you, for this fulfills the law and the prophets.

The Narrow Gate

¹³ "Enter through the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the way is spacious that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. ¹⁴ But the gate is narrow and the way is difficult that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

A Tree and Its Fruit

¹⁵ "Watch out for false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are voracious wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruit. Grapes are not gathered from thorns or figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷ In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree is not able to bear bad fruit, nor a bad tree to bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ So then, you will recognize them by their fruit.

Judgment of Pretenders

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven - only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²² On that day, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons and do many powerful deeds?' ²³ Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!'

Hearing and Doing

²⁴ "Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the flood came, and the winds beat against that house, but it did not collapse because it had been founded on rock.

²⁶ Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, the flood came, and the winds beat against that house, and it collapsed; it was utterly destroyed!"

²⁸ When Jesus finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed by his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught them like one who had authority, not like their experts in the law.

8

¹ After he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. ² And a leper approached, and bowed low before him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." ³ He stretched out his hand and touched him saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ Then Jesus said to him, "See that you do not speak to anyone, but go, show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Healing the Centurion's Servant

⁵ When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him asking for help: ⁶ "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible anguish." ⁷ Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." ⁸ But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Instead, just say the word and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go' and he goes, and to another 'Come' and he comes, and to my slave 'Do this' and he does it." ¹⁰ When Jesus heard this he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found such faith in anyone in Israel! ¹¹ I tell you, many will come from the east and west to share the banquet with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹² but the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." ¹³ Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; just as you believed, it will be done for you." And the servant was healed at that hour.

Healings at Peter's House

¹⁴ Now when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying down, sick with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and began to serve them. ¹⁶ When it was evening, many demon-possessed people were brought to him. He drove out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ In this way what was spoken by Isaiah the prophet was fulfilled:

"He took our weaknesses and carried our diseases."

Challenging Professed Followers

¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw a large crowd around him, he gave orders to go to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹ Then an expert in the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰ Jesus said to him, "Foxes have dens, and the birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." ²¹ Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Stilling of a Storm

²³ As he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ And a great storm developed on the sea so that the waves began to swamp the boat. But he was asleep. ²⁵ So they came and woke him up saying, "Lord, save us! We are about to die!" ²⁶ But he said to them, "Why are you cowardly, you people of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it was dead calm. ²⁷ And the men were amazed and said, "What sort of person is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!"

Healing the Gadarene Demoniacs

²⁸ When he came to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were extremely violent, so that no one was able to pass by that way. ²⁹ They cried out, "Son of God, leave us alone! Have you come here to torment us before the time?" ³⁰ A large herd of pigs was feeding some distance from them. ³¹ Then the demons begged him, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs." ³² And he said, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake and drowned in the water. ³³ The herdsmen ran off, went into the town, and told everything that had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ Then the entire town came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

9

¹ After getting into a boat he crossed to the other side and came to his own town. ² Just then some people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Have courage, son! Your sins are forgiven." ³ Then some of the experts in the law said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming!" ⁴ When Jesus saw their reaction he said, "Why do you respond with evil in your hearts? ⁵ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or to

say, 'Stand up and walk'? ⁶ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" – then he said to the paralytic – "Stand up, take your stretcher, and go home." ⁷ And he stood up and went home. ⁸ When the crowd saw this, they were afraid and honored God who had given such authority to men.

The Call of Matthew; Eating with Sinners

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax booth. "Follow me," he said to him. And he got up and followed him. ¹⁰ As Jesus was having a meal in Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² When Jesus heard this he said, "Those who are healthy don't need a physician, but those who are sick do. ¹³ Go and learn what this saying means: '*I want mercy and not sacrifice.*' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

The Superiority of the New

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples don't fast?" ¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot mourn while the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days are coming when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, because the patch will pull away from the garment and the tear will be worse. ¹⁷ And no one pours new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the skins burst and the wine is spilled out and the skins are destroyed. Instead they put new wine into new wineskins and both are preserved."

Restoration and Healing

¹⁸ As he was saying these things, a ruler came, bowed low before him, and said, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her and she will live." ¹⁹ Jesus and his disciples got up and followed him. ²⁰ But a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹ For she kept saying to herself, "If only I touch his cloak, I will be healed." ²² But when Jesus turned and saw her he said, "Have courage, daughter! Your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed from that hour. ²³ When Jesus entered the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the disorderly crowd, ²⁴ he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but asleep." And they began making fun of him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had

been put outside, he went in and gently took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶ And the news of this spread throughout that region.

Healing the Blind and Mute

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, shouting, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" ²⁸ When he went into the house, the blind men came to him. Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." ²⁹ Then he touched their eyes saying, "Let it be done for you according to your faith." ³⁰ And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about this." ³¹ But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that entire region.

³² As they were going away, a man who could not talk and was demon-possessed was brought to him. ³³ After the demon was cast out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowds were amazed and said, "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel!" ³⁴ But the Pharisees said, "By the ruler of demons he casts out demons."

Workers for the Harvest

³⁵ Then Jesus went throughout all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were bewildered and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."

10

¹ Jesus called his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits so they could cast them out and heal every kind of disease and sickness. ² Now these are the names of the twelve apostles:

first, Simon (called Peter), and Andrew his brother; James son of Zebedee and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵ Jesus sent out these twelve, instructing them as follows: "Do not go to Gentile regions and do not enter any Samaritan town. ⁶ Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near!' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. ⁹ Do not take gold,

silver, or copper in your belts, ¹⁰ no bag for the journey, or an extra tunic, or sandals or staff, for the worker deserves his provisions. ¹¹ Whenever you enter a town or village, find out who is worthy there and stay with them until you leave. ¹² As you enter the house, give it greetings. ¹³ And if the house is worthy, let your peace come on it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ And if anyone will not welcome you or listen to your message, shake the dust off your feet as you leave that house or that town. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town!

Persecution of Disciples

¹⁶ "I am sending you out like sheep surrounded by wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Beware of people, because they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ And you will be brought before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹ Whenever they hand you over for trial, do not worry about how to speak or what to say, for what you should say will be given to you at that time. ²⁰ For it is not you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

²¹ "Brother will hand over brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise against parents and have them put to death. ²² And you will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³ Whenever they persecute you in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴ "A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a slave greater than his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the disciple to become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house 'Beelzebul,' how much more will they defame the members of his household!

Fear God, Not Man

²⁶ "Do not be afraid of them, for nothing is hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing is secret that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light, and what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Aren't two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. ³⁰ Even all the hairs on your head are numbered. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

³² “Whoever, then, acknowledges me before people, I will acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies me before people, I will deny him also before my Father in heaven.

Not Peace, but a Sword

³⁴ “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ For 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 *and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household.*

³⁷ “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ And whoever does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life because of me will find it.

Rewards

⁴⁰ “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward. Whoever receives a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. ⁴² And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple, I tell you the truth, he will never lose his reward.”

11

¹ When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their towns.

Jesus and John the Baptist

² Now when John heard in prison about the deeds Christ had done, he sent his disciples to ask a question: ³ “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?”

⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news proclaimed to them. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷ While they were going away, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What did you go out to see? A man dressed in fancy clothes? Look, those who wear fancy clothes are in the homes of kings! ⁹ What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written:
 ‘*Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,*

who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "I tell you the truth, among those born of women, no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and forceful people lay hold of it. ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John appeared. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, who is to come. ¹⁵ The one who has ears had better listen!

¹⁶ "To what should I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces who call out to one another,

¹⁷ 'We played the flute for you, yet you did not dance; we wailed in mourning, yet you did not weep.'

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!' ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

Woes on Unrepentant Cities

²⁰ Then Jesus began to criticize openly the cities in which he had done many of his miracles, because they did not repent. ²¹ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you! ²³ And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be thrown down to Hades! For if the miracles done among you had been done in Sodom, it would have continued to this day. ²⁴ But I tell you, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you!"

Jesus' Invitation

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to reveal him. ²⁸ Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart,

and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy to bear, and my load is not hard to carry.”

12

¹ At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on a Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pick heads of wheat and eat them. ² But when the Pharisees saw this they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is against the law to do on the Sabbath.” ³ He said to them, “Haven’t you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry – ⁴how he entered the house of God and they ate the sacred bread, which was against the law for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the law that the priests in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are not guilty? ⁶ I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what this means: ‘*I want mercy and not sacrifice,*’ you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸ For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

⁹ Then Jesus left that place and entered their synagogue. ¹⁰ A man was there who had a withered hand. And they asked Jesus, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” so that they could accuse him. ¹¹ He said to them, “Would not any one of you, if he had one sheep that fell into a pit on the Sabbath, take hold of it and lift it out? ¹² How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” ¹³ Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out and it was restored, as healthy as the other. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and plotted against him, as to how they could assassinate him.

God’s Special Servant

¹⁵ Now when Jesus learned of this, he went away from there. Great crowds followed him, and he healed them all. ¹⁶ But he sternly warned them not to make him known. ¹⁷ This fulfilled what was spoken by Isaiah the prophet:

¹⁸ “*Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I take great delight.
I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the
nations.*

¹⁹ *He will not quarrel or cry out,
nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.*

²⁰ *He will not break a bruised reed or extinguish a smoldering
wick,
until he brings justice to victory.*

²¹ *And in his name the Gentiles will hope.”*

Jesus and Beelzebul

²² Then they brought to him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute. Jesus healed him so that he could speak and see. ²³ All the crowds were amazed and said, "Could this one be the Son of David?" ²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard this they said, "He does not cast out demons except by the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons!" ²⁵ Now when Jesus realized what they were thinking, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed, and no town or house divided against itself will stand. ²⁶ So if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? For this reason they will be your judges. ²⁸ But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has already overtaken you. ²⁹ How else can someone enter a strong man's house and steal his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can thoroughly plunder the house. ³⁰ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. ³¹ For this reason I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Trees and Their Fruit

³³ "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴ Offspring of vipers! How are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart. ³⁵ The good person brings good things out of his good treasury, and the evil person brings evil things out of his evil treasury. ³⁶ I tell you that on the day of judgment, people will give an account for every worthless word they speak. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

The Sign of Jonah

³⁸ Then some of the experts in the law along with some Pharisees answered him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." ³⁹ But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For just as Jonah was *in the belly of the huge fish for three days and three nights*, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. ⁴¹ The people of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it,

because they repented when Jonah preached to them – and now, something greater than Jonah is here! ⁴² The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon – and now, something greater than Solomon is here!

The Return of the Unclean Spirit

⁴³ “When an unclean spirit goes out of a person, it passes through waterless places looking for rest but does not find it. ⁴⁴ Then it says, ‘I will return to the home I left.’ When it returns, it finds the house empty, swept clean, and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there, so the last state of that person is worse than the first. It will be that way for this evil generation as well!”

Jesus’ True Family

⁴⁶ While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and brothers came and stood outside, asking to speak to him. ⁴⁷ Someone told him, “Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside wanting to speak to you.” ⁴⁸ To the one who had said this, Jesus replied, “Who is my mother and who are my brothers?” ⁴⁹ And pointing toward his disciples he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

13

¹ On that day after Jesus went out of the house, he sat by the lake. ² And such a large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat to sit while the whole crowd stood on the shore. ³ He told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground where they did not have much soil. They sprang up quickly because the soil was not deep. ⁶ But when the sun came up, they were scorched, and because they did not have sufficient root, they withered. ⁷ Other seeds fell among the thorns, and they grew up and choked them. ⁸ But other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty. ⁹ The one who has ears had better listen!”

¹⁰ Then the disciples came to him and said, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” ¹¹ He replied, “You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they have not. ¹² For whoever has will be given

more, and will have an abundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ¹³ For this reason I speak to them in parables: Although they see they do not see, and although they hear they do not hear nor do they understand. ¹⁴ And concerning them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:

*'You will listen carefully yet will never understand,
you will look closely yet will never comprehend.*

¹⁵ *For the heart of this people has become dull;
they are hard of hearing,
and they have shut their eyes,
so that they would not see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their hearts
and turn, and I would heal them.'*

¹⁶ "But your eyes are blessed because they see, and your ears because they hear. ¹⁷ For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

¹⁸ "So listen to the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches what was sown in his heart; this is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰ The seed sown on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy. ²¹ But he has no root in himself and does not endure; when trouble or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he falls away. ²² The seed sown among thorns is the person who hears the word, but worldly cares and the seductiveness of wealth choke the word, so it produces nothing. ²³ But as for the seed sown on good soil, this is the person who hears the word and understands. He bears fruit, yielding a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown."

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴ He presented them with another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a person who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶ When the plants sprouted and bore grain, then the weeds also appeared. ²⁷ So the slaves of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Then where did the weeds come from?' ²⁸ He said, 'An enemy has done this.' So the slaves replied, 'Do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, since in gathering the weeds you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together

until the harvest. At harvest time I will tell the reapers, "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, but then gather the wheat into my barn." ' ' "

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

³¹ He gave them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³² It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest garden plant and becomes a tree, so that the wild birds come and nest in its branches."

The Parable of the Yeast

³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the dough had risen."

The Purpose of Parables

³⁴ Jesus spoke all these things in parables to the crowds; he did not speak to them without a parable. ³⁵ This fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet:

*"I will open my mouth in parables,
I will announce what has been hidden from the foundation of
the world."*

Explanation for the Disciples

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." ³⁷ He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world and the good seed are the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ As the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. ⁴² They will *throw them into the fiery furnace*, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then *the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father*. The one who has ears had better listen!

Parables on the Kingdom of Heaven

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure, hidden in a field, that a person found and hid. Then because of joy he went and sold all that he had and bought that field.

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found a pearl of great value, he went out and sold everything he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea that caught all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸ When it was full, they pulled it ashore, sat down, and put the good fish into containers and threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ It will be this way at the end of the age. Angels will come and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and *throw them into the fiery furnace*, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all these things?” They replied, “Yes.” ⁵² Then he said to them, “Therefore every expert in the law who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and old.”

Rejection at Nazareth

⁵³ Now when Jesus finished these parables, he moved on from there. ⁵⁴ Then he came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, “Where did this man get such wisdom and miraculous powers? ⁵⁵ Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother named Mary? And aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ And aren’t all his sisters here with us? Where did he get all this?” ⁵⁷ And so they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own house.” ⁵⁸ And he did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

14

¹ At that time Herod the tetrarch heard reports about Jesus, ² and he said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead! And because of this, miraculous powers are at work in him.” ³ For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, ⁴ because John had repeatedly told him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.” ⁵ Although Herod wanted to kill John, he feared the crowd because they accepted John as a prophet. ⁶ But on Herod’s birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod, ⁷ so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. ⁸ Instructed by her mother, she said, “Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter.” ⁹ Although it grieved the king, because of his oath and the dinner guests he commanded it to be given. ¹⁰ So he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. ¹¹ His head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. ¹² Then John’s disciples came and took the body and buried it and went and told Jesus.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

¹³ Now when Jesus heard this he went away from there privately in a boat to an isolated place. But when the crowd heard about it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ As he got out he saw the large crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. ¹⁵ When evening arrived, his disciples came to him saying, "This is an isolated place and the hour is already late. Send the crowds away so that they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶ But he replied, "They don't need to go. You give them something to eat." ¹⁷ They said to him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸ "Bring them here to me," he replied. ¹⁹ Then he instructed the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, and looking up to heaven he gave thanks and broke the loaves. He gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the broken pieces left over, twelve baskets full. ²¹ Not counting women and children, there were about five thousand men who ate.

Walking on Water

²² Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he dispersed the crowds. ²³ And after he sent the crowds away, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone. ²⁴ Meanwhile the boat, already far from land, was taking a beating from the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵ As the night was ending, Jesus came to them walking on the sea. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the water they were terrified and said, "It's a ghost!" and cried out with fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them: "Have courage! It is I. Do not be afraid." ²⁸ Peter said to him, "Lord, if it is you, order me to come to you on the water." ²⁹ So he said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat, walked on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the strong wind he became afraid. And starting to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² When they went up into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

³⁴ After they had crossed over, they came to land at Genesaret. ³⁵ When the people there recognized him, they sent word into all the surrounding area, and they brought all their sick to him. ³⁶ They begged him if they could only touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

15

1 Then Pharisees and experts in the law came from Jerusalem to Jesus and said, 2 “Why do your disciples disobey the tradition of the elders? For they don’t wash their hands when they eat.” 3 He answered them, “And why do you disobey the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Whoever insults his father or mother must be put to death.’ 5 But you say, ‘If someone tells his father or mother, “Whatever help you would have received from me is given to God,” 6 he does not need to honor his father.’ You have nullified the word of God on account of your tradition. 7 Hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you when he said, 8 ‘*This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, and they worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*’ ”

True Defilement

10 Then he called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. 11 What defiles a person is not what goes into the mouth; it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles a person.” 12 Then the disciples came to him and said, “Do you know that when the Pharisees heard this saying they were offended?” 13 And he replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted. 14 Leave them! They are blind guides. If someone who is blind leads another who is blind, both will fall into a pit.” 15 But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” 16 Jesus said, “Even after all this, are you still so foolish? 17 Don’t you understand that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and then passes out into the sewer? 18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these things defile a person. 19 For out of the heart come evil ideas, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. 20 These are the things that defile a person; it is not eating with unwashed hands that defiles a person.”

A Canaanite Woman’s Faith

21 After going out from there, Jesus went to the region of Tyre 22 A Canaanite woman from that area came and cried out, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is horribly demon-possessed!” 23 But he did not answer her a word. Then his disciples came and begged him, “Send her away, because she keeps on crying out after us.” 24 So he answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of

Israel.” ²⁵ But she came and bowed down before him and said, “Lord, help me!” ²⁶ “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs,” he said. ²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, your faith is great! Let what you want be done for you.” And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Healing Many Others

²⁹ When he left there, Jesus went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up a mountain, where he sat down. ³⁰ Then large crowds came to him bringing with them the lame, blind, crippled, mute, and many others. They laid them at his feet, and he healed them. ³¹ As a result, the crowd was amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing, and they praised the God of Israel.

The Feeding of the Four Thousand

³² Then Jesus called the disciples and said, “I have compassion on the crowd, because they have already been here with me three days and they have nothing to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry since they may faint on the way.” ³³ The disciples said to him, “Where can we get enough bread in this desolate place to satisfy so great a crowd?” ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?” They replied, “Seven – and a few small fish.” ³⁵ After instructing the crowd to sit down on the ground, ³⁶ he took the seven loaves and the fish, and after giving thanks, he broke them and began giving them to the disciples, who then gave them to the crowds. ³⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. ³⁸ Not counting children and women, there were four thousand men who ate. ³⁹ After sending away the crowd, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

16

¹ Now when the Pharisees and Sadducees came to test Jesus, they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. ² He said, “When evening comes you say, ‘It will be fair weather, because the sky is red,’ ³ and in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, because the sky is red and darkening.’ You know how to judge correctly the appearance of the sky, but you cannot evaluate the signs of the times. ⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” Then he left them and went away.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

⁵ When the disciples went to the other side, they forgot to take bread. ⁶ “Watch out,” Jesus said to them, “beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” ⁷ So they began to discuss this among themselves, saying, “It is because we brought no bread.” ⁸ When Jesus learned of this, he said, “You who have such little faith! Why are you arguing among yourselves about having no bread? ⁹ Do you still not understand? Don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you took up? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many baskets you took up? ¹¹ How could you not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? But beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!” ¹² Then they understood that he had not told them to be on guard against the yeast in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter’s Confession

¹³ When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ They answered, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven! ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he instructed his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

First Prediction of Jesus’ Death and Resurrection

²¹ From that time on Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him: “God forbid, Lord! This must not happen to you!” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but on man’s.” ²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

²⁶ For what does it benefit a person if he gains the whole world but forfeits his life? Or what can a person give in exchange for his life? ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then *he will reward each person according to what he has done.* ²⁸ I tell you the truth, there are some standing here who will not experience death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

17

¹ Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John the brother of James, and led them privately up a high mountain. ² And he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³ Then Moses and Elijah also appeared before them, talking with him. ⁴ So Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you want, I will make three shelters – one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my one dear Son, in whom I take great delight. Listen to him!” ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they were overwhelmed with fear and threw themselves down with their faces to the ground. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Do not be afraid.” ⁸ When they looked up, all they saw was Jesus alone.

⁹ As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Do not tell anyone about the vision until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.” ¹⁰ The disciples asked him, “Why then do the experts in the law say that Elijah must come first?” ¹¹ He answered, “Elijah does indeed come first and will restore all things. ¹² And I tell you that Elijah has already come. Yet they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wanted. In the same way, the Son of Man will suffer at their hands.” ¹³ Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

The Disciples' Failure to Heal

¹⁴ When they came to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him, ¹⁵ and said, “Lord, have mercy on my son, because he has seizures and suffers terribly, for he often falls into the fire and into the water. ¹⁶ I brought him to your disciples, but they were not able to heal him.” ¹⁷ Jesus answered, “You unbelieving and perverse generation! How much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I endure you? Bring him here to me.” ¹⁸ Then Jesus rebuked the demon and it came out of him, and the boy was healed from that moment. ¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus

privately and said, "Why couldn't we cast it out?" ²⁰ He told them, "It was because of your little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; nothing will be impossible for you." ²¹ *

²² When they gathered together in Galilee, Jesus told them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. ²³ They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised." And they became greatly distressed.

The Temple Tax

²⁴ After they arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Your teacher pays the double drachma tax, doesn't he?" ²⁵ He said, "Yes." When Peter came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do earthly kings collect tolls or taxes - from their sons or from foreigners?" ²⁶ After he said, "From foreigners," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷ But so that we don't offend them, go to the lake and throw out a hook. Take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth, you will find a four drachma coin. Take that and give it to them for me and you."

18

¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² He called a child, had him stand among them, ³ and said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn around and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven! ⁴ Whoever then humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes a child like this in my name welcomes me.

⁶ "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a huge millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the open sea. ⁷ Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! It is necessary that stumbling blocks come, but woe to the person through whom they come. ⁸ If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into fiery hell.

* 17:21 [[EMPTY]]

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

¹⁰ “See that you do not disdain one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. ¹¹ * ¹² What do you think? If someone owns a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go look for the one that went astray? ¹³ And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he will rejoice more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. ¹⁴ In the same way, your Father in heaven is not willing that one of these little ones be lost.

Restoring Christian Relationships

¹⁵ “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others with you, so that *at the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be established*. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to the church, treat him like a Gentile or a tax collector.

¹⁸ “I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, I tell you the truth, if two of you on earth agree about whatever you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. ²⁰ For where two or three are assembled in my name, I am there among them.”

²¹ Then Peter came to him and said, “Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother who sins against me? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, I tell you, but seventy-seven times!

The Parable of the Unforgiving Slave

²³ “For this reason, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ As he began settling his accounts, a man who owed ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵ Because he was not able to repay it, the lord ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, children, and whatever he possessed, and repayment to be made. ²⁶ Then the slave threw himself to the ground before him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I will repay you everything.’ ²⁷ The lord had compassion on that slave and released him, and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ After he went out, that same slave found one of his fellow slaves who owed him one hundred silver coins. So he grabbed him by the throat and started to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave threw himself down and begged him, ‘Be patient with me,

* 18:11 [[EMPTY]]

and I will repay you.’³⁰ But he refused. Instead, he went out and threw him in prison until he repaid the debt.³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were very upset and went and told their lord everything that had taken place.³² Then his lord called the first slave and said to him, ‘Evil slave! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me!’³³ Should you not have shown mercy to your fellow slave, just as I showed it to you?’³⁴ And in anger his lord turned him over to the prison guards to torture him until he repaid all he owed.³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart.”

19

¹ Now when Jesus finished these sayings, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan River. ² Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

³ Then some Pharisees came to him in order to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful to divorce a wife for any cause?” ⁴ He answered, “Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator

made | **strong="G4160" them male and female them male and female**,⁵ and said, ‘*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh?*’ ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” ⁷ They said to him, “Why then did Moses command us *to give a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her?*” ⁸ Jesus said to them, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because of your hard hearts, but from the beginning it was not this way. ⁹ Now I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another commits adultery.” ¹⁰ The disciples said to him, “If this is the case of a husband with a wife, it is better not to marry!” ¹¹ He said to them, “Not everyone can accept this statement, except those to whom it has been given. ¹² For there are some eunuchs who were that way from birth, and some who were made eunuchs by others, and some who became eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who is able to accept this should accept it.”

Jesus and Little Children

¹³ Then little children were brought to him for him to lay his hands on them and pray. But the disciples scolded those who brought them. ¹⁴ But Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me and do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of heaven

belongs to such as these.”¹⁵ And he placed his hands on them and went on his way.

The Rich Young Man

¹⁶ Now someone came up to him and said, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to gain eternal life?”¹⁷ He said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”¹⁸ “Which ones?” he asked. Jesus replied, “*Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,*¹⁹ *honor your father and mother,* and

love| strong="G0025" your neighbor as yourself your neighbor as yourself.²⁰ The young man said to him, “I have wholeheartedly obeyed all these laws. What do I still lack?”²¹ Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go sell your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”²² But when the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he was very rich.

²³ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “I tell you the truth, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven!²⁴ Again I say, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of God.”²⁵ The disciples were greatly astonished when they heard this and said, “Then who can be saved?”²⁶ Jesus looked at them and replied, “This is impossible for mere humans, but for God all things are possible.”²⁷ Then Peter said to him, “Look, we have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?”²⁸ Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth: In the age when all things are renewed, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.²⁹ And whoever has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

20

¹ “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard.² And after agreeing with the workers for the standard wage, he sent them into his vineyard.³ When it was about nine o’clock in the morning, he went out again and saw others standing around in the marketplace without work.⁴ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and I will give you whatever is right.’⁵ So they went. When he went out again

about noon and three o'clock that afternoon, he did the same thing. ⁶ And about five o'clock that afternoon he went out and found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why are you standing here all day without work?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You go and work in the vineyard too.' ⁸ When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the workers and give the pay starting with the last hired until the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each received a full day's pay. ¹⁰ And when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But each one also received the standard wage. ¹¹ When they received it, they began to complain against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last fellows worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who bore the hardship and burning heat of the day.' ¹³ And the landowner replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am not treating you unfairly. Didn't you agree with me to work for the standard wage?' ¹⁴ Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last man the same as I gave to you. ¹⁵ Am I not permitted to do what I want with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last."

Third Prediction of Jesus' Death and Resurrection

¹⁷ As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve aside privately and said to them on the way, ¹⁸ "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the experts in the law. They will condemn him to death, ¹⁹ and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged severely and crucified. Yet on the third day, he will be raised."

A Request for James and John

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling down she asked him for a favor. ²¹ He said to her, "What do you want?" She replied, "Permit these two sons of mine to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." ²² Jesus answered, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink the cup I am about to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." ²³ He told them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right and at my left is not mine to give. Rather, it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."

²⁴ Now when the other ten heard this, they were angry with the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions use their authority over them. ²⁶ It

must not be this way among you! Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave – ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Two Blind Men Healed

²⁹ As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed them. ³⁰ Two blind men were sitting by the road. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, “Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!” ³¹ The crowd scolded them to get them to be quiet. But they shouted even more loudly, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” ³² Jesus stopped, called them, and said, “What do you want me to do for you?” ³³ They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” ³⁴ Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

21

¹ Now when they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² telling them, “Go to the village ahead of you. Right away you will find a donkey tied there, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” ⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet:

⁵ “ ***Tell the people of Zion,
‘ Look, your king is coming to you,
unassuming and seated on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’*** ”

⁶ So the disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and those following kept shouting, “ *Hosanna* | strong="G5614" to the Son of David! ***Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!***

Hosanna | strong="G5614" in the highest!” ¹⁰ As he entered Jerusalem the whole city was thrown into an uproar, saying, “Who is this?” ¹¹ And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Cleansing the Temple

¹² Then Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all those who were selling and buying in the temple courts, and

turned over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves. ¹³ And he said to them, "It is written, '**My house will be called a house of prayer;**' but you are turning it into **a den of robbers!**"

¹⁴ The blind and lame came to him in the temple courts, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the experts in the law saw the wonderful things he did and heard the children crying out in the temple courts, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became indignant ¹⁶ and said to him, "Do you hear what they are saying?" Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, '**Out of the mouths of children and nursing infants you have prepared praise for yourself?**'" ¹⁷ And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

The Withered Fig Tree

¹⁸ Now early in the morning, as he returned to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹ After noticing a fig tree by the road he went to it, but found nothing on it except leaves. He said to it, "Never again will there be fruit from you!" And the fig tree withered at once. ²⁰ When the disciples saw it they were amazed, saying, "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" ²¹ Jesus answered them, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. ²² And whatever you ask in prayer, if you believe, you will receive."

The Authority of Jesus

²³ Now after Jesus entered the temple courts, the chief priests and elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus answered them, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Where did John's baptism come from? From heaven or from people?" They discussed this among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Then why did you not believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From people,' we fear the crowd, for they all consider John to be a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Then he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

²⁹ The boy answered, 'I will not.' But later he had a change of heart and went. ³⁰ The father went to the other son and said the same thing. This boy answered, 'I will, sir,' but did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did his father's will?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, tax collectors and prostitutes will go ahead of you into the kingdom of God! ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe. Although you saw this, you did not later change your minds and believe him.

The Parable of the Tenants

³³ "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a pit for its winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenant farmers and went on a journey. ³⁴ When the harvest time was near, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his portion of the crop. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them the same way. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and get his inheritance!' ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹ They said to him, "He will utterly destroy those evil men! Then he will lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him his portion at the harvest."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

This is from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?

⁴³ For this reason I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. ⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls will be crushed." ⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowds, because the crowds regarded him as a prophet.

22

¹ Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ² "The kingdom of heaven can be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his slaves to summon

those who had been invited to the banquet, but they would not come. ⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Look! The feast I have prepared for you is ready. My oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet."' ⁵ But they were indifferent and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. ⁶ The rest seized his slaves, insolently mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷ The king was furious! He sent his soldiers, and they put those murderers to death and set their city on fire. ⁸ Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but the ones who had been invited were not worthy. ⁹ So go into the main streets and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' ¹⁰ And those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all they found, both bad and good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹ But when the king came in to see the wedding guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹² And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' But he had nothing to say. ¹³ Then the king said to his attendants, 'Tie him up hand and foot and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!' ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen."

Paying Taxes to Caesar

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went out and planned together to entrap him with his own words. ¹⁶ They sent to him their disciples along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful, and teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You do not court anyone's favor because you show no partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us then, what do you think? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

¹⁸ But Jesus realized their evil intentions and said, "Hypocrites! Why are you testing me? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." So they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Jesus said to them, "Whose image is this, and whose inscription?" ²¹ They replied, "Caesar's." He said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² Now when they heard this they were stunned, and they left him and went away.

Marriage and the Resurrection

²³ The same day Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to him and asked him, ²⁴ "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and father children for his brother.' ²⁵ Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and

died, and since he had no children he left his wife to his brother. ²⁶ The second did the same, and the third, down to the seventh. ²⁷ Last of all, the woman died. ²⁸ In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had married her.” ²⁹ Jesus answered them, “You are deceived, because you don’t know the scriptures or the power of God. ³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹ Now as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, ³² *‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’* He is not the God of the dead but of the living!” ³³ When the crowds heard this, they were amazed at his teaching.

The Greatest Commandment

³⁴ Now when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they assembled together. ³⁵ And one of them, an expert in religious law, asked him a question to test him: ³⁶ “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “*‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’* ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ The second is like it: *‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’* ⁴⁰ All the law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

The Messiah: David’s Son and Lord

⁴¹ While the Pharisees were assembled, Jesus asked them a question: ⁴² “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said, “The son of David.” ⁴³ He said to them, “How then does David by the Spirit call him ‘Lord,’ saying, ⁴⁴ *‘The Lord said to my lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet’*”?

⁴⁵ If David then calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”

⁴⁶ No one was able to answer him a word, and from that day on no one dared to question him any longer.

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¹ Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, ² “The experts in the law and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat. ³ Therefore pay attention to what they tell you and do it. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they teach. ⁴ They tie up heavy loads, hard to carry, and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing even to lift a finger to move them. ⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by people, for they make their phylacteries wide and their tassels long. ⁶ They love the place of honor at

banquets and the best seats in the synagogues⁷ and elaborate greetings in the marketplaces, and to have people call them 'Rabbi.'⁸ But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have one Teacher and you are all brothers.⁹ And call no one your 'father' on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.¹⁰ Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one teacher, the Christ.¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant.¹² And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

¹³ "But woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You keep locking people out of the kingdom of heaven! For you neither enter nor permit those trying to enter to go in.^{14*}

¹⁵ "Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You cross land and sea to make one convert, and when you get one, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves!

¹⁶ "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple is bound by nothing. But whoever swears by the gold of the temple is bound by the oath.'¹⁷ Blind fools! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold sacred?¹⁸ And, 'Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing. But if anyone swears by the gift on it he is bound by the oath.'¹⁹ You are blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?²⁰ So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.²¹ And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and the one who dwells in it.²² And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and the one who sits on it.

²³ "Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You give a tenth of mint, dill, and cumin, yet you neglect what is more important in the law - justice, mercy, and faithfulness! You should have done these things without neglecting the others.²⁴ Blind guides! You strain out a gnat yet swallow a camel!

²⁵ "Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.²⁶ Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside may become clean too!

²⁷ "Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs that look beautiful on the outside but inside are full of the bones of the dead and of everything unclean.²⁸ In the same way, on the outside you

* 23:14 [[EMPTY]]

look righteous to people, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹ “Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. ³⁰ And you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have participated with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ ³¹ By saying this you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up then the measure of your ancestors! ³³ You snakes, you offspring of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?

³⁴ “For this reason I am sending you prophets and wise men and experts in the law, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, ³⁵ so that on you will come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ I tell you the truth, this generation will be held responsible for all these things!

Judgment on Israel

³⁷ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would have none of it! ³⁸ Look, your house is left to you desolate! ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me from now until you say, ‘*Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*’ ”

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¹ Now as Jesus was going out of the temple courts and walking away, his disciples came to show him the temple buildings. ² And he said to them, “Do you see all these things? I tell you the truth, not one stone will be left on another. All will be torn down!”

Signs of the End of the Age

³ As he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him privately and said, “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Watch out that no one misleads you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will mislead many. ⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. Make sure that you are not alarmed, for this must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷ For nation will rise up in arms against nation, and kingdom

against kingdom. And there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these things are the beginning of birth pains.

Persecution of Disciples

⁹ “Then they will hand you over to be persecuted and will kill you. You will be hated by all the nations because of my name. ¹⁰ Then many will be led into sin, and they will betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will appear and deceive many, ¹² and because lawlessness will increase so much, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the person who endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole inhabited earth as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

The Abomination of Desolation

¹⁵ “So when you see *the abomination of desolation* – spoken about by Daniel the prophet – standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), ¹⁶ then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ The one on the roof must not come down to take anything out of his house, ¹⁸ and the one in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. ¹⁹ Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing their babies in those days! ²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great suffering unlike anything that has happened from the beginning of the world until now, or ever will happen. ²² And if those days had not been cut short, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. ²³ Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe him. ²⁴ For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ Remember, I have told you ahead of time. ²⁶ So then, if someone says to you, ‘Look, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out, or ‘Look, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe him. ²⁷ For just like the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so the coming of the Son of Man will be. ²⁸ Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

The Arrival of the Son of Man

²⁹ “Immediately after the suffering of those days, *the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken.* ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn. They will see *the Son of Man arriving on the clouds of heaven* with power and great

glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet blast, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The Parable of the Fig Tree

³² “Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also you, when you see all these things, know that he is near, right at the door. ³⁴ I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Be Ready!

³⁶ “But as for that day and hour no one knows it – not even the angels in heaven – except the Father alone. ³⁷ For just like the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be. ³⁸ For in those days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. ³⁹ And they knew nothing until the flood came and took them all away. It will be the same at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one left. ⁴¹ There will be two women grinding grain with a mill; one will be taken and one left.

⁴² “Therefore stay alert, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have been alert and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

The Faithful and Wise Slave

⁴⁵ “Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom the master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that slave whom the master finds at work when he comes. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, the master will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But if that evil slave should say to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ ⁴⁹ and he begins to beat his fellow slaves and to eat and drink with drunkards, ⁵⁰ then the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not foresee, ⁵¹ and will cut him in two, and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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¹“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of the virgins were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish ones took their lamps, they did not take extra olive oil with them. ⁴But the wise ones took flasks of olive oil with their lamps. ⁵When the bridegroom was delayed a long time, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom is here! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.’ ⁹‘No,’ they replied. ‘There won’t be enough for you and for us. Go instead to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰But while they had gone to buy it, the bridegroom arrived, and those who were ready went inside with him to the wedding banquet. Then the door was shut. ¹¹Later, the other virgins came too, saying, ‘Lord, lord! Let us in!’ ¹²But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I do not know you!’ ¹³Therefore stay alert, because you do not know the day or the hour.

The Parable of the Talents

¹⁴“For it is like a man going on a journey, who summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The one who had received five talents went off right away and put his money to work and gained five more. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had two gained two more. ¹⁸But the one who had received one talent went out and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money in it. ¹⁹After a long time, the master of those slaves came and settled his accounts with them. ²⁰The one who had received the five talents came and brought five more, saying, ‘Sir, you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’ ²¹His master answered, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave! You have been faithful in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²The one with the two talents also came and said, ‘Sir, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more.’ ²³His master answered, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Sir, I knew that you were a hard man, harvesting where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed, ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and

hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.’
²⁶ But his master answered, ‘Evil and lazy slave! So you knew that I harvest where I didn’t sow and gather where I didn’t scatter?’
²⁷ Then you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received my money back with interest!
²⁸ Therefore take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten.
²⁹ For the one who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough. But the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.
³⁰ And throw that worthless slave into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

The Judgment

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.
³² All the nations will be assembled before him, and he will separate people one from another like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.
³⁴ 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 foundation of the world.
³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,
³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’
³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?
³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or naked and clothe you?
³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’
⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, ‘I tell you the truth, just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it for me.’

⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels!
⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink.
⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not receive me as a guest, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’
⁴⁴ Then they too will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not give you whatever you needed?’
⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, ‘I tell you the truth, just as you did not do it for one of the least of these, you did not do it for me.’
⁴⁶ And these will depart into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

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¹ When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he told his disciples, ² “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.” ³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people met together in the palace of the high priest, who was named Caiaphas. ⁴ They planned to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. ⁵ But they said, “Not during the feast, so that there won’t be a riot among the people.”

Jesus’ Anointing

⁶ Now while Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of expensive perfumed oil, and she poured it on his head as he was at the table. ⁸ When the disciples saw this, they became indignant and said, “Why this waste? ⁹ It could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor!” ¹⁰ When Jesus learned of this, he said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a good service for me. ¹¹ For you will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me! ¹² When she poured this oil on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. ¹³ I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

The Plan to Betray Jesus

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, the one named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, “What will you give me to betray him into your hands?” So they set out thirty silver coins for him. ¹⁶ From that time on, Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray him.

The Passover

¹⁷ Now on the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹⁸ He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says, “My time is near. I will observe the Passover with my disciples at your house.”’ ” ¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had instructed them, and they prepared the Passover. ²⁰ When it was evening, he took his place at the table with the twelve. ²¹ And while they were eating he said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.” ²² They became greatly distressed and each one began to say to him, “Surely not I, Lord?” ²³ He answered, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man will go as it is written about him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It

would be better for him if he had never been born.”²⁵ Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely not I, Rabbi?” Jesus replied, “You have said it yourself.”

The Lord's Supper

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat, this is my body.”²⁷ And after taking the cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you,²⁸ for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.²⁹ I tell you, from now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”³⁰ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

The Prediction of Peter's Denial

³¹ Then Jesus said to them, “This night you will all fall away because of me, for it is written:

*‘I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’*

³² But after I am raised, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”³³ Peter said to him, “If they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away!”³⁴ Jesus said to him, “I tell you the truth, on this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.”³⁵ Peter said to him, “Even if I must die with you, I will never deny you.” And all the disciples said the same thing.

Gethsemane

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”³⁷ He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and became anguished and distressed.³⁸ Then he said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Remain here and stay awake with me.”³⁹ Going a little farther, he threw himself down with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me! Yet not what I will, but what you will.”⁴⁰ Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “So, couldn't you stay awake with me for one hour?⁴¹ Stay awake and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will must be done.”⁴³ He came again and found them sleeping; they could not keep their eyes open.⁴⁴ So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same thing once more.⁴⁵ Then he came

to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is approaching, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer is approaching!"

Betrayal and Arrest

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸ (Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him!") ⁴⁹ Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and took hold of Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹ But one of those with Jesus grabbed his sword, drew it out, and struck the high priest's slave, cutting off his ear. ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place! For all who take hold of the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Or do you think that I cannot call on my Father, and that he would send me more than twelve legions of angels right now? ⁵⁴ How then would the scriptures that say it must happen this way be fulfilled?" ⁵⁵ At that moment Jesus said to the crowd, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me like you would an outlaw? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple courts, yet you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶ But this has happened so that the scriptures of the prophets would be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

Condemned by the Sanhedrin

⁵⁷ Now the ones who had arrested Jesus led him to Caiaphas, the high priest, in whose house the experts in the law and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ But Peter was following him from a distance, all the way to the high priest's courtyard. After going in, he sat with the guards to see the outcome. ⁵⁹ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were trying to find false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰ But they did not find anything, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward ⁶¹ and declared, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶² So the high priest stood up and said to him, "Have you no answer? What is this that they are testifying against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus was silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man *sitting at the right hand* of the

Power and *coming on the clouds of heaven.*" ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothes and declared, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? Now you have heard the blasphemy! ⁶⁶ What is your verdict?" They answered, "He is guilty and deserves death." ⁶⁷ Then they spat in his face and struck him with their fists. And some slapped him, ⁶⁸ saying, "Prophecy for us, you Christ! Who hit you?"

Peter's Denials

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A slave girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰ But he denied it in front of them all: "I don't know what you're talking about!" ⁷¹ When he went out to the gateway, another slave girl saw him and said to the people there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazarene." ⁷² He denied it again with an oath, "I do not know the man!" ⁷³ After a little while, those standing there came up to Peter and said, "You really are one of them too – even your accent gives you away!" ⁷⁴ At that he began to curse, and he swore with an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

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¹ When it was early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people plotted against Jesus to execute him. ² They tied him up, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

Judas' Suicide

³ Now when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he regretted what he had done and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders, ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood!" But they said, "What is that to us? You take care of it yourself!" ⁵ So Judas threw the silver coins into the temple and left. Then he went out and hanged himself. ⁶ The chief priests took the silver and said, "It is not lawful to put this into the temple treasury, since it is blood money." ⁷ After consulting together they bought the Potter's Field with it, as a burial place for foreigners. ⁸ For this reason that field has been called the "Field of Blood" to this day. ⁹ Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "*They took the thirty silver coins, the price of the one whose price had been set by the people of Israel,* ¹⁰ *and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me.*"

Jesus and Pilate

¹¹ Then Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." ¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he did not respond. ¹³ Then Pilate said to him, "Don't you hear how many charges they are bringing against you?" ¹⁴ But he did not answer even one accusation, so that the governor was quite amazed.

¹⁵ During the feast the governor was accustomed to release one prisoner to the crowd, whomever they wanted. ¹⁶ At that time they had in custody a notorious prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷ So after they had assembled, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Christ?" ¹⁸ (For he knew that they had handed him over because of envy.) ¹⁹ As he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent a message to him: "Have nothing to do with that innocent man; I have suffered greatly as a result of a dream about him today." ²⁰ But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. ²¹ The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas!" ²² Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Christ?" They all said, "Crucify him!" ²³ He asked, "Why? What wrong has he done?" But they shouted more insistently, "Crucify him!"

Jesus is Condemned and Mocked

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but that instead a riot was starting, he took some water, washed his hands before the crowd and said, "I am innocent of this man's blood. You take care of it yourselves!" ²⁵ In reply all the people said, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!" ²⁶ Then he released Barabbas for them. But after he had Jesus flogged, he handed him over to be crucified. ²⁷ Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's residence and gathered the whole cohort around him. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe around him, ²⁹ and after braiding a crown of thorns, they put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, and kneeling down before him, they mocked him: "Hail, king of the Jews!" ³⁰ They spat on him and took the staff and struck him repeatedly on the head. ³¹ When they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

³² As they were going out, they found a man from Cyrene named Simon, whom they forced to carry his cross. ³³ They came to a place called Golgotha (which means “Place of the Skull”) ³⁴ and offered Jesus wine mixed with gall to drink. But after tasting it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ When they had crucified him, *they divided his clothes by throwing dice.* ³⁶ Then they sat down and kept guard over him there. ³⁷ Above his head they put the charge against him, which read: “This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.” ³⁸ Then two outlaws were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹ Those who passed by defamed him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, “You who can destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are God’s Son, come down from the cross!” ⁴¹ In the same way even the chief priests – together with the experts in the law and elders – were mocking him: ⁴² “He saved others, but he cannot save himself! He is the king of Israel! If he comes down now from the cross, we will believe in him!” ⁴³ *He trusts in God – let God, if he wants to, deliver him now* because he said, ‘I am God’s Son!’” ⁴⁴ The robbers who were crucified with him also spoke abusively to him.

Jesus’ Death

⁴⁵ Now from noon until three, darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ At about three o’clock Jesus shouted with a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” that is, “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” ⁴⁷ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “This man is calling for Elijah.” ⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the rest said, “Leave him alone! Let’s see if Elijah will come to save him.” ⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up his spirit. ⁵¹ Just then the temple curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks were split apart. ⁵² And tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had died were raised. ⁵³ (They came out of the tombs after his resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.) ⁵⁴ Now when the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place, they were extremely terrified and said, “Truly this one was God’s Son!” ⁵⁵ Many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and given him support were also there, watching from a distance. ⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Jesus' Burial

⁵⁷ Now when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut in the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ (Now Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there, opposite the tomb.)

The Guard at the Tomb

⁶² The next day (which is after the day of preparation) the chief priests and the Pharisees assembled before Pilate ⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember that while that deceiver was still alive he said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give orders to secure the tomb until the third day. Otherwise his disciples may come and steal his body and say to the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "Take a guard of soldiers. Go and make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶ So they went with the soldiers of the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

28

¹ Now after the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. ² Suddenly there was a severe earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descending from heaven came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were shaken and became like dead men because they were so afraid of him. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has been raised, just as he said. Come and see the place where he was lying. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there.' Listen, I have told you!" ⁸ So they left the tomb quickly, with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ But Jesus met them, saying, "Greetings!" They came to him, held on to his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. They will see me there."

The Guards' Report

¹¹ While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹² After they had assembled with the elders and formed a plan, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³ telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came at night and stole his body while we were asleep.’” ¹⁴ If this matter is heard before the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” ¹⁵ So they took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story is told among the Jews to this day.

The Great Commission

¹⁶ So the eleven disciples went to Galilee to the mountain Jesus had designated. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came up and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Mark

The Ministry of John the Baptist

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“*Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way,*

³ *the voice of one shouting in the wilderness,*

‘*Prepare the way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.*’ ”

⁴ In the wilderness John the baptizer began preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ People from the whole Judean countryside and all of Jerusalem were going out to him, and he was baptizing them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. ⁶ John wore a garment made of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “One more powerful than I am is coming after me; I am not worthy to bend down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

⁹ Now in those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan River. ¹⁰ And just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: “You are my one dear Son; in you I take great delight.” ¹² The Spirit immediately drove him into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, enduring temptations from Satan. He was with wild animals, and angels were ministering to his needs.

Preaching in Galilee and the Call of the Disciples

¹⁴ Now after John was imprisoned, Jesus went into Galilee and proclaimed the gospel of God. ¹⁵ He said, “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the gospel!” ¹⁶ As he went along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, Simon’s brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen). ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will turn you into fishers of people.” ¹⁸ They left their nets immediately and followed him. ¹⁹ Going on a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother in their boat mending nets. ²⁰ Immediately he called

them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus' Authority

²¹ Then they went to Capernaum. When the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people there were amazed by his teaching, because he taught them like one who had authority, not like the experts in the law. ²³ Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, ²⁴ "Leave us alone, Jesus the Nazarene! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!" ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him: "Silence! Come out of him!" ²⁶ After throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him. ²⁷ They were all amazed so that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands the unclean spirits and they obey him." ²⁸ So the news about him spread quickly throughout all the region around Galilee.

Healings at Simon's House

²⁹ Now as soon as they left the synagogue, they entered Simon and Andrew's house, with James and John. ³⁰ Simon's mother-in-law was lying down, sick with a fever, so they spoke to Jesus at once about her. ³¹ He came and raised her up by gently taking her hand. Then the fever left her and she began to serve them. ³² When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and demon-possessed. ³³ The whole town gathered by the door. ³⁴ So he healed many who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. But he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Praying and Preaching

³⁵ Then Jesus got up early in the morning when it was still very dark, departed, and went out to a deserted place, and there he spent time in prayer. ³⁶ Simon and his companions searched for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you." ³⁸ He replied, "Let us go elsewhere, into the surrounding villages, so that I can preach there too. For that is what I came out here to do." ³⁹ So he went into all of Galilee preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Cleansing a Leper

⁴⁰ Now a leper came to him and fell to his knees, asking for help. "If you are willing, you can make me clean," he said. ⁴¹ Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out his hand

and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" ⁴² The leprosy left him at once, and he was clean. ⁴³ Immediately Jesus sent the man away with a very strong warning. ⁴⁴ He told him, "See that you do not say anything to anyone, but go, show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ But as the man went out he began to announce it publicly and spread the story widely, so that Jesus was no longer able to enter any town openly but stayed outside in remote places. Still they kept coming to him from everywhere.

2

¹ Now after some days, when he returned to Capernaum, the news spread that he was at home. ² So many gathered that there was no longer any room, not even by the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some people came bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. ⁴ When they were not able to bring him in because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Jesus. Then, after tearing it out, they lowered the stretcher the paralytic was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some of the experts in the law were sitting there, turning these things over in their minds: ⁷ "Why does this man speak this way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸ Now immediately, when Jesus realized in his spirit that they were contemplating such thoughts, he said to them, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up, take your stretcher, and walk?' ¹⁰ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," - he said to the paralytic - ¹¹ "I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher, and go home." ¹² And immediately the man stood up, took his stretcher, and went out in front of them all. They were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

The Call of Levi; Eating with Sinners

¹³ Jesus went out again by the sea. The whole crowd came to him, and he taught them. ¹⁴ As he went along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax booth. "Follow me," he said to him. And he got up and followed him. ¹⁵ As Jesus was having a meal in Levi's home, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the experts in the law and the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax

collectors, they said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹⁷ When Jesus heard this he said to them, “Those who are healthy don’t need a physician, but those who are sick do. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

The Superiority of the New

¹⁸ Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. So they came to Jesus and said, “Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples don’t fast?” ¹⁹ Jesus said to them, “The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they do not fast. ²⁰ But the days are coming when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and at that time they will fast. ²¹ No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and the tear becomes worse. ²² And no one pours new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins will be destroyed. Instead new wine is poured into new wineskins.”

Lord of the Sabbath

²³ Jesus was going through the grain fields on a Sabbath, and his disciples began to pick some heads of wheat as they made their way. ²⁴ So the Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is against the law on the Sabbath?” ²⁵ He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions were hungry – ²⁶ how he entered the house of God when Abiathar was high priest and ate the sacred bread, which is against the law for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to his companions?” ²⁷ Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath. ²⁸ For this reason the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”

3

¹ Then Jesus entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ² They watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they could accuse him. ³ So he said to the man who had the withered hand, “Stand up among all these people.” ⁴ Then he said to them, “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, or evil, to save a life or destroy it?” But they were silent. ⁵ After looking around at them in anger, grieved by the hardness of their hearts, he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ So the Pharisees went

out immediately and began plotting with the Herodians, as to how they could assassinate him.

Crowds by the Sea

⁷ Then Jesus went away with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him. And from Judea, ⁸ Jerusalem, a great multitude came to him when they heard about the things he had done. ⁹ Because of the crowd, he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him so the crowd would not press toward him. ¹⁰ For he had healed many, so that all who were afflicted with diseases pressed toward him in order to touch him. ¹¹ And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." ¹² But he sternly ordered them not to make him known.

Appointing the Twelve Apostles

¹³ Now Jesus went up the mountain and called for those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ He appointed twelve (whom he named apostles), so that they would be with him and he could send them to preach ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out demons. ¹⁶ He appointed twelve: To Simon he gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ to James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee, he gave the name Boanerges (that is, "sons of thunder"); ¹⁸ and Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Jesus and Beelzebul

²⁰ Now Jesus went home, and a crowd gathered so that they were not able to eat. ²¹ When his family heard this they went out to restrain him, for they said, "He is out of his mind." ²² The experts in the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and, "By the ruler of demons he casts out demons." ²³ So he called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom will not be able to stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan rises against himself and is divided, he is not able to stand and his end has come. ²⁷ But no one is able to enter a strong man's house and steal his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can thoroughly plunder his house. ²⁸ I tell you the truth, people will be forgiven for all sins, even all the blasphemies they utter. ²⁹ But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, but is guilty of an eternal sin" ³⁰ (because they said, "He has an unclean spirit").

Jesus' True Family

³¹ Then Jesus' mother and his brothers came. Standing outside, they sent word to him, to summon him. ³² A crowd was sitting around him and they said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are outside looking for you." ³³ He answered them and said, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" ³⁴ And looking at those who were sitting around him in a circle, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!" ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

4

¹ Again he began to teach by the lake. Such a large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the lake and sat there while the whole crowd was on the shore by the lake. ² He taught them many things in parables, and in his teaching said to them: ³ "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground where it did not have much soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep. ⁶ When the sun came up it was scorched, and because it did not have sufficient root, it withered. ⁷ Other seed fell among the thorns, and they grew up and choked it, and it did not produce grain. ⁸ But other seed fell on good soil and produced grain, sprouting and growing; some yielded thirty times as much, some sixty, and some a hundred times." ⁹ And he said, "Whoever has ears to hear had better listen!"

The Purpose of Parables

¹⁰ When he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ He said to them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those outside, everything is in parables, ¹² so that *although they look they may look but not see, and although they hear they may hear but not understand, so they may not repent and be forgiven.*"

¹³ He said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? Then how will you understand any parable? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: Whenever they hear, immediately Satan comes and snatches the word that was sown in them. ¹⁶ These are the ones sown on rocky ground: As soon as they hear the word, they receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But they have no root in themselves and do not endure. Then, when trouble or persecution comes because of the word, immediately they fall away. ¹⁸ Others are the ones sown among thorns: They

are those who hear the word,¹⁹ but worldly cares, the seductiveness of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it produces nothing.²⁰ But these are the ones sown on good soil: They hear the word and receive it and bear fruit, one thirty times as much, one sixty, and one a hundred.”

The Parable of the Lamp

²¹ He also said to them, “A lamp isn’t brought to be put under a basket or under a bed, is it? Isn’t it to be placed on a lampstand? ²² For nothing is hidden except to be revealed, and nothing concealed except to be brought to light. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, he had better listen!” ²⁴ And he said to them, “Take care about what you hear. The measure you use will be the measure you receive, and more will be added to you. ²⁵ For whoever has will be given more, but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.”

The Parable of the Growing Seed

²⁶ He also said, “The kingdom of God is like someone who spreads seed on the ground. ²⁷ He goes to sleep and gets up, night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ By itself the soil produces a crop, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹ And when the grain is ripe, he sends in the sickle because the harvest has come.”

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

³⁰ He also asked, “To what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use to present it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed that when sown in the ground, even though it is the smallest of all the seeds in the ground – ³² when it is sown, it grows up, becomes the greatest of all garden plants, and grows large branches so that the wild birds can nest in its shade.”

The Use of Parables

³³ So with many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear. ³⁴ He did not speak to them without a parable. But privately he explained everything to his own disciples.

Stilling of a Storm

³⁵ On that day, when evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s go across to the other side of the lake.” ³⁶ So after leaving the crowd, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat, and other boats were with him. ³⁷ Now a great windstorm developed and the waves were breaking into the

boat, so that the boat was nearly swamped. ³⁸ But he was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. They woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?" ³⁹ So he got up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Be quiet! Calm down!" Then the wind stopped, and it was dead calm. ⁴⁰ And he said to them, "Why are you cowardly? Do you still not have faith?" ⁴¹ They were overwhelmed by fear and said to one another, "Who then is this? Even the wind and sea obey him!"

5

¹ So they came to the other side of the lake, to the region of the Gerasenes. ² Just as Jesus was getting out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit came from the tombs and met him. ³ He lived among the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴ For his hands and feet had often been bound with chains and shackles, but he had torn the chains apart and broken the shackles in pieces. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵ Each night and every day among the tombs and in the mountains, he would cry out and cut himself with stones. ⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him. ⁷ Then he cried out with a loud voice, "Leave me alone, Jesus, Son of the Most High God! I implore you by God - do not torment me!" ⁸ (For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of that man, you unclean spirit!") ⁹ Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰ He begged Jesus repeatedly not to send them out of the region. ¹¹ There on the hillside, a great herd of pigs was feeding. ¹² And the demonic spirits begged him, "Send us into the pigs. Let us enter them." ¹³ Jesus gave them permission. So the unclean spirits came out and went into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake, and about two thousand were drowned in the lake.

¹⁴ Now the herdsmen ran off and spread the news in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵ They came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man sitting there, clothed and in his right mind - the one who had the "Legion" - and they were afraid. ¹⁶ Those who had seen what had happened to the demon-possessed man reported it, and they also told about the pigs. ¹⁷ Then they asked Jesus to leave their region. ¹⁸ As he was getting into the boat the man who had been demon-possessed asked if he could go with him. ¹⁹ But Jesus did not permit him to do so. Instead, he said to him, "Go to your home and to your people and tell them what the Lord has done for you, that he

had mercy on you.”²⁰ So he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him, and all were amazed.

Restoration and Healing

²¹ When Jesus had crossed again in a boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he was by the sea. ²² Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came up, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³ He asked him urgently, “My little daughter is near death. Come and lay your hands on her so that she may be healed and live.” ²⁴ Jesus went with him, and a large crowd followed and pressed around him.

²⁵ Now a woman was there who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years. ²⁶ She had endured a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet instead of getting better, she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ for she kept saying, “If only I touch his clothes, I will be healed.” ²⁹ At once the bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰ Jesus knew at once that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?” ³¹ His disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing against you and you say, ‘Who touched me?’ ” ³² But he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, with fear and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”

³⁵ While he was still speaking, people came from the synagogue ruler’s house saying, “Your daughter has died. Why trouble the teacher any longer?” ³⁶ But Jesus, paying no attention to what was said, told the synagogue ruler, “Do not be afraid; just believe.” ³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. ³⁸ They came to the house of the synagogue ruler where he saw noisy confusion and people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ When he entered he said to them, “Why are you distressed and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep.” ⁴⁰ And they began making fun of him. But he put them all outside and he took the child’s father and mother and his own companions and went into the room where the child was. ⁴¹ Then, gently taking the child by the hand, he said to her, “*Talitha koum*,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, get up.” ⁴² The girl got up at once and began to walk around (she was twelve years

old). They were completely astonished at this. ⁴³ He strictly ordered that no one should know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

6

¹ Now Jesus left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ² When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did he get these ideas? And what is this wisdom that has been given to him? What are these miracles that are done through his hands?" ³ Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And aren't his sisters here with us?" And so they took offense at him. ⁴ Then Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown, and among his relatives, and in his own house." ⁵ He was not able to do a miracle there, except to lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ And he was amazed because of their unbelief. Then he went around among the villages and taught.

Sending Out the Twelve Apostles

⁷ Jesus called the twelve and began to send them out two by two. He gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a staff - no bread, no bag, no money in their belts - ⁹ and to put on sandals but not to wear two tunics. ¹⁰ He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the area. ¹¹ If a place will not welcome you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." ¹² So they went out and preached that all should repent. ¹³ They cast out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

The Death of John the Baptist

¹⁴ Now King Herod heard this, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead, and because of this, miraculous powers are at work in him." ¹⁵ Others said, "He is Elijah." Others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets from the past." ¹⁶ But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised!" ¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent men, arrested John, and bound him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. ¹⁸ For John had repeatedly told Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ So Herodias nursed a grudge against him and wanted to kill him. But she could not ²⁰ because Herod stood in awe of John and protected him, since he knew that

John was a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard him, he was thoroughly baffled, and yet he liked to listen to John.

²¹ But a suitable day came, when Herod gave a banquet on his birthday for his court officials, military commanders, and leaders of Galilee. ²² When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you want and I will give it to you." ²³ He swore to her, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom." ²⁴ So she went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" Her mother said, "The head of John the baptizer." ²⁵ Immediately she hurried back to the king and made her request: "I want the head of John the Baptist on a platter immediately." ²⁶ Although it grieved the king deeply, he did not want to reject her request because of his oath and his guests. ²⁷ So the king sent an executioner at once to bring John's head, and he went and beheaded John in prison. ²⁸ He brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When John's disciples heard this, they came and took his body and placed it in a tomb.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

³⁰ Then the apostles gathered around Jesus and told him everything they had done and taught. ³¹ He said to them, "Come with me privately to an isolated place and rest a while" (for many were coming and going, and there was no time to eat). ³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to some remote place. ³³ But many saw them leaving and recognized them, and they hurried on foot from all the towns and arrived there ahead of them. ³⁴ As Jesus came ashore he saw the large crowd and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he taught them many things.

³⁵ When it was already late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is an isolated place and it is already very late. ³⁶ Send them away so that they can go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy something for themselves to eat." ³⁷ But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "Should we go and buy bread for two hundred silver coins and give it to them to eat?" ³⁸ He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five - and two fish." ³⁹ Then he directed them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they reclined in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. He gave them

to his disciples to serve the people, and he divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³ and they picked up the broken pieces and fish that were left over, twelve baskets full. ⁴⁴ Now there were five thousand men who ate the bread.

Walking on Water

⁴⁵ Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dispersed the crowd. ⁴⁶ After saying good-bye to them, he went to the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ He saw them straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. As the night was ending, he came to them walking on the sea, for he wanted to pass by them. ⁴⁹ When they saw him walking on the water they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁵⁰ for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them: "Have courage! It is I. Do not be afraid." ⁵¹ Then he went up with them into the boat, and the wind ceased. They were completely astonished, ⁵² because they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Healing the Sick

⁵³ After they had crossed over, they came to land at Genesaret and anchored there. ⁵⁴ As they got out of the boat, people immediately recognized Jesus. ⁵⁵ They ran through that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever he was rumored to be. ⁵⁶ And wherever he would go - into villages, towns, or countryside - they would place the sick in the marketplaces, and would ask him if they could just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

7

¹ Now the Pharisees and some of the experts in the law who came from Jerusalem gathered around him. ² And they saw that some of Jesus' disciples ate their bread with unclean hands, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they perform a ritual washing, holding fast to the tradition of the elders. ⁴ And when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. They hold fast to many other traditions: the washing of cups, pots, kettles, and dining couches.) ⁵ The Pharisees and the experts in the law asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with unwashed hands?" ⁶ He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied correctly about you hypocrites, as it is written:

*'This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me.*

*⁷ They worship me in vain,
teaching as doctrine the commandments of men.'*

⁸ Having no regard for the command of God, you hold fast to human tradition." ⁹ He also said to them, "You neatly reject the commandment of God in order to set up your tradition. ¹⁰ For Moses said, '*Honor your father and your mother,*' and, '*Whoever insults his father or mother must be put to death.*' ¹¹ But you say that if anyone tells his father or mother, 'Whatever help you would have received from me is *corban*' (that is, a gift for God), ¹² then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother. ¹³ Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like this."

¹⁴ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing outside of a person that can defile him by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles him." ¹⁶ *

¹⁷ Now when Jesus had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸ He said to them, "Are you so foolish? Don't you understand that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him? ¹⁹ For it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and then goes out into the sewer." (This means all foods are clean.) ²⁰ He said, "What comes out of a person defiles him. ²¹ For from within, out of the human heart, come evil ideas, sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, evil, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, and folly. ²³ All these evils come from within and defile a person."

A Syrophenician Woman's Faith

²⁴ After Jesus left there, he went to the region of Tyre. When he went into a house, he did not want anyone to know, but he was not able to escape notice. ²⁵ Instead, a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him and came and fell at his feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, of Syrophenician origin. She asked him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and to throw it to the dogs." ²⁸ She answered, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ²⁹ Then he said to her, "Because you said this, you may go. The demon has left your daughter." ³⁰ She went home and found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

* 7:16 [[EMPTY]]

Healing a Deaf Mute

³¹ Then Jesus went out again from the region of Tyre to the Sea of Galilee in the region of the Decapolis. ³² They brought to him a deaf man who had difficulty speaking, and they asked him to place his hands on him. ³³ After Jesus took him aside privately, away from the crowd, he put his fingers in the man's ears, and after spitting, he touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then he looked up to heaven and said with a sigh, "Ephphatha" (that is, "Be opened"). ³⁵ And immediately the man's ears were opened, his tongue loosened, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Jesus ordered them not to tell anything. But as much as he ordered them not to do this, they proclaimed it all the more. ³⁷ People were completely astounded and said, "He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

8

¹ In those days there was another large crowd with nothing to eat. So Jesus called his disciples and said to them, ² "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have already been here with me three days, and they have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them home hungry, they will faint on the way, and some of them have come from a great distance." ⁴ His disciples answered him, "Where can someone get enough bread in this desolate place to satisfy these people?" ⁵ He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They replied, "Seven." ⁶ Then he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. After he took the seven loaves and gave thanks, he broke them and began giving them to the disciples to serve. So they served the crowd. ⁷ They also had a few small fish. After giving thanks for these, he told them to serve these as well. ⁸ Everyone ate and was satisfied, and they picked up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. ⁹ There were about four thousand who ate. Then he dismissed them. ¹⁰ Immediately he got into a boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

The Demand for a Sign

¹¹ Then the Pharisees came and began to argue with Jesus, asking for a sign from heaven to test him. ¹² Sighing deeply in his spirit he said, "Why does this generation look for a sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³ Then he left them, got back into the boat, and went to the other side.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod

¹⁴ Now they had forgotten to take bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. ¹⁵ And Jesus ordered them, "Watch out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod!" ¹⁶ So they began to discuss with one another about having no bread. ¹⁷ When he learned of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Have your hearts been hardened? ¹⁸ Though you have eyes, don't you see? And though you have ears, can't you hear? Don't you remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of pieces did you pick up?" They replied, "Twelve." ²⁰ "When I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many baskets full of pieces did you pick up?" They replied, "Seven." ²¹ Then he said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

A Two-stage Healing

²² Then they came to Bethsaida. They brought a blind man to Jesus and asked him to touch him. ²³ He took the blind man by the hand and brought him outside of the village. Then he spit on his eyes, placed his hands on his eyes and asked, "Do you see anything?" ²⁴ Regaining his sight he said, "I see people, but they look like trees walking." ²⁵ Then Jesus placed his hands on the man's eyes again. And he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. ²⁶ Jesus sent him home, saying, "Do not even go into the village."

Peter's Confession

²⁷ Then Jesus and his disciples went to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸ They said, "John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and still others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰ Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.

First Prediction of Jesus' Death and Resurrection

³¹ Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke openly about this. So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But after turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan. You are not setting your mind on God's interests, but on man's."

Following Jesus

³⁴ Then Jesus called the crowd, along with his disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ For what benefit is it for a person to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his life? ³⁷ What can a person give in exchange for his life? ³⁸ For if anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

9

¹ And he said to them, “I tell you the truth, there are some standing here who will not experience death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”

The Transfiguration

² Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John and led them alone up a high mountain privately. And he was transfigured before them, ³ and his clothes became radiantly white, more so than any launderer in the world could bleach them. ⁴ Then Elijah appeared before them along with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ So Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three shelters – one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶ (For they were afraid, and he did not know what to say.) ⁷ Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came from the cloud, “This is my one dear Son. Listen to him!” ⁸ Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down from the mountain, he gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ They kept this statement to themselves, discussing what this rising from the dead meant.

¹¹ Then they asked him, “Why do the experts in the law say that Elijah must come first?” ¹² He said to them, “Elijah does indeed come first, and restores all things. And why is it written that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be despised? ¹³ But I tell you that Elijah has certainly come, and they did to him whatever they wanted, just as it is written about him.”

The Disciples' Failure to Heal

¹⁴ When they came to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and experts in the law arguing with them.

15 When the whole crowd saw him, they were amazed and ran at once and greeted him. 16 He asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" 17 A member of the crowd said to him, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that makes him mute. 18 Whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they were not able to do so." 19 He answered them, "You unbelieving generation! How much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I endure you? Bring him to me." 20 So they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell on the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. 21 Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. 22 It has often thrown him into fire or water to destroy him. But if you are able to do anything, have compassion on us and help us." 23 Then Jesus said to him, "'If you are able?' All things are possible for the one who believes." 24 Immediately the father of the boy cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!"

25 Now when Jesus saw that a crowd was quickly gathering, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." 26 It shrieked, threw him into terrible convulsions, and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, "He is dead!" 27 But Jesus gently took his hand and raised him to his feet, and he stood up.

28 Then, after he went into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we cast it out?" 29 He told them, "This kind can come out only by prayer."

Second Prediction of Jesus' Death and Resurrection

30 They went out from there and passed through Galilee. But Jesus did not want anyone to know, 31 for he was teaching his disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." 32 But they did not understand this statement and were afraid to ask him.

Questions About the Greatest

33 Then they came to Capernaum. After Jesus was inside the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" 34 But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. 35 After he sat down, he called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." 36 He

took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

On Jesus' Side

³⁸ John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us.” ³⁹ But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, because no one who does a miracle in my name will be able soon afterward to say anything bad about me. ⁴⁰ For whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For I tell you the truth, whoever gives you a cup of water because you bear Christ’s name will never lose his reward.

⁴² “If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a huge millstone tied around his neck and to be thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life crippled than to have two hands and go into hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better to enter life lame than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁶ ⁴⁷ If your eye causes you to sin, tear it out! It is better to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where their worm never dies and the fire is never quenched. ⁴⁹ Everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”

10

¹ Then Jesus left that place and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan River. Again crowds gathered to him, and again, as was his custom, he taught them. ² Then some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” ³ He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” ⁴ They said, “Moses permitted a man to write *a certificate of dismissal* and to divorce her.” ⁵ But Jesus said to them, “He wrote this commandment for you because of your hard hearts. ⁶ But from the beginning of creation *he made them male and female**. ⁷ *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother*,⁸ *and the two will become one flesh*. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

¹⁰ In the house once again, the disciples asked him about this. ¹¹ So he told them, “Whoever divorces his wife and

* 9:44 [[EMPTY]] † 9:46 [[EMPTY]]

marries another commits adultery against her. ¹² And if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Jesus and Little Children

¹³ Now people were bringing little children to him for him to touch, but the disciples scolded those who brought them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me and do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.” ¹⁶ After he took the children in his arms, he placed his hands on them and blessed them.

The Rich Man

¹⁷ Now as Jesus was starting out on his way, someone ran up to him, fell on his knees, and said, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁸ Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘ **Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.** ’ ” ²⁰ The man said to him, “Teacher, I have wholeheartedly obeyed all these laws since my youth.” ²¹ As Jesus looked at him, he felt love for him and said, “You lack one thing. Go, sell whatever you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” ²² But at this statement, the man looked sad and went away sorrowful, for he was very rich.

²³ Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” ²⁴ The disciples were astonished at these words. But again Jesus said to them, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ They were even more astonished and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷ Jesus looked at them and replied, “This is impossible for mere humans, but not for God; all things are possible for God.”

²⁸ Peter began to speak to him, “Look, we have left everything to follow you!” ²⁹ Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, there is no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the gospel ³⁰ who will not receive in this age a hundred times as much – homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, fields, all with persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life. ³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Third Prediction of Jesus' Death and Resurrection

³² They were on the way, going up to Jerusalem. Jesus was going ahead of them, and they were amazed, but those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was going to happen to him. ³³ "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and experts in the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ They will mock him, spit on him, flog him severely, and kill him. Yet after three days, he will rise again."

The Request of James and John

³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask." ³⁶ He said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³⁷ They said to him, "Permit one of us to sit at your right hand and the other at your left in your glory." ³⁸ But Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I experience?" ³⁹ They said to him, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink, and you will be baptized with the baptism I experience, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give. It is for those for whom it has been prepared."

⁴¹ Now when the other ten heard this, they became angry with James and John. ⁴² Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions use their authority over them. ⁴³ But it is not this way among you. Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Healing Blind Bartimaeus

⁴⁶ They came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus the son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the road. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸ Many scolded him to get him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man and said to him, "Have courage! Get up! He is calling you." ⁵⁰ He threw off his cloak, jumped up, and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man

replied, "Rabbi, let me see again." ⁵² Jesus said to him, "Go, your faith has healed you." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the road.

11

¹ Now as they approached Jerusalem, near Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, "Go to the village ahead of you. As soon as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here soon.' " ⁴ So they went and found a colt tied at a door, outside in the street, and untied it. ⁵ Some people standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" ⁶ They replied as Jesus had told them, and the bystanders let them go. ⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. ⁸ Many spread their cloaks on the road and others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Both those who went ahead and those who followed kept shouting, "*Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*" ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" ¹¹ Then Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. And after looking around at everything, he went out to Bethany with the twelve since it was already late.

Cursing of the Fig Tree

¹² Now the next day, as they went out from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ After noticing in the distance a fig tree with leaves, he went to see if he could find any fruit on it. When he came to it he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

Cleansing the Temple

¹⁵ Then they came to Jerusalem. Jesus entered the temple area and began to drive out those who were selling and buying in the temple courts. He turned over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and he would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. ¹⁷ Then he began to teach them and said, "Is it not written: '*My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations*'? But you have turned it into *a den of robbers!*" ¹⁸ The chief priests and the experts in the law heard it and they considered how they could assassinate him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed by his

teaching. ¹⁹ When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

The Withered Fig Tree

²⁰ In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. ²¹ Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered." ²² Jesus said to them, "Have faith in God. ²³ I tell you the truth, if someone says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ²⁴ For this reason I tell you, whatever you pray and ask for, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven will also forgive you your sins." ²⁶ *

²⁷ They came again to Jerusalem. While Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the experts in the law, and the elders came up to him ²⁸ and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Or who gave you this authority to do these things?" ²⁹ Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question. Answer me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things: ³⁰ John's baptism – was it from heaven or from people? Answer me." ³¹ They discussed with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Then why did you not believe him?' ³² But if we say, 'From people – ' " (they feared the crowd, for they all considered John to be truly a prophet). ³³ So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Then Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

12

¹ Then he began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a pit for its winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenant farmers and went on a journey. ² At harvest time he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his portion of the crop. ³ But those tenants seized his slave, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ So he sent another slave to them again. This one they struck on the head and treated outrageously. ⁵ He sent another, and that one they killed. This happened to many others, some of whom were beaten, others killed. ⁶ He had one left, his one dear son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ⁷ But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and

* 11:26 [[EMPTY]]

the inheritance will be ours!’⁸ So they seized him, killed him, and threw his body out of the vineyard.⁹ What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.¹⁰ Have you not read this scripture:

‘ ***The stone the builders rejected has become the corner-stone.***

¹¹ ***This is from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’***”

¹² Now they wanted to arrest him (but they feared the crowd), because they realized that he told this parable against them. So they left him and went away.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

¹³ Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to trap him with his own words.¹⁴ When they came they said to him, “Teacher, we know that you are truthful and do not court anyone’s favor, because you show no partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”¹⁵ But he saw through their hypocrisy and said to them, “Why are you testing me? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.”¹⁶ So they brought one, and he said to them, “Whose image is this, and whose inscription?” They replied, “Caesar’s.”¹⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they were utterly amazed at him.

Marriage and the Resurrection

¹⁸ Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) also came to him and asked him,¹⁹ “Teacher, Moses wrote for us: ‘ ***If a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, that man must marry the widow and father children for his brother.***’²⁰ There were seven brothers. The first one married, and when he died he had no children.²¹ The second married her and died without any children, and likewise the third.²² None of the seven had children. Finally, the woman died too.²³ In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For all seven had married her.”²⁴ Jesus said to them, “Aren’t you deceived for this reason, because you don’t know the scriptures or the power of God?²⁵ For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.²⁶ Now as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him, ‘ ***I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of***

Jacob?²⁷ He is not the God of the dead but of the living. You are badly mistaken!”

The Greatest Commandment

²⁸ Now one of the experts in the law came and heard them debating. When he saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?”²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is: ‘**Listen, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.**³⁰ **Love the Lord** your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’³¹ The second is: ‘**Love your neighbor as yourself.**’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”³² The expert in the law said to him, “That is true, Teacher; you are right to say that

he is | strong="G1510" one, and there is no one else besides him.³³ And

to love | strong="G0025" him with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength and

to love | strong="G0025" your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered thoughtfully, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” Then no one dared any longer to question him.

The Messiah: David's Son and Lord

³⁵ While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he said, “How is it that the experts in the law say that the Christ is David’s son? ³⁶ David himself, by the Holy Spirit, said,

‘**The Lord said to my lord,**

“**Sit at my right hand,**

until I put your enemies under your feet.”’

³⁷ If David himself calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” And the large crowd was listening to him with delight.

Warnings About Experts in the Law

³⁸ In his teaching Jesus also said, “Watch out for the experts in the law. They like walking around in long robes and elaborate greetings in the marketplaces,³⁹ and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.⁴⁰ They devour widows’ property, and as a show make long prayers. These men will receive a more severe punishment.”

The Widow's Offering

⁴¹ Then he sat down opposite the offering box, and watched the crowd putting coins into it. Many rich people were throwing in large amounts.⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, worth less than a penny.⁴³ He

called his disciples and said to them, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the offering box than all the others. ⁴⁴ For they all gave out of their wealth. But she, out of her poverty, put in what she had to live on, everything she had."

13

¹ Now as Jesus was going out of the temple courts, one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look at these tremendous stones and buildings!" ² Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left on another. All will be torn down!"

Signs of the End of the Age

³ So while he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that all these things are about to take place?" ⁵ Jesus began to say to them, "Watch out that no one misleads you. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and they will mislead many. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. These things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁸ For nation will rise up in arms against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines. These are but the beginning of birth pains.

Persecution of Disciples

⁹ "You must watch out for yourselves. You will be handed over to councils and beaten in the synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them. ¹⁰ First the gospel must be preached to all nations. ¹¹ When they arrest you and hand you over for trial, do not worry about what to speak. But say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. ¹² Brother will hand over brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise against parents and have them put to death. ¹³ You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

The Abomination of Desolation

¹⁴ "But when you see *the abomination of desolation* standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ The one on the roof must not come down or go inside to take anything out of his house. ¹⁶ The one in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. ¹⁷ Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing their babies in those days! ¹⁸ Pray that it may

not be in winter. ¹⁹ For in those days there will be suffering unlike anything that has happened from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, or ever will happen. ²⁰ And if the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved. But because of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut them short. ²¹ Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe him. ²² For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, the elect. ²³ Be careful! I have told you everything ahead of time.

The Arrival of the Son of Man

²⁴ "But in those days, after that suffering, *the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light;* ²⁵ *the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.* ²⁶ Then everyone will see *the Son of Man arriving in the clouds* with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send angels and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Parable of the Fig Tree

²⁸ "Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also you, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, right at the door. ³⁰ I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Be Ready!

³² "But as for that day or hour no one knows it – neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son – except the Father. ³³ Watch out! Stay alert! For you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey. He left his house and put his slaves in charge, assigning to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to stay alert. ³⁵ Stay alert, then, because you do not know when the owner of the house will return – whether during evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or at dawn – ³⁶ or else he might find you asleep when he returns suddenly. ³⁷ What I say to you I say to everyone: Stay alert!"

14

¹ Two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the chief priests and the experts in the law were trying to find a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. ² For they

said, “Not during the feast, so there won’t be a riot among the people.”

Jesus’ Anointing

³ Now while Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, reclining at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of costly aromatic oil from pure nard. After breaking open the jar, she poured it on his head. ⁴ But some who were present indignantly said to one another, “Why this waste of expensive ointment? ⁵ It could have been sold for more than three hundred silver coins and the money given to the poor!” So they spoke angrily to her. ⁶ But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why are you bothering her? She has done a good service for me. ⁷ For you will always have the poor with you, and you can do good for them whenever you want. But you will not always have me! ⁸ She did what she could. She anointed my body beforehand for burial. ⁹ I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

The Plan to Betray Jesus

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus into their hands. ¹¹ When they heard this, they were delighted and promised to give him money. So Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray him.

The Passover

¹² Now on the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, Jesus’ disciples said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹³ He sent two of his disciples and told them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴ Wherever he enters, tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’” ¹⁵ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.” ¹⁶ So the disciples left, went into the city, and found things just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ Then, when it was evening, he came to the house with the twelve. ¹⁸ While they were at the table eating, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, one of you eating with me will betray me.” ¹⁹ They were distressed, and one by one said to him, “Surely not I?” ²⁰ He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who dips his hand with me into the bowl. ²¹ For the Son of Man will go as it is written about him, but woe to that man by whom the

Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for him if he had never been born.”

The Lord's Supper

²² While they were eating, he took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it, gave it to them, and said, “Take it. This is my body.” ²³ And after taking the cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, “This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, that is poured out for many. ²⁵ I tell you the truth, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

The Prediction of Peter's Denial

²⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written,

*‘I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.’*

²⁸ But after I am raised, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.” ²⁹ Peter said to him, “Even if they all fall away, I will not!” ³⁰ Jesus said to him, “I tell you the truth, today – this very night – before a rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” ³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I must die with you, I will never deny you.” And all of them said the same thing.

Gethsemane

³² Then they went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ He took Peter, James, and John with him, and became very troubled and distressed. ³⁴ He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Remain here and stay alert.” ³⁵ Going a little farther, he threw himself to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour would pass from him. ³⁶ He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” ³⁷ Then he came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Couldn't you stay awake for one hour? ³⁸ Stay awake and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ³⁹ He went away again and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came again he found them sleeping; they could not keep their eyes open. And they did not know what to tell him. ⁴¹ He came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough of that! The hour has come. Look, the Son of

Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer is approaching!”

Betrayal and Arrest

⁴³ Right away, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived. With him came a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and experts in the law and elders. ⁴⁴ (Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him and lead him away under guard.”) ⁴⁵ When Judas arrived, he went up to Jesus immediately and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ Then they took hold of him and arrested him. ⁴⁷ One of the bystanders drew his sword and struck the high priest’s slave, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸ Jesus said to them, “Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like you would an outlaw? ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, yet you did not arrest me. But this has happened so that the scriptures would be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰ Then all the disciples left him and fled. ⁵¹ A young man was following him, wearing only a linen cloth. They tried to arrest him, ⁵² but he ran off naked, leaving his linen cloth behind.

Condemned by the Sanhedrin

⁵³ Then they led Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests and elders and experts in the law came together. ⁵⁴ And Peter had followed him from a distance, up to the high priest’s courtyard. He was sitting with the guards and warming himself by the fire. ⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find anything. ⁵⁶ Many gave false testimony against him, but their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷ Some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸ “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands and in three days build another not made with hands.’ ” ⁵⁹ Yet even on this point their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is this that they are testifying against you?” ⁶¹ But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest questioned him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” ⁶² “I am,” said Jesus, “and you will see *the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.*” ⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard the blasphemy! What is your verdict?” They all condemned him as deserving death. ⁶⁵ Then some began to spit on him, and to blindfold him, and

to strike him with their fists, saying, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him and beat him.

Peter's Denials

⁶⁶ Now while Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the high priest's slave girls came by. ⁶⁷ When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked directly at him and said, "You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus." ⁶⁸ But he denied it: "I don't even understand what you're talking about!" Then he went out to the gateway, and a rooster crowed. ⁶⁹ When the slave girl saw him, she began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." ⁷⁰ But he denied it again. A short time later the bystanders again said to Peter, "You must be one of them, because you are also a Galilean." ⁷¹ Then he began to curse, and he swore with an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about!" ⁷² Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him: "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

15

¹ Early in the morning, after forming a plan, the chief priests with the elders and the experts in the law and the whole Sanhedrin tied Jesus up, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ² So Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He replied, "You say so." ³ Then the chief priests began to accuse him repeatedly. ⁴ So Pilate asked him again, "Have you nothing to say? See how many charges they are bringing against you!" ⁵ But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Jesus and Barabbas

⁶ During the feast it was customary to release one prisoner to the people, whomever they requested. ⁷ A man named Barabbas was imprisoned with rebels who had committed murder during an insurrection. ⁸ Then the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to release a prisoner for them, as was his custom. ⁹ So Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to release the king of the Jews for you?" ¹⁰ (For he knew that the chief priests had handed him over because of envy.) ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas instead. ¹² So Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you want me to do with the one you call king of the Jews?" ¹³ They shouted back, "Crucify him!" ¹⁴ Pilate asked them, "Why? What has he done wrong?" But they shouted more insistently, "Crucify him!" ¹⁵ Because he wanted to satisfy the

crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them. Then, after he had Jesus flogged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Jesus is Mocked

¹⁶ So the soldiers led him into the palace (that is, the governor's residence) and called together the whole cohort. ¹⁷ They put a purple cloak on him and after braiding a crown of thorns, they put it on him. ¹⁸ They began to salute him: "Hail, king of the Jews!" ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Then they knelt down and paid homage to him. ²⁰ When they had finished mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

²¹ The soldiers forced a passerby to carry his cross, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country (he was the father of Alexander and Rufus). ²² They brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which is translated, "Place of the Skull"). ²³ They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ Then they crucified him and *divided his clothes, throwing dice* for them, to decide what each would take. ²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against him read, "The king of the Jews." ²⁷ And they crucified two outlaws with him, one on his right and one on his left. ^{28*} ²⁹ Those who passed by defamed him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who can destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself and come down from the cross!" ³¹ In the same way even the chief priests - together with the experts in the law - were mocking him among themselves: "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! ³² Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, that we may see and believe!" Those who were crucified with him also spoke abusively to him.

Jesus' Death

³³ Now when it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ Around three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" which means, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*" ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah!" ³⁶ Then someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Leave him alone! Let's see if Elijah will come to take him down!" ³⁷ But Jesus cried out with a loud voice and

* 15:28 [[EMPTY]]

breathed his last. ³⁸ And the temple curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹ Now when the centurion, who stood in front of him, saw how he died, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" ⁴⁰ There were also women, watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹ When he was in Galilee, they had followed him and given him support. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were there too.

Jesus' Burial

⁴² Now when evening had already come, since it was the day of preparation (that is, the day before the Sabbath), ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a highly regarded member of the council, who was himself looking forward to the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised that he was already dead. He called the centurion and asked him if he had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵ When Pilate was informed by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ After Joseph bought a linen cloth and took down the body, he wrapped it in the linen and placed it in a tomb cut out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone across the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body was placed.

16

¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought aromatic spices so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, at sunrise, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been asking each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled back. ⁵ Then as they went into the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has been raised! He is not here. Look, there is the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples, even Peter, that he is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you." ⁸ Then they went out and ran from the tomb, for terror and bewilderment had seized them. And they said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

The Longer Ending of Mark

⁹ [[Early on the first day of the week, after he arose, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had driven

out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went out and told those who were with him, while they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹ And when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

¹² After this he appeared in a different form to two of them while they were on their way to the country. ¹³ They went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. ¹⁴ Then he appeared to the eleven themselves, while they were eating, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen him resurrected. ¹⁵ He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ The one who believes and is baptized will be saved, but the one who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ These signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands, and whatever poison they drink will not harm them; they will place their hands on the sick and they will be well." ¹⁹ After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ They went out and proclaimed everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through the accompanying signs.]]

Luke

Explanatory Preface

¹ Now many have undertaken to compile an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ² like the accounts passed on to us by those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the word from the beginning. ³ So it seemed good to me as well, because I have followed all things carefully from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may know for certain the things you were taught.

Birth Announcement of John the Baptist

⁵ During the reign of Herod king of Judea, there lived a priest named Zechariah who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah, and he had a wife named Elizabeth, who was a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ They were both righteous in the sight of God, following all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. ⁷ But they did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both very old.

⁸ Now while Zechariah was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the holy place of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ Now the whole crowd of people were praying outside at the hour of the incense offering. ¹¹ An angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, appeared to him. ¹² And Zechariah, visibly shaken when he saw the angel, was seized with fear. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son; you will name him John. ¹⁴ Joy and gladness will come to you, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. ¹⁶ He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ And he will go as forerunner before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him."

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? For I am an old man, and my wife is old as well." ¹⁹ The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ And now, because you did not believe my words,

which will be fulfilled in their time, you will be silent, unable to speak, until the day these things take place.”

²¹ Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they began to wonder why he was delayed in the holy place.

²² When he came out, he was not able to speak to them. They realized that he had seen a vision in the holy place, because he was making signs to them and remained unable to speak.

²³ When his time of service was over, he went to his home.

²⁴ After some time his wife Elizabeth became pregnant, and for five months she kept herself in seclusion. She said, ²⁵ “This is what the Lord has done for me at the time when he has been gracious to me, to take away my disgrace among people.”

Birth Announcement of Jesus the Messiah

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth,

²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, a descendant of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ The

angel came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled by his words and began to wonder about the meaning of this greeting. ³⁰ So

the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God! ³¹ Listen: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will

be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³ He

will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?” ³⁵ The

angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God.

³⁶ “And look, your relative Elizabeth has also become pregnant with a son in her old age – although she was called barren, she is now in her sixth month! ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ So Mary said, “Yes, I am a servant of the Lord; let this happen to me according to your word.” Then

the angel departed from her.

Mary and Elizabeth

³⁹ In those days Mary got up and went hurriedly into the hill country, to a town of Judah, ⁴⁰ and entered Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was

filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² She exclaimed with a loud voice, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child in

your womb! ⁴³ And who am I that the mother of my Lord should come and visit me? ⁴⁴ For the instant the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that what was spoken to her by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

Mary's Hymn of Praise

⁴⁶ And Mary said,
“My soul exalts the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit has begun to rejoice in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ because he has looked upon the humble state of his servant.
For from now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹ because he who is mighty has done great things for me, and
holy is his name;
⁵⁰ from generation to generation he is merciful to those who
fear him.
⁵¹ He has demonstrated power with his arm; he has scattered
those whose pride wells up from the sheer arrogance
of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the mighty from their thrones, and
has lifted up those of lowly position;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and has sent the
rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy,
⁵⁵ as he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his
descendants forever.”
⁵⁶ So Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and
then returned to her home.

The Birth of John

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.
⁵⁹ On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they wanted to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰ But his mother replied, “No! He must be named John.” ⁶¹ They said to her, “But none of your relatives bears this name.” ⁶² So they made signs to the baby’s father, inquiring what he wanted to name his son. ⁶³ He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they were all amazed. ⁶⁴ Immediately Zechariah’s mouth was opened and his tongue released, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ All their neighbors were filled with fear, and throughout the entire hill country of Judea all these things were talked about. ⁶⁶ All who heard these things kept them in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the Lord’s hand was indeed with him.

Zechariah's Praise and Prediction

⁶⁷ Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied,

⁶⁸ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he has come to help and has redeemed his people.

⁶⁹ For he has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰ as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago,

⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷² He has done this to show mercy to our ancestors, and to remember his holy covenant –

⁷³ the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham. This oath grants

⁷⁴ that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, may serve him without fear,

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him for as long as we live.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High. For you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷ to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸ Because of our God's tender mercy the dawn will break upon us from on high

⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰ And the child kept growing and becoming strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he was revealed to Israel.

2

¹ Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus to register all the empire for taxes. ² This was the first registration, taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

³ Everyone went to his own town to be registered. ⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth because he was of the house and family line of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him, and who was expecting a child.

⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds' Visit

⁸ Now there were shepherds nearby living out in the field, keeping guard over their flock at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were absolutely terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! Listen carefully, for I proclaim to you good news that brings great joy to all the people: ¹¹ Today your Savior is born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a vast, heavenly army appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among people with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵ When the angels left them and went back to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, that the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they hurried off and located Mary and Joseph, and found the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they related what they had been told about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were astonished at what the shepherds said. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these words, pondering in her heart what they might mean. ²⁰ So the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; everything was just as they had been told.

²¹ At the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Jesus' Presentation at the Temple

²² Now when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "*Every firstborn male will be set apart to the Lord*"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is specified in the law of the Lord,

a pair | strong="G2201" of doves of doves

or | strong="G2228" two young pigeons.

The Prophecy of Simeon

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon who was righteous and devout, looking for the restoration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ So Simeon, directed by the Spirit, came into the temple courts, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary

according to the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and blessed God, saying,

²⁹ “Now, according to your word, Sovereign Lord, permit your servant to depart in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:

³² a light,

for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ So the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “Listen carefully: This child is destined to be the cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be rejected. ³⁵ Indeed, as a result of him the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul as well!”

The Testimony of Anna

³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old, having been married to her husband for seven years until his death. ³⁷ She had lived as a widow since then for eighty-four years. She never left the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment, she came up to them and began to give thanks to God and to speak about the child to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ So when Joseph and Mary had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

Jesus in the Temple

⁴¹ Now Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem every year for the feast of the Passover. ⁴² When he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³ But when the feast was over, as they were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but (because they assumed that he was in their group of travelers) they went a day’s journey. Then they began to look for him among their relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Jesus were astonished at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him, they were

overwhelmed. His mother said to him, “Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.” ⁴⁹ But he replied, “Why were you looking for me? Didn’t you know that I must be in my Father’s house?” ⁵⁰ Yet his parents did not understand the remark he made to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. But his mother kept all these things in her heart.

⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and with people.

3

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan River, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one shouting in the wilderness:

*‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make his paths straight*.*

⁵ *Every valley will be filled,
and every mountain and hill will be brought low,
and the crooked will be made straight,
and the rough ways will be made smooth,*

⁶ **and all humanity**

will see | strong="G3700" the salvation of God.’ ”

⁷ So John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You offspring of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore produce fruit that proves your repentance, and don’t begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that God can raise up children for Abraham from these stones! ⁹ Even now the ax is laid at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ So the crowds were asking him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹ John answered them, “The person who has two tunics must share with the person who has none, and the person who has food must do likewise.” ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He told them, “Collect no more than you are required

to.” ¹⁴ Then some soldiers also asked him, “And as for us – what should we do?” He told them, “Take money from no one by violence or by false accusation, and be content with your pay.”

¹⁵ While the people were filled with anticipation and they all wondered whether perhaps John could be the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered them all, “I baptize you with water, but one more powerful than I am is coming – I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clean out his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse, but the chaff he will burn up with inextinguishable fire.”

¹⁸ And in this way, with many other exhortations, John proclaimed good news to the people. ¹⁹ But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil deeds that he had done, ²⁰ Herod added this to them all: He locked up John in prison.

The Baptism of Jesus

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. And while he was praying, the heavens opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my one dear Son; in you I take great delight.”

The Genealogy of Jesus

²³ So Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years old. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, ²⁵ the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, ²⁷ the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹ the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, ³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, ³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg,

the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶ the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Kenan, ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

4

¹ Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he endured temptations from the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were completed, he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” ⁴ Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘ **Man does not live by bread alone.**’ ”

⁵ Then the devil led him up to a high place and showed him in a flash all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, “To you I will grant this whole realm – and the glory that goes along with it, for it has been relinquished to me, and I can give it to anyone I wish. ⁷ So then, if you will worship me, all this will be yours.” ⁸ Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘ **You are to worship the Lord your God and serve only him.**’ ”

⁹ Then the devil brought him to Jerusalem, had him stand on the highest point of the temple, and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written, ‘ **He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,**’ ¹¹ and ‘ **with their hands they will lift you up, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.**’ ” ¹² Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘ **You are not to put the Lord your God to the test.**’ ” ¹³ So when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him until a more opportune time.

The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee

¹⁴ Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and news about him spread throughout the surrounding countryside. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by all.

Rejection at Nazareth

¹⁶ Now Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ “ **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,**

because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and the regaining of sight to the blind,

to set free those who are oppressed,

19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to tell them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled even as you heard it being read."

²² All were speaking well of him, and were amazed at the gracious words coming out of his mouth. They said, "Isn't this Joseph's son?" ²³ Jesus said to them, "No doubt you will quote to me the proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself!' and say, 'What we have heard that you did in Capernaum, do here in your hometown too.' "

²⁴ And he added, "I tell you the truth, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's days, when the sky was shut up three and a half years, and there was a great famine over all the land. ²⁶ Yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to a woman who was a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, yet none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

²⁸ When they heard this, all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹ They got up, forced him out of the town, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the crowd and went on his way.

Ministry in Capernaum

³¹ So he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he began to teach the people. ³² They were amazed at his teaching, because he spoke with authority.

³³ Now in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ "Ha! Leave us alone, Jesus the Nazarene! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God."

³⁵ But Jesus rebuked him: "Silence! Come out of him!" Then, after the demon threw the man down in their midst, he came out of him without hurting him. ³⁶ They were all amazed and began to say to one another, "What's happening here? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" ³⁷ So the news about him spread into all areas of the region.

³⁸ After Jesus left the synagogue, he entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. ³⁹ So he stood over her, commanded the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began to serve them.

⁴⁰ As the sun was setting, all those who had any relatives sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus. He placed his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ Demons also came out of many, crying out, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them, and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

⁴² The next morning Jesus departed and went to a deserted place. Yet the crowds were seeking him, and they came to him and tried to keep him from leaving them. ⁴³ But Jesus said to them, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns too, for that is what I was sent to do." ⁴⁴ So he continued to preach in the synagogues of Judea.

5

¹ Now Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing around him to hear the word of God. ² He saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and lower your nets for a catch." ⁵ Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing! But at your word I will lower the nets." ⁶ When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets started to tear. ⁷ So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they were about to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For Peter and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, Zebedee's sons, who were Simon's business partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." ¹¹ So when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Healing a Leper

¹² While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came to him who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he bowed down with his face to the ground and begged him,

“Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” ¹³ So he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing. Be clean!” And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴ Then he ordered the man to tell no one, but commanded him, “Go and show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” ¹⁵ But the news about him spread even more, and large crowds were gathering together to hear him and to be healed of their illnesses. ¹⁶ Yet Jesus himself frequently withdrew to the wilderness and prayed.

Healing and Forgiving a Paralytic

¹⁷ Now on one of those days, while he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting nearby (who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem), and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. ¹⁸ Just then some men showed up, carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They were trying to bring him in and place him before Jesus. ¹⁹ But since they found no way to carry him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down on the stretcher through the roof tiles right in front of Jesus. ²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.” ²¹ Then the experts in the law and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, “Who is this man who is uttering blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ²² When Jesus perceived their hostile thoughts, he said to them, “Why are you raising objections within yourselves? ²³ Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk’? ²⁴ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” – he said to the paralyzed man – “I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher and go home.” ²⁵ Immediately he stood up before them, picked up the stretcher he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ Then astonishment seized them all, and they glorified God. They were filled with awe, saying, “We have seen incredible things today.”

The Call of Levi; Eating with Sinners

²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax booth. “Follow me,” he said to him. ²⁸ And he got up and followed him, leaving everything behind.

²⁹ Then Levi gave a great banquet in his house for Jesus, and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting at the table with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and their experts in the law complained to his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat

and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ Jesus answered them, "Those who are well don't need a physician, but those who are sick do. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The Superiority of the New

³³ Then they said to him, "John's disciples frequently fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours continue to eat and drink." ³⁴ So Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? ³⁵ But those days are coming, and when the bridegroom is taken from them, at that time they will fast." ³⁶ He also told them a parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old garment. If he does, he will have torn the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. ³⁸ Instead new wine must be poured into new wineskins. ³⁹ No one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is good enough.' "

6

¹ Jesus was going through the grain fields on a Sabbath, and his disciples picked some heads of wheat, rubbed them in their hands, and ate them. ² But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is against the law on the Sabbath?" ³ Jesus answered them, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry - ⁴ how he entered the house of God, took and ate the sacred bread, which is not lawful for any to eat but the priests alone, and gave it to his companions?" ⁵ Then he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Healing a Withered Hand

⁶ On another Sabbath, Jesus entered the synagogue and was teaching. Now a man was there whose right hand was withered. ⁷ The experts in the law and the Pharisees watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they could find a reason to accuse him. ⁸ But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Get up and stand here." So he rose and stood there. ⁹ Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath or to do evil, to save a life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰ After looking around at them all, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man did so, and his hand was restored. ¹¹ But

they were filled with mindless rage and began debating with one another what they would do to Jesus.

Choosing the Twelve Apostles

¹² Now it was during this time that Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent all night in prayer to God. ¹³ When morning came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: ¹⁴ Simon (whom he named Peter), and his brother Andrew; and James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶ Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

The Sermon on the Plain

¹⁷ Then he came down with them and stood on a level place. And a large number of his disciples had gathered along with a vast multitude from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, They came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, ¹⁸ and those who suffered from unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ The whole crowd was trying to touch him, because power was coming out from him and healing them all.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God belongs to you.

²¹ “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you and insult you and reject you as evil on account of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day, and jump for joy, because your reward is great in heaven. For their ancestors did the same things to the prophets.

²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your comfort already.

²⁵ “Woe to you who are well satisfied with food now, for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ “Woe to you when all people speak well of you, for their ancestors did the same things to the false prophets.

²⁷ “But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ To the person who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other as well, and from the person who takes away your coat, do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your possessions back from the person who takes them away.

³¹ Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you hope to be repaid, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, so that they may be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to ungrateful and evil people. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Do Not Judge Others

³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be poured into your lap. For the measure you use will be the measure you receive.”

³⁹ He also told them a parable: “Someone who is blind cannot lead another who is blind, can he? Won’t they both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰ A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹ Why do you see the speck in your brother’s eye, but fail to see the beam of wood in your own? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck from your eye,’ while you yourself don’t see the beam in your own? You hypocrite! First remove the beam from your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

⁴³ “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, ⁴⁴ for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from brambles. ⁴⁵ The good person out of the good treasury of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasury produces evil, for his mouth speaks from what fills his heart.

⁴⁶ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and don’t do what I tell you?

⁴⁷ “Everyone who comes to me and listens to my words and puts them into practice – I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep, and laid the foundation on bedrock. When a flood came, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹ But the person who hears and does not

put my words into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against that house, it collapsed immediately, and was utterly destroyed!”

7

¹ After Jesus had finished teaching all this to the people, he entered Capernaum. ² A centurion there had a slave who was highly regarded, but who was sick and at the point of death. ³ When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴ When they came to Jesus, they urged him earnestly, “He is worthy to have you do this for him, ⁵ because he loves our nation, and even built our synagogue.” ⁶ So Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, “Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. ⁷ That is why I did not presume to come to you. Instead, say the word, and my servant must be healed. ⁸ For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” ⁹ When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him. He turned and said to the crowd that followed him, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith!” ¹⁰ So when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave well.

Raising a Widow’s Son

¹¹ Soon afterward Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹² As he approached the town gate, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother (who was a widow), and a large crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, “Do not weep.” ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and those who carried it stood still. He said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!” ¹⁵ So the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they began to glorify God, saying, “A great prophet has appeared among us!” and “God has come to help his people!” ¹⁷ This report about Jesus circulated throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

Jesus and John the Baptist

¹⁸ John’s disciples informed him about all these things. So John called two of his disciples ¹⁹ and sent them to Jesus to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for

another?" ²⁰ When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?'" ²¹ At that very time Jesus cured many people of diseases, sicknesses, and evil spirits, and granted sight to many who were blind. ²² So he answered them, "Go tell John what you have seen and heard: The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news proclaimed to them. ²³ Blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

²⁴ When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵ What did you go out to see? A man dressed in fancy clothes? Look, those who wear fancy clothes and live in luxury are in kings' courts! ²⁶ What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is the one about whom it is written, '*Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,*

who | strong="G3739" will prepare your way before you.' ²⁸ I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he is." ²⁹ (Now all the people who heard this, even the tax collectors, acknowledged God's justice, because they had been baptized with John's baptism. ³⁰ However, the Pharisees and the experts in religious law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)

³¹ "To what then should I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to one another, 'We played the flute for you, yet you did not dance; we wailed in mourning, yet you did not weep.'

³³ For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!' ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵ But wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

Jesus' Anointing

³⁶ Now one of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. ³⁷ Then when a woman of that town, who was a sinner, learned that Jesus was dining at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfumed oil. ³⁸ As she stood behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. She wiped them with her hair, kissed them,

and anointed them with the perfumed oil. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner.” ⁴⁰ So Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” He replied, “Say it, Teacher.” ⁴¹ “A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed him five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay, he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?” ⁴³ Simon answered, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled.” Jesus said to him, “You have judged rightly.” ⁴⁴ Then, turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house. You gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss of greeting, but from the time I entered she has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfumed oil. ⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which were many, are forgiven, thus she loved much; but the one who is forgiven little loves little.” ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” ⁴⁹ But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” ⁵⁰ He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

8

¹ Some time afterward he went on through towns and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, ² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and disabilities: Mary (called Magdalene), from whom seven demons had gone out, ³ and Joanna the wife of Cuza (Herod’s household manager), Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their own resources.

The Parable of the Sower

⁴ While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from one town after another, he spoke to them in a parable: ⁵ “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled on, and the wild birds devoured it. ⁶ Other seed fell on rock, and when it came up, it withered because it had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among the thorns, and they grew up with it and choked it. ⁸ But other seed fell on good soil and grew, and it produced a hundred times as much grain.” As he said this, he called out, “The one who has ears to hear had better listen!”

⁹ Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, “You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that **although they see they may not see, and although they hear they may not understand.**”

¹¹ “Now the parable means this: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those along the path are the ones who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in a time of testing fall away. ¹⁴ As for the seed that fell among thorns, these are the ones who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the worries and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. ¹⁵ But as for the seed that landed on good soil, these are the ones who, after hearing the word, cling to it with an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with steadfast endurance.”

Showing the Light

¹⁶ “No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand so that those who come in can see the light. ¹⁷ For nothing is hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing concealed that will not be made known and brought to light. ¹⁸ So listen carefully, for whoever has will be given more, but whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him.”

Jesus' True Family

¹⁹ Now Jesus' mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not get near him because of the crowd. ²⁰ So he was told, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.” ²¹ But he replied to them, “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.”

Stilling of a Storm

²² One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples and said to them, “Let's go across to the other side of the lake.” So they set out, ²³ and as they sailed he fell asleep. Now a violent windstorm came down on the lake, and the boat started filling up with water, and they were in danger. ²⁴ They came and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we are about to die!” So he got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they died down, and it was calm. ²⁵ Then he said to them, “Where is your faith?” But they were afraid and amazed, saying to one

another, "Who then is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him!"

Healing of a Demoniac

²⁶ So they sailed over to the region of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ As Jesus stepped ashore, a certain man from the town met him who was possessed by demons. For a long time this man had worn no clothes and had not lived in a house, but among the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before him, and shouted with a loud voice, "Leave me alone, Jesus, Son of the Most High God! I beg you, do not torment me!" ²⁹ For Jesus had started commanding the evil spirit to come out of the man. (For it had seized him many times, so he would be bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard. But he would break the restraints and be driven by the demon into deserted places.) ³⁰ Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. ³¹ And they began to beg him not to order them to depart into the abyss. ³² Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and the demonic spirits begged Jesus to let them go into them. He gave them permission. ³³ So the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd of pigs rushed down the steep slope into the lake and drowned. ³⁴ When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they ran off and spread the news in the town and countryside. ³⁵ So the people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus. They found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told them how the man who had been demon-possessed had been healed. ³⁷ Then all the people of the Gerasenes and the surrounding region asked Jesus to leave them alone, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and left. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your home, and declare what God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole town what Jesus had done for him.

Restoration and Healing

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, because they were all waiting for him. ⁴¹ Then a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue, came up. Falling at Jesus' feet, he pleaded with him to come to his house, ⁴² because he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds pressed around him. ⁴³ Now a woman was there who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years but could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴ She came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak, and at once the bleeding stopped. ⁴⁵ Then Jesus asked, "Who was it who touched me?" When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds are surrounding you and pressing against you!" ⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I know that power has gone out from me." ⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she could not escape notice, she came trembling and fell down before him. In the presence of all the people, she explained why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸ Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

⁴⁹ While he was still speaking, someone from the synagogue ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer." ⁵⁰ But when Jesus heard this, he told him, "Do not be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed." ⁵¹ Now when he came to the house, Jesus did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother. ⁵² Now they were all wailing and mourning for her, but he said, "Stop your weeping; she is not dead but asleep." ⁵³ And they began making fun of him, because they knew that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But Jesus gently took her by the hand and said, "Child, get up." ⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and she got up immediately. Then he told them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

9

¹ After Jesus called the twelve together, he gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³ He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey – no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, and do not take an extra tunic. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave the area. ⁵ Wherever they do not receive you, as you leave that town, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." ⁶ Then they departed and went throughout the villages, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Herod's Confusion about Jesus

⁷ Now Herod the tetrarch heard about everything that was happening, and he was thoroughly perplexed, because some people were saying that John had been raised from the dead,

⁸ while others were saying that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had risen. ⁹ Herod said, "I had John beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?" So Herod wanted to learn about Jesus.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

¹⁰ When the apostles returned, they told Jesus everything they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew privately to a town called Bethsaida. ¹¹ But when the crowds found out, they followed him. He welcomed them, spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and cured those who needed healing. ¹² Now the day began to draw to a close, so the twelve came and said to Jesus, "Send the crowd away, so they can go into the surrounding villages and countryside and find lodging and food, because we are in an isolated place." ¹³ But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They replied, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish – unless we go and buy food for all these people." ¹⁴ (Now about five thousand men were there.) Then he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." ¹⁵ So they did as Jesus directed, and the people all sat down.

¹⁶ Then he took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven he gave thanks and broke them. He gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and what was left over was picked up – twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Peter's Confession

¹⁸ Once when Jesus was praying by himself, and his disciples were nearby, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" ¹⁹ They answered, "John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others that one of the prophets of long ago has risen." ²⁰ Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ of God." ²¹ But he forcefully commanded them not to tell this to anyone, ²² saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

A Call to Discipleship

²³ Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ For what does it benefit a person if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of me and my

words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷ But I tell you most certainly, there are some standing here who will not experience death before they see the kingdom of God.”

The Transfiguration

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings, Jesus took with him Peter, John, and James, and went up the mountain to pray. ²⁹ As he was praying, the appearance of his face was transformed, and his clothes became very bright, a brilliant white. ³⁰ Then two men, Moses and Elijah, began talking with him. ³¹ They appeared in glorious splendor and spoke about his departure that he was about to carry out at Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and those with him were quite sleepy, but as they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. ³³ Then as the men were starting to leave, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three shelters, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah” – not knowing what he was saying. ³⁴ As he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ Then a voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him!” ³⁶ After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. So they kept silent and told no one at that time anything of what they had seen.

Healing a Boy with an Unclean Spirit

³⁷ Now on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. ³⁸ Then a man from the crowd cried out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son – he is my only child! ³⁹ A spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions and causes him to foam at the mouth. It hardly ever leaves him alone, torturing him severely. ⁴⁰ I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so.” ⁴¹ Jesus answered, “You unbelieving and perverse generation! How much longer must I be with you and endure you? Bring your son here.” ⁴² As the boy was approaching, the demon threw him to the ground and shook him with convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. ⁴³ Then they were all astonished at the mighty power of God.

Another Prediction of Jesus' Suffering

But while the entire crowd was amazed at everything Jesus was doing, he said to his disciples, ⁴⁴ “Take these words to heart, for the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the

hands of men.”⁴⁵ But they did not understand this statement; its meaning had been concealed from them, so that they could not grasp it. Yet they were afraid to ask him about this statement.

Concerning the Greatest

⁴⁶ Now an argument started among the disciples as to which of them might be the greatest. ⁴⁷ But when Jesus discerned their innermost thoughts, he took a child, had him stand by his side, ⁴⁸ and said to them, “Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me, for the one who is least among you all is the one who is great.”

On the Right Side

⁴⁹ John answered, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he is not a disciple along with us.” ⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, “Do not stop him, for whoever is not against you is for you.”

Rejection in Samaria

⁵¹ Now when the days drew near for him to be taken up, Jesus set out resolutely to go to Jerusalem. ⁵² He sent messengers on ahead of him. As they went along, they entered a Samaritan village to make things ready in advance for him, ⁵³ but the villagers refused to welcome him, because he was determined to go to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ Now when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us *to call fire to come down from heaven and consume them?*” ⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and rebuked them, ⁵⁶ and they went on to another village.

Challenging Professed Followers

⁵⁷ As they were walking along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” ⁵⁸ Jesus said to him, “Foxes have dens and the birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” ⁵⁹ Jesus said to another, “Follow me.” But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” ⁶⁰ But Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” ⁶¹ Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to my family.” ⁶² Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

10

¹ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him two by two into every town and place

where he himself was about to go. ² He said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest. ³ Go! I am sending you out like lambs surrounded by wolves. ⁴ Do not carry a money bag, a traveler’s bag, or sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵ Whenever you enter a house, first say, ‘May peace be on this house!’ ⁶ And if a peace-loving person is there, your peace will remain on him, but if not, it will return to you. ⁷ Stay in that same house, eating and drinking what they give you, for the worker deserves his pay. Do not move around from house to house. ⁸ Whenever you enter a town and the people welcome you, eat what is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick in that town and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come upon you!’ ¹⁰ But whenever you enter a town and the people do not welcome you, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this: The kingdom of God has come.’ ¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town!

¹³ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you! ¹⁵ And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be thrown down to Hades!

¹⁶ “The one who listens to you listens to me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects the one who sent me.”

¹⁷ Then the seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name!” ¹⁸ So he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Look, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions and on the full force of the enemy, and nothing will hurt you. ²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names stand written in heaven.”

²¹ On that same occasion Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your gracious will. ²² All things have been given to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to reveal him.”

²³ Then Jesus turned to his disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! ²⁴ For I tell you

that many prophets and kings longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.”

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵ Now an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
²⁶ He said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you understand it?”
²⁷ The expert answered, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.*”
²⁸ Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”

²⁹ But the expert, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”
³⁰ Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him up, and went off, leaving him half dead.
³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, but when he saw the injured man he passed by on the other side.
³² So too a Levite, when he came up to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.
³³ But a Samaritan who was traveling came to where the injured man was, and when he saw him, he felt compassion for him.
³⁴ He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way.’
³⁶ Which of these three do you think became a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”
³⁷ The expert in religious law said, “The one who showed mercy to him.” So Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”

Jesus and Martha

³⁸ Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him as a guest.
³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he said.
⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with all the preparations she had to make, so she came up to him and said, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do all the work alone? Tell her to help me.”
⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things,
⁴² but one thing is needed. Mary has chosen the best part; it will not be taken away from her.”

11

¹ Now Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” ² So he said to them, “When you pray, say:

Father, may your name be honored;
may your kingdom come.

³ Give us each day our daily bread,

⁴ and forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

And do not lead us into temptation.”

⁵ Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶ because a friend of mine has stopped here while on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him.’ ⁷ Then he will reply from inside, ‘Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.’ ⁸ I tell you, even though the man inside will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the first man’s sheer persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

⁹ “So I tell you: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹ What father among you, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, although you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Jesus and Beelzebul

¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute began to speak, and the crowds were amazed. ¹⁵ But some of them said, “By the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, he casts out demons.” ¹⁶ Others, to test him, began asking for a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But Jesus, realizing their thoughts, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ So if Satan too is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? I ask you this because you claim that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ Now if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has already overtaken you. ²¹ When a strong man, fully armed,

guards his own palace, his possessions are safe. ²² But when a stronger man attacks and conquers him, he takes away the first man's armor on which the man relied and divides up his plunder. ²³ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

Response to Jesus' Work

²⁴ "When an unclean spirit goes out of a person, it passes through waterless places looking for rest but not finding any. Then it says, 'I will return to the home I left.' ²⁵ When it returns, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there, so the last state of that person is worse than the first."

²⁷ As he said these things, a woman in the crowd spoke out to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts at which you nursed!" ²⁸ But he replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"

The Sign of Jonah

²⁹ As the crowds were increasing, Jesus began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it looks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation. ³¹ The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon – and now, something greater than Solomon is here! ³² The people of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented when Jonah preached to them – and now, something greater than Jonah is here!

Internal Light

³³ "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a hidden place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who come in can see the light. ³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is diseased, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵ Therefore see to it that the light in you is not darkness. ³⁶ If then your whole body is full of light, with no part in the dark, it will be as full of light as when the light of a lamp shines on you."

Rebuking the Pharisees and Experts in the Law

³⁷ As he spoke, a Pharisee invited Jesus to have a meal with him, so he went in and took his place at the table. ³⁸ The

Pharisee was astonished when he saw that Jesus did not first wash his hands before the meal. ³⁹ But the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰ You fools! Didn’t the one who made the outside make the inside as well? ⁴¹ But give from your heart to those in need, and then everything will be clean for you.

⁴² “But woe to you Pharisees! You give a tenth of your mint, rue, and every herb, yet you neglect justice and love for God! But you should have done these things without neglecting the others. ⁴³ Woe to you Pharisees! You love the best seats in the synagogues and elaborate greetings in the marketplaces! ⁴⁴ Woe to you! You are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without realizing it!”

⁴⁵ One of the experts in religious law answered him, “Teacher, when you say these things you insult us too.” ⁴⁶ But Jesus replied, “Woe to you experts in religious law as well! You load people down with burdens difficult to bear, yet you yourselves refuse to touch the burdens with even one of your fingers! ⁴⁷ Woe to you! You build the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors killed. ⁴⁸ So you testify that you approve of the deeds of your ancestors, because they killed the prophets and you build their tombs! ⁴⁹ For this reason also the wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’ ⁵⁰ so that this generation may be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against this generation. ⁵² Woe to you experts in religious law! You have taken away the key to knowledge! You did not go in yourselves, and you hindered those who were going in.”

⁵³ When he went out from there, the experts in the law and the Pharisees began to oppose him bitterly, and to ask him hostile questions about many things, ⁵⁴ plotting against him, to catch him in something he might say.

12

Fear God, Not People

¹ Meanwhile, when many thousands of the crowd had gathered so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ² Nothing is hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing is secret

that will not be made known. ³ So then whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.

⁴ “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more they can do. ⁵ But I will warn you whom you should fear: Fear the one who, after the killing, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! ⁶ Aren’t five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷ In fact, even the hairs on your head are all numbered. Do not be afraid; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

⁸ “I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before God’s angels. ⁹ But the one who denies me before men will be denied before God’s angels. ¹⁰ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the person who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. ¹¹ But when they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you should make your defense or what you should say, ¹² for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what you must say.”

The Parable of the Rich Landowner

¹³ Then someone from the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” ¹⁴ But Jesus said to him, “Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator between you two?” ¹⁵ Then he said to them, “Watch out and guard yourself from all types of greed, because one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” ¹⁶ He then told them a parable: “The land of a certain rich man produced an abundant crop, ¹⁷ so he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ ¹⁸ Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to myself, “You have plenty of goods stored up for many years; relax, eat, drink, celebrate!”’ ²⁰ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded back from you, but who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ ²¹ So it is with the one who stores up riches for himself, but is not rich toward God.”

Exhortation Not to Worry

²² Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. ²³ For there is more to life than

food, and more to the body than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds! ²⁵ And which of you by worrying can add an hour to his life? ²⁶ So if you cannot do such a very little thing as this, why do you worry about the rest? ²⁷ Consider how the flowers grow; they do not work or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these! ²⁸ And if this is how God clothes the wild grass, which is here today and tomorrow is tossed into the fire to heat the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you people of little faith! ²⁹ So do not be overly concerned about what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not worry about such things. ³⁰ For all the nations of the world pursue these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹ Instead, pursue his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

³² “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father is well pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide yourselves purses that do not wear out – a treasure in heaven that never decreases, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Call to Faithful Stewardship

³⁵ “Get dressed for service and keep your lamps burning; ³⁶ be like people waiting for their master to come back from the wedding celebration, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷ Blessed are those slaves whom their master finds alert when he returns! I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, have them take their place at the table, and will come and wait on them! ³⁸ Even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night and finds them alert, blessed are those slaves! ³⁹ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

⁴¹ Then Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?” ⁴² The Lord replied, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his household servants, to give them their allowance of food at the proper time? ⁴³ Blessed is that slave whom his master finds at work when he returns. ⁴⁴ I tell you the truth, the master will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁵ But if that slave should say to himself, ‘My master is delayed in returning,’ and he begins to beat the other slaves, both men

and women, and to eat, drink, and get drunk, ⁴⁶ then the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not foresee, and will cut him in two, and assign him a place with the unfaithful. ⁴⁷ That servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or do what his master asked will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know his master's will and did things worthy of punishment will receive a light beating. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be asked.

Not Peace, but Division

⁴⁹ "I have come to bring fire on the earth – and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰ I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is finished! ⁵¹ Do you think I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵² For from now on there will be five in one household divided, three against two and two against three. ⁵³ They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

Reading the Signs

⁵⁴ Jesus also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, 'A rainstorm is coming,' and it does. ⁵⁵ And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and there is. ⁵⁶ You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky, but how can you not know how to interpret the present time?"

Clear the Debts

⁵⁷ "And why don't you judge for yourselves what is right? ⁵⁸ As you are going with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle with him on the way, so that he will not drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. ⁵⁹ I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the very last cent!"

13

¹ Now there were some present on that occasion who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² He answered them, "Do you think these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered these things? ³ No, I tell you! But unless

you repent, you will all perish as well! ⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them, do you think they were worse offenders than all the others who live in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you! But unless you repent you will all perish as well!”

Warning to Israel to Bear Fruit

⁶ Then Jesus told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the worker who tended the vineyard, ‘For three years now, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and each time I inspect it I find none. Cut it down! Why should it continue to deplete the soil?’ ⁸ But the worker answered him, ‘Sir, leave it alone this year too, until I dig around it and put fertilizer on it. ⁹ Then if it bears fruit next year, very well, but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

Healing on the Sabbath

¹⁰ Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath, ¹¹ and a woman was there who had been disabled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten herself up completely. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her to him and said, “Woman, you are freed from your infirmity.” ¹³ Then he placed his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. ¹⁴ But the president of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the crowd, “There are six days on which work should be done! So come and be healed on those days, and not on the Sabbath day.” ¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from its stall, and lead it to water? ¹⁶ Then shouldn’t this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be released from this imprisonment on the Sabbath day?” ¹⁷ When he said this all his adversaries were humiliated, but the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things he was doing.

On the Kingdom of God

¹⁸ Thus Jesus asked, “What is the kingdom of God like? To what should I compare it? ¹⁹ It is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the wild birds nested in its branches.”

²⁰ Again he said, “To what should I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹ It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the dough had risen.”

The Narrow Door

²² Then Jesus traveled throughout towns and villages, teaching and making his way toward Jerusalem. ²³ Someone asked him, “Lord, will only a few be saved?” So he said to them, ²⁴ “Exert every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. ²⁵ Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, then you will stand outside and start to knock on the door and beg him, ‘Lord, let us in!’ But he will answer you, ‘I don’t know where you come from.’ ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’ ²⁷ But he will reply, ‘I don’t know where you come from! Go away from me, all you evildoers!’ ²⁸ There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹ Then people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and take their places at the banquet table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ But indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

Going to Jerusalem

³¹ At that time, some Pharisees came up and said to Jesus, “Get away from here, because Herod wants to kill you.” ³² But he said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Look, I am casting out demons and performing healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will complete my work. ³³ Nevertheless I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the next day, because it is impossible that a prophet should be killed outside Jerusalem.’ ³⁴ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would have none of it! ³⁵ Look, your house is forsaken! And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘*Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*’ ”

14

¹ Now one Sabbath when Jesus went to dine at the house of a leader of the Pharisees, they were watching him closely. ² There right in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. ³ So Jesus asked the experts in religious law and the Pharisees, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?” ⁴ But they remained silent. So Jesus took hold of the man, healed him, and sent him away. ⁵ Then he said to them, “Which of you, if you have a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?” ⁶ But they could not reply to this.

On Seeking Seats of Honor

⁷ Then when Jesus noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. He said to them, ⁸ “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, because a person more distinguished than you may have been invited by your host. ⁹ So the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this man your place.’ Then, ashamed, you will begin to move to the least important place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and take the least important place, so that when your host approaches he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up here to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who share the meal with you. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹² He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you host a dinner or a banquet, don’t invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors so you can be invited by them in return and get repaid. ¹³ But when you host an elaborate meal, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ Then you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The Parable of the Great Banquet

¹⁵ When one of those at the meal with Jesus heard this, he said to him, “Blessed is everyone who will feast in the kingdom of God!” ¹⁶ But Jesus said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many guests. ¹⁷ At the time for the banquet he sent his slave to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, because everything is now ready.’ ¹⁸ But one after another they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.’ ¹⁹ Another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going out to examine them. Please excuse me.’ ²⁰ Another said, ‘I just got married, and I cannot come.’ ²¹ So the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the master of the household was furious and said to his slave, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and alleys of the city, and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ ²² Then the slave said, ‘Sir, what you instructed has been done, and there is still room.’ ²³ So the master said to his slave, ‘Go out to the highways and country roads and urge people to come in, so that my house will be filled. ²⁴ For I tell you, not one of those individuals who were invited will taste my banquet!’ ”

Counting the Cost

²⁵ Now large crowds were accompanying Jesus, and turning to them he said, ²⁶ “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn’t sit down first and compute the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish the tower, all who see it will begin to make fun of him. ³⁰ They will say, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish!’ ³¹ Or what king, going out to confront another king in battle, will not sit down first and determine whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot succeed, he will send a representative while the other is still a long way off and ask for terms of peace. ³³ In the same way therefore not one of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his own possessions.

³⁴ “Salt is good, but if salt loses its flavor, how can its flavor be restored? ³⁵ It is of no value for the soil or for the manure pile; it is to be thrown out. The one who has ears to hear had better listen!”

15

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming to hear him. ² But the Pharisees and the experts in the law were complaining, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, if he has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, would not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go look for the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ Then when he has found it, he places it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ Returning home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, telling them, ‘Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to repent.

⁸ “Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search thoroughly until she finds it? ⁹ Then when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of God’s angels over one sinner who repents.”

The Parable of the Compassionate Father

¹¹ Then Jesus said, “A man had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. ¹³ After a few days, the younger son gathered together all he had and left on a journey to a distant country, and there he squandered his wealth with a wild lifestyle. ¹⁴ Then after he had spent everything, a severe famine took place in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and worked for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He was longing to eat the carob pods the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have food enough to spare, but here I am dying from hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father and say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired workers.”’ ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way from home his father saw him, and his heart went out to him; he ran and hugged his son and kissed him. ²¹ Then his son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Hurry! Bring the best robe, and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it! Let us eat and celebrate, ²⁴ because this son of mine was dead, and is alive again – he was lost and is found!’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his older son was in the field. As he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the slaves and asked what was happening. ²⁷ The slave replied, ‘Your brother has returned, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he got his son back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ But the older son became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and appealed to him, ²⁹ but he answered his father, ‘Look! These many years I have worked like a slave for you, and I never disobeyed your commands. Yet you never gave me even a goat so that I could celebrate with my friends! ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and everything that belongs to me is yours. ³² It was appropriate to celebrate and be glad, for your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.’”

16

¹ Jesus also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who was informed of accusations that his manager was wasting his assets. ² So he called the manager in and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Turn in the account of your administration, because you can no longer be my manager.’ ³ Then the manager said to himself, ‘What should I do, since my master is taking my position away from me? I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m too ashamed to beg. ⁴ I know what to do so that when I am put out of management, people will welcome me into their homes.’ ⁵ So he contacted his master’s debtors one by one. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ The man replied, ‘A hundred measures of olive oil.’ The manager said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ The second man replied, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ The manager said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸ The master commended the dishonest manager because he acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their contemporaries than the people of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by how you use worldly wealth, so that when it runs out you will be welcomed into the eternal homes.

¹⁰ “The one who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and the one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. ¹¹ If then you haven’t been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will entrust you with the true riches? ¹² And if you haven’t been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you your own? ¹³ No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

More Warnings about the Pharisees

¹⁴ The Pharisees (who loved money) heard all this and ridiculed him. ¹⁵ But Jesus said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in men’s eyes, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly prized among men is utterly detestable in God’s sight.

¹⁶ “The law and the prophets were in force until John; since then, the good news of the kingdom of God has been proclaimed, and everyone is urged to enter it. ¹⁷ But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tiny stroke of a letter in the law to become void.

18 “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery, and the one who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19 “There was a rich man who dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 But at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus whose body was covered with sores, 21 who longed to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. In addition, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 “Now the poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And in hell, as he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far off with Lazarus at his side. 24 So he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in this fire.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus likewise bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in anguish. 26 Besides all this, a great chasm has been fixed between us, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ 27 So the rich man said, ‘Then I beg you, father – send Lazarus to my father’s house 28 (for I have five brothers) to warn them so that they don’t come into this place of torment.’ 29 But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they must respond to them.’ 30 Then the rich man said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ 31 He replied to him, ‘If they do not respond to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’ ”

17

1 Jesus said to his disciples, “Stumbling blocks are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! 2 It would be better for him to have a millstone tied around his neck and be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. 3 Watch yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. 4 Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to you saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

5 The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” 6 So the Lord replied, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this black mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled out by the roots and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

7 “Would any one of you say to your slave who comes in from the field after plowing or shepherding sheep, ‘Come at

once and sit down for a meal'? ⁸ Won't the master instead say to him, 'Get my dinner ready, and make yourself ready to serve me while I eat and drink. Then you may eat and drink'? ⁹ He won't thank the slave because he did what he was told, will he? ¹⁰ So you too, when you have done everything you were commanded to do, should say, 'We are slaves undeserving of special praise; we have only done what was our duty.' "

The Grateful Leper

¹¹ Now on the way to Jerusalem, Jesus was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was entering a village, ten men with leprosy met him. They stood at a distance, ¹³ raised their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." ¹⁴ When he saw them he said, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went along, they were cleansed. ¹⁵ Then one of them, when he saw he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. ¹⁶ He fell with his face to the ground at Jesus' feet and thanked him. (Now he was a Samaritan.) ¹⁷ Then Jesus said, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Was no one found to turn back and give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then he said to the man, "Get up and go your way. Your faith has made you well."

The Coming of the Kingdom

²⁰ Now at one point the Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God was coming, so he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, ²¹ nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is in your midst."

The Coming of the Son of Man

²² Then he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. ²³ Then people will say to you, 'Look, there he is!' or 'Look, here he is!' Do not go out or chase after them. ²⁴ For just like the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. ²⁵ But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. ²⁶ Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ People were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage - right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot, people were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; ²⁹ but on the day Lot went

out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. ³⁰ It will be the same on the day the Son of Man is revealed. ³¹ On that day, anyone who is on the roof, with his goods in the house, must not come down to take them away, and likewise the person in the field must not turn back. ³² Remember Lot's wife! ³³ Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it. ³⁴ I tell you, in that night there will be two people in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. ³⁵ There will be two women grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left." ³⁶*

³⁷ Then the disciples said to him, "Where, Lord?" He replied to them, "Where the dead body is, there the vultures will gather."

18

¹ Then Jesus told them a parable to show them they should always pray and not lose heart. ² He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected people. ³ There was also a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' ⁴ For a while he refused, but later on he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor have regard for people, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps on bothering me, I will give her justice, or in the end she will wear me out by her unending pleas.'" ⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge says! ⁷ Won't God give justice to his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay long to help them? ⁸ I tell you, he will give them justice speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector

⁹ Jesus also told this parable to some who were confident that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else. ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself like this: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: extortionists, unrighteous people, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I get.' ¹³ The tax collector, however, stood far off and would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, be merciful to me, sinner that I am!' ¹⁴ I tell you that this man went down to his home justified rather than the Pharisee. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

* 17:36 [[EMPTY]]

Jesus and Little Children

¹⁵ Now people were even bringing their babies to him for him to touch. But when the disciples saw it, they began to scold those who brought them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called for the children, saying, "Let the little children come to me and do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ I tell you the truth, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."

The Wealthy Ruler

¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: '*Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.*'" ²¹ The man replied, "I have wholeheartedly obeyed all these laws since my youth." ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." ²³ But when the man heard this he became very sad, for he was extremely wealthy. ²⁴ When Jesus noticed this, he said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁶ Those who heard this said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ He replied, "What is impossible for mere humans is possible for God." ²⁸ And Peter said, "Look, we have left everything we own to follow you!" ²⁹ Then Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, there is no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of God's kingdom ³⁰ who will not receive many times more in this age - and in the age to come, eternal life."

Another Prediction of Jesus' Passion

³¹ Then Jesus took the twelve aside and said to them, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. ³² For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; he will be mocked, mistreated, and spat on. ³³ They will flog him severely and kill him. Yet on the third day he will rise again." ³⁴ But the twelve understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what Jesus meant.

Healing a Blind Man

³⁵ As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road begging. ³⁶ When he heard a crowd going by,

he asked what was going on. ³⁷ They told him, "Jesus the Nazarene is passing by." ³⁸ So he called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ³⁹ And those who were in front scolded him to get him to be quiet, but he shouted even more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁰ So Jesus stopped and ordered the beggar to be brought to him. When the man came near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹ "What do you want me to do for you?" He replied, "Lord, let me see again." ⁴² Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you." ⁴³ And immediately he regained his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they too gave praise to God.

19

¹ Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. ² Now a man named Zacchaeus was there; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³ He was trying to get a look at Jesus, but being a short man he could not see over the crowd. ⁴ So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, because Jesus was going to pass that way. ⁵ And when Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, because I must stay at your house today." ⁶ So he came down quickly and welcomed Jesus joyfully. ⁷ And when the people saw it, they all complained, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." ⁸ But Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, half of my possessions I now give to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone of anything, I am paying back four times as much!" ⁹ Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this household, because he too is a son of Abraham!" ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

The Parable of the Ten Minas

¹¹ While the people were listening to these things, Jesus proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. ¹² Therefore he said, "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. ¹³ And he summoned ten of his slaves, gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business with these until I come back.' ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to be king over us!' ¹⁵ When he returned after receiving the kingdom, he summoned these slaves to whom he had given the money. He wanted to know how much they had earned by trading. ¹⁶ So the first one came before him and said, 'Sir, your mina has made ten minas more.' ¹⁷ And the king said to

him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you have been faithful in a very small matter, you will have authority over ten cities.'¹⁸ Then the second one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has made five minas.'¹⁹ So the king said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'²⁰ Then another slave came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina that I put away for safekeeping in a piece of cloth.'²¹ For I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You withdraw what you did not deposit and reap what you did not sow.'²² The king said to him, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked slave! So you knew, did you, that I was a severe man, withdrawing what I didn't deposit and reaping what I didn't sow?'²³ Why then didn't you put my money in the bank, so that when I returned I could have collected it with interest?'²⁴ And he said to his attendants, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has ten.'²⁵ But they said to him, 'Sir, he has ten minas already!'²⁶ 'I tell you that everyone who has will be given more, but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.'²⁷ But as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to be their king, bring them here and slaughter them in front of me!' "

The Triumphal Entry

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he continued on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.²⁹ Now when he approached Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples,³⁰ telling them, "Go to the village ahead of you. When you enter it, you will find a colt tied there that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here."³¹ If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say, "The Lord needs it." "³² So those who were sent ahead found it exactly as he had told them.³³ As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying that colt?"³⁴ They replied, "The Lord needs it."³⁵ Then they brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt, and had Jesus get on it.³⁶ As he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.³⁷ As he approached the road leading down from the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen:³⁸ "***Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!*** Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"³⁹ But some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."⁴⁰ He answered, "I tell you, if they keep silent, the very stones will cry out!"

Jesus Weeps for Jerusalem under Judgment

⁴¹ Now when Jesus approached and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴² saying, “If you had only known on this day, even you, the things that make for peace!

But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and surround you and close in on you from every side. ⁴⁴ They will demolish you – you and your children within your walls – and they will not leave within you one stone on top of another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.”

Cleansing the Temple

⁴⁵ Then Jesus entered the temple courts and began to drive out those who were selling things there, ⁴⁶ saying to them, “It is written, ‘**My house will be a house of prayer,**’ but you have turned it into **a den of robbers!**”

⁴⁷ Jesus was teaching daily in the temple courts. The chief priests and the experts in the law and the prominent leaders among the people were seeking to assassinate him, ⁴⁸ but they could not find a way to do it, for all the people hung on his words.

20

¹ Now one day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the gospel, the chief priests and the experts in the law with the elders came up ² and said to him, “Tell us: By what authority are you doing these things? Or who it is who gave you this authority?” ³ He answered them, “I will also ask you a question, and you tell me: ⁴ John’s baptism – was it from heaven or from people?” ⁵ So they discussed it with one another, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why did you not believe him?’ ⁶ But if we say, ‘From people,’ all the people will stone us, because they are convinced that John was a prophet.” ⁷ So they replied that they did not know where it came from. ⁸ Then Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by whose authority I do these things.”

The Parable of the Tenants

⁹ Then he began to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, leased it to tenant farmers, and went on a journey for a long time. ¹⁰ When harvest time came, he sent a slave to the tenants so that they would give him his portion of the crop. However, the tenants beat his slave and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹ So he sent another slave. They beat this one too, treated him outrageously, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹² So he sent still a third. They even

wounded this one, and threw him out. ¹³ Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What should I do? I will send my one dear son; perhaps they will respect him.' ¹⁴ But when the tenants saw him, they said to one another, 'This is the heir; let's kill him so the inheritance will be ours!' ¹⁵ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When the people heard this, they said, "May this never happen!" ¹⁷ But Jesus looked straight at them and said, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written: '*The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone*'? ¹⁸ Everyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls will be crushed." ¹⁹ Then the experts in the law and the chief priests wanted to arrest him that very hour, because they realized he had told this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

²⁰ Then they watched him carefully and sent spies who pretended to be sincere. They wanted to take advantage of what he might say so that they could deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. ²¹ Thus they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach correctly, and show no partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. ²² Is it right for us to pay the tribute tax to Caesar or not?" ²³ But Jesus perceived their deceit and said to them, ²⁴ "Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?" They said, "Caesar's." ²⁵ So he said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²⁶ Thus they were unable in the presence of the people to trap him with his own words. And stunned by his answer, they fell silent.

Marriage and the Resurrection

²⁷ Now some Sadducees (who contend that there is no resurrection) came to him. ²⁸ They asked him, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that *if a man's brother dies leaving a wife but no children, that man must marry the widow and father children for his brother**. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died without children. ³⁰ The second ³¹ and then the third married her, and in this same way all seven died, leaving no children. ³² Finally the woman died too. ³³ In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For all seven had married her."

³⁴ So Jesus said to them, "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are regarded as

worthy to share in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶ In fact, they can no longer die, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, since they are sons of the resurrection. ³⁷ But even Moses revealed that the dead are raised in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord

the God | strong="G2316"of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live before him." ³⁹ Then some of the experts in the law answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well!" ⁴⁰ For they did not dare any longer to ask him anything.

The Messiah: David's Son and Lord

⁴¹ But he said to them, "How is it that they say that the Christ is David's son? ⁴² For David himself says in the book of Psalms,

'The Lord said to my lord,

'Sit at my right hand,

⁴³ *until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'*"

⁴⁴ If David then calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"

Jesus Warns the Disciples against Pride

⁴⁵ As all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁶ "Beware of the experts in the law. They like walking around in long robes, and they love elaborate greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁷ They devour widows' property, and as a show make long prayers. They will receive a more severe punishment."

21

¹ Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box. ² He also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. ³ He said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴ For they all offered their gifts out of their wealth. But she, out of her poverty, put in everything she had to live on."

The Signs of the End of the Age

⁵ Now while some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and offerings, Jesus said, ⁶ "As for these things that you are gazing at, the days will come when not one stone will be left on another. All will be torn down!" ⁷ So they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that these things are about to take place?" ⁸ He said, "Watch out that you are not misled. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them! ⁹ And when you hear of

wars and rebellions, do not be afraid. For these things must happen first, but the end will not come at once.”

Persecution of Disciples

¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Nation will rise up in arms against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you, handing you over to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³ This will be a time for you to serve as witnesses. ¹⁴ Therefore be resolved not to rehearse ahead of time how to make your defense. ¹⁵ For I will give you the words along with the wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will have some of you put to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by everyone because of my name. ¹⁸ Yet not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your lives.

The Desolation of Jerusalem

²⁰ “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. ²¹ Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Those who are inside the city must depart. Those who are out in the country must not enter it, ²² because these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. ²³ Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing their babies in those days! For there will be great distress on the earth and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away as captives among all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Arrival of the Son of Man

²⁵ “And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and on the earth nations will be in distress, anxious over the roaring of the sea and the surging waves. ²⁶ People will be fainting from fear and from the expectation of what is coming on the world, for *the powers of the heavens will be shaken*. ²⁷ Then they will see *the Son of Man arriving in a cloud with power and great glory*. ²⁸ But when these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

The Parable of the Fig Tree

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the other trees. ³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you see for yourselves and know that summer is now near. ³¹ So also you, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Be Ready!

³⁴ “But be on your guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day close down upon you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will overtake all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ But stay alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that must happen, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

³⁷ So every day Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, but at night he went and stayed on the Mount of Olives. ³⁸ And all the people came to him early in the morning to listen to him in the temple courts.

22

¹ Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. ² The chief priests and the experts in the law were trying to find some way to execute Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

³ Then Satan entered Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve. ⁴ He went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers of the temple guard how he might betray Jesus, handing him over to them. ⁵ They were delighted and arranged to give him money. ⁶ So Judas agreed and began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus when no crowd was present.

The Passover

⁷ Then the day for the feast of Unleavened Bread came, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸ Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us to eat.” ⁹ They said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?” ¹⁰ He said to them, “Listen, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters, ¹¹ and tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’” ¹² Then he will show you a large furnished room upstairs. Make preparations there.” ¹³ So they went and found things just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

The Lord's Supper

¹⁴ Now when the hour came, Jesus took his place at the table and the apostles joined him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ Then he took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

A Final Discourse

²¹ "But look, the hand of the one who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man is to go just as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" ²³ So they began to question one another as to which of them it could possibly be who would do this.

²⁴ A dispute also started among them over which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵ So Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called 'benefactors.' ²⁶ Not so with you; instead the one who is greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is seated at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is seated at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

²⁸ "You are the ones who have remained with me in my trials. ²⁹ Thus I grant to you a kingdom, just as my Father granted to me, ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹ "Simon, Simon, pay attention! Satan has demanded to have you all, to sift you like wheat, ³² but I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. When you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." ³³ But Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!" ³⁴ Jesus replied, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know me."

³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "When I sent you out with no money bag, or traveler's bag, or sandals, you didn't lack anything, did you?" They replied, "Nothing." ³⁶ He said to

them, "But now, the one who has a money bag must take it, and likewise a traveler's bag too. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷ For I tell you that this scripture must be fulfilled in me, '*And he was counted with the transgressors.*' For what is written about me is being fulfilled." ³⁸ So they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords." Then he told them, "It is enough."

On the Mount of Olives

³⁹ Then Jesus went out and made his way, as he customarily did, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ When he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹ He went away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Yet not my will but yours be done." ⁴³ [Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And in his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.] ⁴⁵ When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, exhausted from grief. ⁴⁶ So he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you will not fall into temptation!"

Betrayal and Arrest

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd appeared, and the man named Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He walked up to Jesus to kiss him. ⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" ⁴⁹ When those who were around him saw what was about to happen, they said, "Lord, should we use our swords?" ⁵⁰ Then one of them struck the high priest's slave, cutting off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus said, "Enough of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him. ⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders who had come out to get him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs like you would against an outlaw? ⁵³ Day after day when I was with you in the temple courts, you did not arrest me. But this is your hour, and that of the power of darkness!"

Jesus' Condemnation and Peter's Denials

⁵⁴ Then they arrested Jesus, led him away, and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵ When they had made a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. ⁵⁶ Then a slave girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man was with him too!" ⁵⁷ But Peter denied it: "Woman, I don't know him!" ⁵⁸ Then a little

later someone else saw him and said, “You are one of them too.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” ⁵⁹ And after about an hour still another insisted, “Certainly this man was with him, because he too is a Galilean.” ⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” At that moment, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹ Then the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.” ⁶² And he went outside and wept bitterly.

⁶³ Now the men who were holding Jesus under guard began to mock him and beat him. ⁶⁴ They blindfolded him and asked him repeatedly, “Prophecy! Who hit you?” ⁶⁵ They also said many other things against him, reviling him.

⁶⁶ When day came, the council of the elders of the people gathered together, both the chief priests and the experts in the law. Then they led Jesus away to their council ⁶⁷ and said, “If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe, ⁶⁸ and if I ask you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on *the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.*” ⁷⁰ So they all said, “Are you the Son of God, then?” He answered them, “You say that I am.” ⁷¹ Then they said, “Why do we need further testimony? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!”

23

¹ Then the whole group of them rose up and brought Jesus before Pilate. ² They began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man subverting our nation, forbidding us to pay the tribute tax to Caesar and claiming that he himself is Christ, a king.” ³ So Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He replied, “You say so.” ⁴ Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no basis for an accusation against this man.” ⁵ But they persisted in saying, “He incites the people by teaching throughout all Judea. It started in Galilee and ended up here!”

Jesus Brought Before Herod

⁶ Now when Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷ When he learned that he was from Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who also happened to be in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸ When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some miraculous sign. ⁹ So Herod questioned him at considerable length; Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ The chief priests and

the experts in the law were there, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹ Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, dressing him in elegant clothes, Herod sent him back to Pilate. ¹² That very day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other, for prior to this they had been enemies.

Jesus Brought Before the Crowd

¹³ Then Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, ¹⁴ and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. When I examined him before you, I did not find this man guilty of anything you accused him of doing. ¹⁵ Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, he has done nothing deserving death. ¹⁶ I will therefore have him flogged and release him.” ¹⁷*

¹⁸ But they all shouted out together, “Take this man away! Release Barabbas for us!” ¹⁹ (This was a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder.) ²⁰ Pilate addressed them once again because he wanted to release Jesus. ²¹ But they kept on shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” ²² A third time he said to them, “Why? What wrong has he done? I have found him guilty of no crime deserving death. I will therefore flog him and release him.” ²³ But they were insistent, demanding with loud shouts that he be crucified. And their shouts prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man they asked for, who had been thrown in prison for insurrection and murder. But he handed Jesus over to their will.

The Crucifixion

²⁶ As they led him away, they seized Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country. They placed the cross on his back and made him carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷ A great number of the people followed him, among them women who were mourning and wailing for him. ²⁸ But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For this is certain: The days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore children, and the breasts that never nursed!’ ³⁰ Then they will begin *to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’* ³¹ For if such things are done when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

³² Two other criminals were also led away to be executed with him. ³³ So when they came to the place that is called “The

* 23:17 [[EMPTY]]

Skull," they crucified him there, along with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ [But Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."] Then *they threw dice to divide his clothes.* ³⁵ The people also stood there watching, but the rulers ridiculed him, saying, "He saved others. Let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one!" ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, "This is the king of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals who was hanging there railed at him, saying, "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we rightly so, for we are getting what we deserve for what we did, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." ⁴³ And Jesus said to him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ because the sun's light failed. The temple curtain was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, *into your hands I commit my spirit!*" And after he said this he breathed his last.

⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent!" ⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ And all those who knew Jesus stood at a distance, and the women who had followed him from Galilee saw these things.

Jesus' Burial

⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph who was a member of the council, a good and righteous man. ⁵¹ (He had not consented to their plan and action.) He was from the Judean town of Arimathea, and was looking forward to the kingdom of God. ⁵² He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and placed it in a tomb cut out of the rock, where no one had yet been buried. ⁵⁴ It was the day of preparation and the Sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵ The women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared aromatic spices and perfumes.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

24

¹ Now on the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women went to the tomb, taking the aromatic spices they had prepared. ² They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men stood beside them in dazzling attire. ⁵ The women were terribly frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but has been raised! Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” ⁸ Then the women remembered his words, ⁹ and when they returned from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. ¹¹ But these words seemed like pure nonsense to them, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He bent down and saw only the strips of linen cloth; then he went home, wondering what had happened.

Jesus Walks the Road to Emmaus

¹³ Now that very day two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking to each other about all the things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and debating these things, Jesus himself approached and began to accompany them ¹⁶ (but their eyes were kept from recognizing him). ¹⁷ Then he said to them, “What are these matters you are discussing so intently as you walk along?” And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn’t know the things that have happened there in these days?” ¹⁹ He said to them, “What things?” “The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied, “a man who, with his powerful deeds and words, proved to be a prophet before God and all the people; ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. Not only this, but it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Furthermore, some

women of our group amazed us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back and said they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.” ²⁵ So he said to them, “You foolish people – how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Wasn’t it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?” ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things written about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ So they approached the village where they were going. He acted as though he wanted to go farther, ²⁹ but they urged him, “Stay with us, because it is getting toward evening and the day is almost done.” So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ When he had taken his place at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ At this point their eyes were opened and they recognized him. Then he vanished out of their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us while he was speaking with us on the road, while he was explaining the scriptures to us?” ³³ So they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and those with them gathered together ³⁴ and saying, “The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

Jesus Makes a Final Appearance

³⁶ While they were saying these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ³⁷ But they were startled and terrified, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ Then he said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; it’s me! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones like you see I have.” ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ And while they still could not believe it (because of their joy) and were amazed, he said to them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” ⁴² So they gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in front of them.

Jesus’ Final Commission

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they

could understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, “Thus it stands written that the Christ would suffer and would rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Jesus' Departure

⁵⁰ Then Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ Now during the blessing he departed and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² So they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple courts blessing God.

John

The Prologue to the Gospel

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. ² The Word was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. ⁴ *In him was life*, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵ And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it.

⁶ A man came, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that everyone might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. ⁹ The true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was created by him, but the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, but his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who have received him – those who believe in his name – he has given the right to become God’s children ¹³ – children not born by human parents or by human desire or a husband’s decision, but by God.

¹⁴ Now the Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We saw his glory – the glory of the one and only, full of grace and truth, who came from the Father. ¹⁵ John testified about him and shouted out, “This one was the one about whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is greater than I am, because he existed before me.’” ¹⁶ For we have all received from his fullness one gracious gift after another. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came about through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. The only one, himself God, who is in closest fellowship with the Father, has made God known.

The Testimony of John the Baptist

¹⁹ Now this was John’s testimony when the Jewish leaders sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed – he did not deny but confessed – “I am not the Christ!” ²¹ So they asked him, “Then who are you? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not!” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No!” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you? Tell us so that we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

²³ John said, "I am *the voice of one shouting in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord,'* as Isaiah the prophet said." ²⁴ (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵ So they asked John, "Why then are you baptizing if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not recognize, ²⁷ who is coming after me. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal!" ²⁸ These things happened in Bethany across the Jordan River where John was baptizing.

²⁹ On the next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one about whom I said, 'After me comes a man who is greater than I am, because he existed before me.' ³¹ I did not recognize him, but I came baptizing with water so that he could be revealed to Israel."

³² Then John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. ³³ And I did not recognize him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'The one on whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining - this is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ I have both seen and testified that this man is the Chosen One of God."

³⁵ Again the next day John was standing there with two of his disciples. ³⁶ Gazing at Jesus as he walked by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ When John's two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Jesus turned around and saw them following and said to them, "What do you want?" So they said to him, "Rabbi" (which is translated Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ Jesus answered, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. Now it was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

Andrew's Declaration

⁴⁰ Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two disciples who heard what John said and followed Jesus. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah!" (which is translated Christ). ⁴² Andrew brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

The Calling of More Disciples

⁴³ On the next day Jesus wanted to set out for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴ (Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter.) ⁴⁵ Philip

found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law, and the prophets also wrote about – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶ Nathanael replied, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip replied, "Come and see."

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and exclaimed, "Look, a true Israelite *in whom there is no deceit!*" ⁴⁸ Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" Jesus replied, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel!" ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹ He continued, "I tell all of you the solemn truth – you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

2

¹ Now on the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ² and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no wine left." ⁴ Jesus replied, "Woman, why are you saying this to me? My time has not yet come." ⁵ His mother told the servants, "Whatever he tells you, do it."

⁶ Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washing, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus told the servants, "Fill the water jars with water." So they filled them up to the very top. ⁸ Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the head steward," and they did. ⁹ When the head steward tasted the water that had been turned to wine, not knowing where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), he called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the cheaper wine when the guests are drunk. You have kept the good wine until now!" ¹¹ Jesus did this as the first of his miraculous signs, in Cana of Galilee. In this way he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Cleansing the Temple

¹² After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there a few days. ¹³ Now the Jewish feast of Passover was near, so Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴

He found in the temple courts those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers sitting at

tables. ¹⁵ So he made a whip of cords and drove them all out of the temple courts, with the sheep and the oxen. He scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold the doves he said, "Take these things away from here! Do not make my Father's house a marketplace!" ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "*Zeal for your house will devour me.*"

¹⁸ So then the Jewish leaders responded, "What sign can you show us, since you are doing these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again." ²⁰ Then the Jewish leaders said to him, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and are you going to raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But Jesus was speaking about the temple of his body. ²² So after he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the saying that Jesus had spoken.

Jesus at the Passover Feast

²³ Now while Jesus was in Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover, many people believed in his name because they saw the miraculous signs he was doing. ²⁴ But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people. ²⁵ He did not need anyone to testify about man, for he knew what was in man.

3

¹ Now a certain man, a Pharisee named Nicodemus, who was a member of the Jewish ruling council, ² came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus replied, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time, can he?"

⁵ Jesus answered, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must all be born from above.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it will, and you hear the sound it makes, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹ Nicodemus replied, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you don't

understand these things? ¹¹ I tell you the solemn truth, we speak about what we know and testify about what we have seen, but you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² If I have told you people about earthly things and you don't believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven – the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses *lifted up the serpent in the wilderness*, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”

¹⁶ For this is the way God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world should be saved through him. ¹⁸ The one who believes in him is not condemned. The one who does not believe has been condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God. ¹⁹ Now this is the basis for judging: that the light has come into the world and people loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does evil deeds hates the light and does not come to the light, so that their deeds will not be exposed. ²¹ But the one who practices the truth comes to the light, so that it may be plainly evident that his deeds have been done in God.

Further Testimony About Jesus by John the Baptist

²² After this, Jesus and his disciples came into Judean territory, and there he spent time with them and was baptizing. ²³ John was also baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming to him and being baptized. ²⁴ (For John had not yet been thrown into prison.)

²⁵ Now a dispute came about between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew concerning ceremonial washing. ²⁶ So they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan River, about whom you testified – see, he is baptizing, and everyone is flocking to him!”

²⁷ John replied, “No one can receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but rather, ‘I have been sent before him.’ ²⁹ The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly when he hears the bridegroom's voice.

This then is my joy, and it is complete. ³⁰ He must become more important while I become less important.”

³¹ The one who comes from above is superior to all. The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is superior to all. ³² He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. ³³ The one who has accepted his testimony has confirmed clearly that God is truthful. ³⁴ For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he does not give the Spirit sparingly. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has placed all things under his authority. ³⁶ The one who believes in the Son has eternal life. The one who rejects the Son will not see life, but God’s wrath remains on him.

4

¹ Now when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was winning and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were), ³ he left Judea and set out once more for Galilee.

Conversation With a Samaritan Woman

⁴ But he had to pass through Samaria. ⁵ Now he came to a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there, so Jesus, since he was tired from the journey, sat right down beside the well. It was about noon.

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me some water to drink.” ⁸ (For his disciples had gone off into the town to buy supplies.) ⁹ So the Samaritan woman said to him, “How can you – a Jew – ask me, a Samaritan woman, for water to drink?” (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.)

¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you had known the gift of God and who it is who said to you, ‘Give me some water to drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” ¹¹ “Sir,” the woman said to him, “you have no bucket and the well is deep; where then do you get this living water? ¹² Surely you’re not greater than our ancestor Jacob, are you? For he gave us this well and drank from it himself, along with his sons and his livestock.”

¹³ Jesus replied, “Everyone who drinks some of this water will be thirsty again. ¹⁴ But whoever drinks some of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again, but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life.” ¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.” ¹⁶ He said to her, “Go call your

husband and come back here.” ¹⁷ The woman replied, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “Right you are when you said, ‘I have no husband,’ ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the man you are living with now is not your husband. This you said truthfully!”

¹⁹ The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you people say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” ²¹ Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You people worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, because salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But a time is coming – and now is here – when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such people to be his worshipers. ²⁴ God is spirit, and the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” ²⁵ The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (the one called Christ); “whenever he comes, he will tell us everything.” ²⁶ Jesus said to her, “I, the one speaking to you, am he.”

The Disciples Return

²⁷ Now at that very moment his disciples came back. They were shocked because he was speaking with a woman. However, no one said, “What do you want?” or “Why are you speaking with her?” ²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar, went off into the town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Surely he can’t be the Messiah, can he?” ³⁰ So they left the town and began coming to him.

Workers for the Harvest

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” ³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” ³³ So the disciples began to say to one another, “No one brought him anything to eat, did they?” ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵ Don’t you say, ‘There are four more months and then comes the harvest?’ I tell you, look up and see that the fields are already white for harvest! ³⁶ The one who reaps receives pay and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that the one who sows and the one who reaps can rejoice together. ³⁷ For in this instance the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸ I sent you to reap what you did not work for; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

The Samaritans Respond

³⁹ Now many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the report of the woman who testified, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they began asking him to stay with them. He stayed there two days, ⁴¹ and because of his word many more believed. ⁴² They said to the woman, “No longer do we believe because of your words, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this one really is the Savior of the world.”

Onward to Galilee

⁴³ After the two days he departed from there to Galilee. ⁴⁴ (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) ⁴⁵ So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him because they had seen all the things he had done in Jerusalem at the feast (for they themselves had gone to the feast).

Healing the Royal Official's Son

⁴⁶ Now he came again to Cana there was a certain royal official whose son was sick. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come back from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and begged him to come down and heal his son, who was about to die. ⁴⁸ So Jesus said to him, “Unless you people see signs and wonders you will never believe!” ⁴⁹ “Sir,” the official said to him, “come down before my child dies.” ⁵⁰ Jesus told him, “Go home; your son will live.” The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and set off for home.

⁵¹ While he was on his way down, his slaves met him and told him that his son was going to live. ⁵² So he asked them the time when his condition began to improve, and they told him, “Yesterday at one o'clock in the afternoon the fever left him.” ⁵³ Then the father realized that it was the very time Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live,” and he himself believed along with his entire household. ⁵⁴ Jesus did this as his second miraculous sign when he returned from Judea to Galilee.

5

¹ After this there was a Jewish feast, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool called *Bethzatha* in Aramaic, which has five covered walkways. ³ A great number of sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying in these walkways. ⁴* ⁵ Now a man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and when he realized that

* 5:4 [[EMPTY]]

the man had been disabled a long time already, he said to him, "Do you want to become well?" ⁷ The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I am trying to get into the water, someone else goes down there before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Stand up! Pick up your mat and walk." ⁹ Immediately the man was healed, and he picked up his mat and started walking. (Now that day was a Sabbath.)

¹⁰ So the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and you are not permitted to carry your mat." ¹¹ But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'" ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick up your mat and walk'?" ¹³ But the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped out, since there was a crowd in that place.

¹⁴ After this Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "Look, you have become well. Don't sin any more, lest anything worse happen to you." ¹⁵ The man went away and informed the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the one who had made him well.

Responding to Jewish Leaders

¹⁶ Now because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began persecuting him. ¹⁷ So he told them, "My Father is working until now, and I too am working." ¹⁸ For this reason the Jewish leaders were trying even harder to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was also calling God his own Father, thus making himself equal with God.

¹⁹ So Jesus answered them, "I tell you the solemn truth, the Son can do nothing on his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he does, and will show him greater deeds than these, so that you will be amazed. ²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes. ²² Furthermore, the Father does not judge anyone, but has assigned all judgment to the Son, ²³ so that all people will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

²⁴ "I tell you the solemn truth, the one who hears my message and believes the one who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned, but has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵ I tell you the solemn truth, a time is coming - and is now here - when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of

God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For just as the Father has life in himself, thus he has granted the Son to have life in himself, ²⁷ and he has granted the Son authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

²⁸ “Do not be amazed at this, because a time is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and will come out – the ones who have done what is good to the resurrection resulting in life, and the ones who have done what is evil to the resurrection resulting in condemnation. ³⁰ I can do nothing on my own initiative. Just as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will, but the will of the one who sent me.

More Testimony About Jesus

³¹ “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies about me, and I know the testimony he testifies about me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ (I do not accept human testimony, but I say this so that you may be saved.) ³⁵ He was a lamp that was burning and shining, and you wanted to rejoice greatly for a short time in his light.

³⁶ “But I have a testimony greater than that from John. For the deeds that the Father has assigned me to complete – the deeds I am now doing – testify about me that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You people have never heard his voice nor seen his form at any time, ³⁸ nor do you have his word residing in you, because you do not believe the one whom he sent. ³⁹ You study the scriptures thoroughly because you think in them you possess eternal life, and it is these same scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰ but you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life.

⁴¹ “I do not accept praise from people, ⁴² but I know you, that you do not have the love of God within you. ⁴³ I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me. If someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, if you accept praise from one another and don’t seek the praise that comes from the only God?

⁴⁵ “Do not suppose that I will accuse you before the Father. The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe what Moses wrote, how will you believe my words?”

6

¹ After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (also called the Sea of Tiberias). ² A large crowd was following him because they were observing the miraculous signs he was performing on the sick. ³ So Jesus went on up the mountainside and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ (Now the Jewish feast of the Passover was near.) ⁵ Then Jesus, when he looked up and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, said to Philip, “Where can we buy bread so that these people may eat?” ⁶ (Now Jesus said this to test him, for he knew what he was going to do.) ⁷ Philip replied, “Two hundred silver coins worth of bread would not be enough for them, for each one to get a little.” ⁸ One of Jesus’ disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, ⁹ “Here is a boy who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what good are these for so many people?”

¹⁰ Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” (Now there was a lot of grass in that place.) So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed the bread to those who were seated. He then did the same with the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² When they were all satisfied, Jesus said to his disciples, “Gather up the broken pieces that are left over, so that nothing is wasted.” ¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves left over by the people who had eaten.

¹⁴ Now when the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus performed, they began to say to one another, “This is certainly *the Prophet who is to come into the world.*” ¹⁵ Then Jesus, because he knew they were going to come and seize him by force to make him king, withdrew again up the mountainside alone.

Walking on Water

¹⁶ Now when evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started to cross the lake to Capernaum. (It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.) ¹⁸ By now a strong wind was blowing and the sea was getting rough. ¹⁹ Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they caught sight of Jesus walking on the lake, approaching the boat, and they were frightened. ²⁰ But he said to them, “It is I. Do not be afraid.” ²¹ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat came to the land where they had been heading.

²² The next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the lake realized that only one small boat had been there,

and that Jesus had not boarded it with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. ²³ But some boats from Tiberias came to shore near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ So when the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

Jesus' Discourse About the Bread of Life

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" ²⁶ Jesus replied, "I tell you the solemn truth, you are looking for me not because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate all the loaves of bread you wanted. ²⁷ Do not work for the food that disappears, but for the food that remains to eternal life – the food which the Son of Man will give to you. For God the Father has put his seal of approval on him."

²⁸ So then they said to him, "What must we do to accomplish the deeds God requires?" ²⁹ Jesus replied, "This is the deed God requires – to believe in the one whom he sent." ³⁰ So they said to him, "Then what miraculous sign will you perform, so that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?" ³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, '*He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*' "

³² Then Jesus told them, "I tell you the solemn truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but my Father is giving you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴ So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread all the time!"

³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. The one who comes to me will never go hungry, and the one who believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶ But I told you that you have seen me and still do not believe. ³⁷ Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never send away. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. ³⁹ Now this is the will of the one who sent me – that I should not lose one person of every one he has given me, but raise them all up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father – for everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him to have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

⁴¹ Then the Jews who were hostile to Jesus began complaining about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven," ⁴² and they said, "Isn't this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he

now say, 'I have come down from heaven?'" ⁴³ Jesus replied, "Do not complain about me to one another. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, '*And they will all be taught by God.*' Everyone who hears and learns from the Father comes to me. ⁴⁶ (Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God – he has seen the Father.) ⁴⁷ I tell you the solemn truth, the one who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that has come down from heaven, so that a person may eat from it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵² Then the Jews who were hostile to Jesus began to argue with one another, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³ Jesus said to them, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood resides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so the one who consumes me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the bread your ancestors ate, but then later died. The one who eats this bread will live forever."

Many Followers Depart

⁵⁹ Jesus said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. ⁶⁰ Then many of his disciples, when they heard these things, said, "This is a difficult saying! Who can understand it?" ⁶¹ When Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining about this, he said to them, "Does this cause you to be offended? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man ascending where he was before? ⁶³ The Spirit is the one who gives life; human nature is of no help! The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus had already known from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ⁶⁵ So Jesus added, "Because of this I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has allowed him to come."

Peter's Confession

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples quit following him and did not accompany him any longer. ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, “You don’t want to go away too, do you?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God!” ⁷⁰ Jesus replied, “Didn’t I choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is the devil?” ⁷¹ (Now he said this about Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for Judas, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.)

7

¹ After this Jesus traveled throughout Galilee. He stayed out of Judea because the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him. ² Now the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near. ³ So Jesus’ brothers advised him, “Leave here and go to Judea so your disciples may see your miracles that you are performing. ⁴ For no one who seeks to make a reputation for himself does anything in secret. If you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” ⁵ (For not even his own brothers believed in him.)

⁶ So Jesus replied, “My time has not yet arrived, but you are ready at any opportunity! ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates me, because I am testifying about it that its deeds are evil. ⁸ You go up to the feast yourselves. I am not going up to this feast because my time has not yet fully arrived.” ⁹ When he had said this, he remained in Galilee.

¹⁰ But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, then Jesus himself also went up, not openly but in secret. ¹¹ So the Jewish leaders were looking for him at the feast, asking, “Where is he?” ¹² There was a lot of grumbling about him among the crowds. Some were saying, “He is a good man,” but others, “He deceives the common people.” ¹³ However, no one spoke openly about him for fear of the Jewish leaders.

Teaching in the Temple

¹⁴ When the feast was half over, Jesus went up to the temple courts and began to teach. ¹⁵ Then the Jewish leaders were astonished and said, “How does this man know so much when he has never had formal instruction?” ¹⁶ So Jesus replied, “My teaching is not from me, but from the one who sent me. ¹⁷ If anyone wants to do God’s will, he will know about my teaching, whether it is from God or whether I speak from my own authority. ¹⁸ The person who speaks on his own authority desires to receive honor for himself; the one who desires the honor of the one who sent him is a man of integrity, and there is no unrighteousness in him. ¹⁹ Hasn’t

Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law! Why do you want to kill me?"

²⁰ The crowd answered, "You're possessed by a demon! Who is trying to kill you?" ²¹ Jesus replied, "I performed one miracle and you are all amazed. ²² However, because Moses gave you the practice of circumcision (not that it came from Moses, but from the forefathers), you circumcise a male child on the Sabbath. ²³ But if a male child is circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses is not broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? ²⁴ Do not judge according to external appearance, but judge with proper judgment."

Questions About Jesus' Identity

²⁵ Then some of the residents of Jerusalem began to say, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? ²⁶ Yet here he is, speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to him. Do the rulers really know that this man is the Christ? ²⁷ But we know where this man comes from. Whenever the Christ comes, no one will know where he comes from."

²⁸ Then Jesus, while teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "You both know me and know where I come from! And I have not come on my own initiative, but the one who sent me is true. You do not know him, ²⁹ but I know him, because I have come from him and he sent me."

³⁰ So then they tried to seize Jesus, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come. ³¹ Yet many of the crowd believed in him and said, "Whenever the Christ comes, he won't perform more miraculous signs than this man did, will he?"

³² The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things about Jesus, so the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. ³³ Then Jesus said, "I will be with you for only a little while longer, and then I am going to the one who sent me. ³⁴ You will look for me but will not find me, and where I am you cannot come."

³⁵ Then the Jewish leaders said to one another, "Where is he going to go that we cannot find him? He is not going to go to the Jewish people dispersed among the Greeks and teach the Greeks, is he? ³⁶ What did he mean by saying, 'You will look for me but will not find me, and where I am you cannot come?'"

Teaching About the Spirit

³⁷ On the last day of the feast, the greatest day, Jesus stood up and shouted out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me, and ³⁸ let the one who believes in me drink. Just as the scripture says, 'From within him will flow rivers of living

water.’ ” ³⁹ (Now he said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were going to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Differing Opinions About Jesus

⁴⁰ When they heard these words, some of the crowd began to say, “This really is the Prophet!” ⁴¹ Others said, “This is the Christ!” But still others said, “No, for the Christ doesn’t come from Galilee, does he?” ⁴² Don’t the scriptures say that the Christ is *a descendant of David* and *comes from Bethlehem*, the village where David lived?” ⁴³ So there was a division in the crowd because of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Some of them were wanting to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

Lack of Belief

⁴⁵ Then the officers returned to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why didn’t you bring him back with you?” ⁴⁶ The officers replied, “No one ever spoke like this man!” ⁴⁷ Then the Pharisees answered, “You haven’t been deceived too, have you?” ⁴⁸ None of the rulers or the Pharisees have believed in him, have they? ⁴⁹ But this rabble who do not know the law are accursed!”

⁵⁰ Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before and who was one of the rulers, said, ⁵¹ “Our law doesn’t condemn a man unless it first hears from him and learns what he is doing, does it?” ⁵² They replied, “You aren’t from Galilee too, are you? Investigate carefully and you will see that no prophet comes from Galilee!”

A Woman Caught in Adultery

⁵³ [[And each one departed to his own house.

8

¹ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Early in the morning he came to the temple courts again. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. ³ The experts in the law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught committing adultery. They made her stand in front of them ⁴ and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of adultery. ⁵ In the law *Moses commanded us to stone to death* such women. What then do you say?” ⁶ (Now they were asking this in an attempt to trap him, so that they could bring charges against him.) Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they persisted in asking him, he stood up straight and replied, “Whoever among you is guiltless may be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸ Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground.

⁹ Now when they heard this, they began to drift away one at a time, starting with the older ones, until Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus stood up straight and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?” ¹¹ She replied, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “I do not condemn you either. Go, and from now on do not sin any more.”]]

Jesus as the Light of the World

¹² Then Jesus spoke out again, “I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” ¹³ So the Pharisees objected, “You testify about yourself; your testimony is not true!” ¹⁴ Jesus answered, “Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going. But you people do not know where I came from or where I am going. ¹⁵ You people judge by outward appearances; I do not judge anyone. ¹⁶ But if I judge, my evaluation is accurate, because I am not alone when I judge, but I and the Father who sent me do so together. ¹⁷ It is written in your law that *the testimony of two men is true*. ¹⁸ I testify about myself and the Father who sent me testifies about me.”

¹⁹ Then they began asking him, “Who is your father?” Jesus answered, “You do not know either me or my Father. If you knew me you would know my Father too.” ²⁰ (Jesus spoke these words near the offering box while he was teaching in the temple courts. No one seized him because his time had not yet come.)

Where Jesus Came From and Where He is Going

²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, “I am going away, and you will look for me but will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come.” ²² So the Jewish leaders began to say, “Perhaps he is going to kill himself, because he says, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ ” ²³ Jesus replied, “You people are from below; I am from above. You people are from this world; I am not from this world. ²⁴ Thus I told you that you will die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.”

²⁵ So they said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus replied, “What I have told you from the beginning. ²⁶ I have many things to say and to judge about you, but the Father who sent me is truthful, and the things I have heard from him I speak to the world.” ²⁷ (They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father.)

²⁸ Then Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and I do nothing on my own initiative, but I speak just what the Father taught me. ²⁹ And the one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do those things that please him." ³⁰ While he was saying these things, many people believed in him.

Abraham's Children and the Devil's Children

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Judeans who had believed him, "If you continue to follow my teaching, you are really my disciples ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³ "We are descendants of Abraham," they replied, "and have never been anyone's slaves! How can you say, 'You will become free'?" ³⁴ Jesus answered them, "I tell you the solemn truth, everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the family forever, but the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the son sets you free, you will be really free. ³⁷ I know that you are Abraham's descendants. But you want to kill me, because my teaching makes no progress among you. ³⁸ I am telling you the things I have seen while with the Father; as for you, practice the things you have heard from the Father!"

³⁹ They answered him, "Abraham is our father!" Jesus replied, "If you are Abraham's children, you would be doing the deeds of Abraham. ⁴⁰ But now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth I heard from God. Abraham did not do this! ⁴¹ You people are doing the deeds of your father."

Then they said to Jesus, "We were not born as a result of immorality! We have only one Father, God himself." ⁴² Jesus replied, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come from God and am now here. I have not come on my own initiative, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why don't you understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot accept my teaching. ⁴⁴ You people are from your father the devil, and you want to do what your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ But because I am telling you the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶ Who among you can prove me guilty of any sin? If I am telling you the truth, why don't you believe me? ⁴⁷ The one who belongs to God listens and responds to God's words. You don't listen and respond, because you don't belong to God."

⁴⁸ The Judeans replied, "Aren't we correct in saying that you are a Samaritan and are possessed by a demon?" ⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "I am not possessed by a demon, but I honor my Father - and yet you dishonor me. ⁵⁰ I am not trying to get praise for myself. There is one who demands it, and he also judges. ⁵¹ I tell you the solemn truth, if anyone obeys my teaching, he will never see death."

⁵² Then the Judeans responded, "Now we know you're possessed by a demon! Both Abraham and the prophets died, and yet you say, 'If anyone obeys my teaching, he will never experience death.' ⁵³ You aren't greater than our father Abraham who died, are you? And the prophets died too! Who do you claim to be?" ⁵⁴ Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory is worthless. The one who glorifies me is my Father, about whom you people say, 'He is our God.' ⁵⁵ Yet you do not know him, but I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I obey his teaching. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham was overjoyed to see my day, and he saw it and was glad."

⁵⁷ Then the Judeans replied, "You are not yet fifty years old! Have you seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "I tell you the solemn truth, before Abraham came into existence, I am!" ⁵⁹ Then they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out from the temple area.

9

¹ Now as Jesus was passing by, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who committed the sin that caused him to be born blind, this man or his parents?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but he was born blind so that the acts of God may be revealed through what happens to him. ⁴ We must perform the deeds of the one who sent me as long as it is daytime. Night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ Having said this, he spat on the ground and made some mud with the saliva. He smeared the mud on the blind man's eyes ⁷ and said to him, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated "sent"). So the blind man went away and washed, and came back seeing.

⁸ Then the neighbors and the people who had seen him previously as a beggar began saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some people said, "This is the man!" while others said, "No, but he looks like him." The man himself kept insisting, "I am the one!" ¹⁰ So they asked him,

“How then were you made to see?” ¹¹ He replied, “The man called Jesus made mud, smeared it on my eyes and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and was able to see.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is that man?” He replied, “I don’t know.”

The Pharisees’ Reaction to the Healing

¹³ They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ (Now the day on which Jesus made the mud and caused him to see was a Sabbath.) ¹⁵ So the Pharisees asked him again how he had gained his sight. He replied, “He put mud on my eyes and I washed, and now I am able to see.”

¹⁶ Then some of the Pharisees began to say, “This man is not from God, because he does not observe the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such miraculous signs?” Thus there was a division among them. ¹⁷ So again they asked the man who used to be blind, “What do you say about him, since he caused you to see?” “He is a prophet,” the man replied.

¹⁸ Now the Jewish religious leaders refused to believe that he had really been blind and had gained his sight until at last they summoned the parents of the man who had become able to see. ¹⁹ They asked the parents, “Is this your son, whom you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?” ²⁰ So his parents replied, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ But we do not know how he is now able to see, nor do we know who caused him to see. Ask him, he is a mature adult. He will speak for himself.” ²² (His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jewish religious leaders. For the Jewish leaders had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ For this reason his parents said, “He is a mature adult, ask him.”)

²⁴ Then they summoned the man who used to be blind a second time and said to him, “Promise before God to tell the truth. We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He replied, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. I do know one thing – that although I was blind, now I can see.” ²⁶ Then they said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he cause you to see?” ²⁷ He answered, “I told you already and you didn’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You people don’t want to become his disciples too, do you?”

²⁸ They heaped insults on him, saying, “You are his disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses! We do not know where this man comes from!” ³⁰ The man replied, “This is a remarkable thing, that you don’t know where he comes from, and yet he caused me to see!

³¹ We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but if anyone is devout and does his will, God listens to him. ³² Never before has anyone heard of someone causing a man born blind to see. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They replied, "You were born completely in sinfulness, and yet you presume to teach us?"

So they threw him out.

The Man's Response to Jesus

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, so he found the man and said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ The man replied, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" ³⁷ Jesus told him, "You have seen him; he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸ [He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said,] "For judgment I have come into this world, so that those who do not see may gain their sight, and the ones who see may become blind."

⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and asked him, "We are not blind too, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus replied, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin, but now because you claim that you can see, your guilt remains."

10

¹ "I tell you the solemn truth, the one who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. ² The one who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The doorkeeper opens the door for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought all his own sheep out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they recognize his voice. ⁵ They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him, because they do not recognize the stranger's voice." ⁶ Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So Jesus said to them again, "I tell you the solemn truth, I am the door for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters through me, he will be saved, and will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand, who is not a shepherd and does not own sheep, sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and runs away. So the wolf attacks the sheep

and scatters them. ¹³ Because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep, he runs away.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me - ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that do not come from this sheepfold. I must bring them too, and they will listen to my voice, so that there will be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ This is why the Father loves me - because I lay down my life, so that I may take it back again. ¹⁸ No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of my own free will. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it back again. This commandment I received from my Father."

¹⁹ Another sharp division took place among the Jewish people because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them were saying, "He is possessed by a demon and has lost his mind! Why do you listen to him?" ²¹ Others said, "These are not the words of someone possessed by a demon. A demon cannot cause the blind to see, can it?"

Jesus at the Feast of Dedication

²² Then came the feast of the Dedication in Jerusalem. ²³ It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple area in Solomon's Portico. ²⁴ The Jewish leaders surrounded him and asked, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus replied, "I told you and you do not believe. The deeds I do in my Father's name testify about me. ²⁶ But you refuse to believe because you are not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; no one will snatch them from my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can snatch them from my Father's hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one."

³¹ The Jewish leaders picked up rocks again to stone him to death. ³² Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many good deeds from the Father. For which one of them are you going to stone me?" ³³ The Jewish leaders replied, "We are not going to stone you for a good deed but for blasphemy, because you, a man, are claiming to be God."

³⁴ Jesus answered, "Is it not written in your law, '*I said, you are gods*'? ³⁵ If those people to whom the word of God came were called 'gods' (and the scripture cannot be broken), ³⁶ do you say about the one whom the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? ³⁷ If I do not perform the deeds of my

Father, do not believe me. ³⁸ But if I do them, even if you do not believe me, believe the deeds, so that you may come to know and understand that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” ³⁹ Then they attempted again to seize him, but he escaped their clutches.

⁴⁰ Jesus went back across the Jordan River again to the place where John had been baptizing at an earlier time, and he stayed there. ⁴¹ Many came to him and began to say, “John performed no miraculous sign, but everything John said about this man was true!” ⁴² And many believed in Jesus there.

11

¹ Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village where Mary and her sister Martha lived. ² (Now it was Mary who anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and wiped his feet dry with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) ³ So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, look, the one you love is sick.” ⁴ When Jesus heard this, he said, “This sickness will not lead to death, but to God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” ⁵ (Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.)

⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he remained in the place where he was for two more days. ⁷ Then after this, he said to his disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” ⁸ The disciples replied, “Rabbi, the Jewish leaders were just now trying to stone you to death! Are you going there again?” ⁹ Jesus replied, “Are there not twelve hours in a day? If anyone walks around in the daytime, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks around at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

¹¹ After he said this, he added, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. But I am going there to awaken him.” ¹² Then the disciples replied, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” ¹³ (Now Jesus had been talking about his death, but they thought he had been talking about real sleep.)

¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, ¹⁵ and I am glad for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” ¹⁶ So Thomas (called Didymus) said to his fellow disciples, “Let us go too, so that we may die with him.”

Speaking with Martha and Mary

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb four days already. ¹⁸ (Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ so many of the Jewish people of the region had come to Martha and Mary to console them

over the loss of their brother.) ²⁰ So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will grant you."

²³ Jesus replied, "Your brother will come back to life again." ²⁴ Martha said, "I know that he will come back to life again in the resurrection at the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live even if he dies, ²⁶ and the one who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She replied, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God who comes into the world."

²⁸ And when she had said this, Martha went and called her sister Mary, saying privately, "The Teacher is here and is asking for you." ²⁹ So when Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ (Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still in the place where Martha had come out to meet him.) ³¹ Then the people who were with Mary in the house consoling her saw her get up quickly and go out. They followed her, because they thought she was going to the tomb to weep there.

³² Now when Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the people who had come with her weeping, he was intensely moved in spirit and greatly distressed. ³⁴ He asked, "Where have you laid him?" They replied, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Thus the people who had come to mourn said, "Look how much he loved him!" ³⁷ But some of them said, "This is the man who caused the blind man to see! Couldn't he have done something to keep Lazarus from dying?"

Lazarus Raised from the Dead

³⁸ Jesus, intensely moved again, came to the tomb. (Now it was a cave, and a stone was placed across it.) ³⁹ Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, replied, "Lord, by this time the body will have a bad smell, because he has been buried four days." ⁴⁰ Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that if you believe, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you that you have listened to me. ⁴² I knew that you always listen to me, but I said this for the sake of the crowd standing around here, that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³ When he had said this, he shouted in a loud

voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The one who had died came out, his feet and hands tied up with strips of cloth, and a cloth wrapped around his face. Jesus said to them, “Unwrap him and let him go.”

The Response of the Jewish Leaders

⁴⁵ Then many of the people, who had come with Mary and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and reported to them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ So the chief priests and the Pharisees called the council together and said, “What are we doing? For this man is performing many miraculous signs. ⁴⁸ If we allow him to go on in this way, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away our sanctuary and our nation.”

⁴⁹ Then one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said, “You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not realize that it is more to your advantage to have one man die for the people than for the whole nation to perish.” ⁵¹ (Now he did not say this on his own, but because he was high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish nation, ⁵² and not for the Jewish nation only, but to gather together into one the children of God who are scattered.) ⁵³ So from that day they planned together to kill him.

⁵⁴ Thus Jesus no longer went around publicly among the Judeans, but went away from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and stayed there with his disciples. ⁵⁵ Now the Jewish feast of Passover was near, and many people went up to Jerusalem from the rural areas before the Passover to cleanse themselves ritually. ⁵⁶ Thus they were looking for Jesus, and saying to one another as they stood in the temple courts, “What do you think? That he won’t come to the feast?” ⁵⁷ (Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should report it, so that they could arrest him.)

12

¹ Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom he had raised from the dead. ² So they prepared a dinner for Jesus there. Martha was serving, and Lazarus was among those present at the table with him. ³ Then Mary took three quarters of a pound of expensive aromatic oil from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus. She then wiped his feet dry with her hair. (Now the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfumed oil.) ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was going to betray him) said, ⁵ “Why wasn’t this oil sold for three hundred

silver coins and the money given to the poor?" ⁶ (Now Judas said this not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief. As keeper of the money box, he used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She has kept it for the day of my burial. ⁸ For you will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me!"

⁹ Now a large crowd of Judeans learned that Jesus was there, and so they came not only because of him but also to see Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests planned to kill Lazarus too, ¹¹ for on account of him many of the Jewish people from Jerusalem were going away and believing in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry

¹² The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him. They began to shout, "*Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*" Blessed is the king of Israel!" ¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, ¹⁵ "*Do not be afraid, people of Zion; look, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt!*" ¹⁶ (His disciples did not understand these things when they first happened, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about him and that these things had happened to him.)

¹⁷ So the crowd who had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead were continuing to testify about it. ¹⁸ Because they had heard that Jesus had performed this miraculous sign, the crowd went out to meet him. ¹⁹ Thus the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you can do nothing. Look, the world has run off after him!"

Seekers

²⁰ Now some Greeks were among those who had gone up to worship at the feast. ²¹ So these approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and requested, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went and told Andrew, and they both went and told Jesus. ²³ Jesus replied, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ I tell you the solemn truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵ The one who loves his life destroys it, and the one who hates his life in this world guards it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone wants to serve me, he must follow me, and where I

am, my servant will be too. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷ “Now my soul is greatly distressed. And what should I say? ‘Father, deliver me from this hour’? No, but for this very reason I have come to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹ The crowd that stood there and heard the voice said that it had thundered. Others said that an angel had spoken to him. ³⁰ Jesus said, “This voice has not come for my benefit but for yours. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³ (Now he said this to indicate clearly what kind of death he was going to die.)

³⁴ Then the crowd responded, “We have heard from the law that *the Christ will remain forever*. How can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?” ³⁵ Jesus replied, “The light is with you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become sons of light.” When Jesus had said these things, he went away and hid himself from them.

The Outcome of Jesus' Public Ministry Foretold

³⁷ Although Jesus had performed so many miraculous signs before them, they still refused to believe in him, ³⁸ so that the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled. He said, “

Lord | strong="G2962", who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord

been revealed | strong="G0601"?” ³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, because again Isaiah said,

⁴⁰ “*He has blinded their eyes
and hardened their heart,
so that they would not see with their eyes
and understand with their heart,
and turn to me, and I would heal them*.*”

⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw Christ's glory, and spoke about him.

⁴² Nevertheless, even among the rulers many believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess Jesus to be the Christ, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue. ⁴³ For they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

Jesus' Final Public Words

⁴⁴ But Jesus shouted out, "The one who believes in me does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me, ⁴⁵ and the one who sees me sees the one who sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness. ⁴⁷ If anyone hears my words and does not obey them, I do not judge him. For I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world. ⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has a judge; the word I have spoken will judge him at the last day. ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken from my own authority, but the Father himself who sent me has commanded me what I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. Thus the things I say, I say just as the Father has told me."

13

¹ Just before the Passover feast, Jesus knew that his time had come to depart from this world to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now loved them to the very end. ² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, that he should betray Jesus. ³ Because Jesus knew that the Father had handed all things over to him, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ he got up from the meal, removed his outer clothes, took a towel and tied it around himself. ⁵ He poured water into the washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to dry them with the towel he had wrapped around himself.

⁶ Then he came to Simon Peter. Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not understand what I am doing now, but you will understand after these things." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰ Jesus replied, "The one who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not every one of you." ¹¹ (For Jesus knew the one who was going to betray him. For this reason he said, "Not every one of you is clean.")

¹² So when Jesus had washed their feet and put his outer clothing back on, he took his place at the table again and said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? ¹³ You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and do so correctly, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed

your feet, you too ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example – you should do just as I have done for you. ¹⁶ I tell you the solemn truth, the slave is not greater than his master, nor is the one who is sent as a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you understand these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

The Announcement of Jesus' Betrayal

¹⁸ "What I am saying does not refer to all of you. I know the ones I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture, ‘

The one who eats | strong="G5176" my bread my bread has turned | strong="G1869" against me.’ ¹⁹ I am telling you this now, before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe that I am he. ²⁰ I tell you the solemn truth, whoever accepts the one I send accepts me, and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.”

²¹ When he had said these things, Jesus was greatly distressed in spirit, and testified, “I tell you the solemn truth, one of you will betray me.” ²² The disciples began to look at one another, worried and perplexed to know which of them he was talking about. ²³ One of his disciples, the one Jesus loved, was at the table to the right of Jesus in a place of honor. ²⁴ So Simon Peter gestured to this disciple to ask Jesus who it was he was referring to. ²⁵ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved leaned back against Jesus' chest and asked him, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶ Jesus replied, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread after I have dipped it in the dish.” Then he dipped the piece of bread in the dish and gave it to Judas Iscariot, Simon's son. ²⁷ And after Judas took the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.” ²⁸ (Now none of those present at the table understood why Jesus said this to Judas. ²⁹ Some thought that, because Judas had the money box, Jesus was telling him to buy whatever they needed for the feast, or to give something to the poor.) ³⁰ Judas took the piece of bread and went out immediately. (Now it was night.)

The Prediction of Peter's Denial

³¹ When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him right away. ³³ Children, I am still with you for a little while. You will look for me, and just as I said to the Jewish religious leaders, ‘Where I am going you cannot come,’ now I tell you the same.

³⁴ “I give you a new commandment – to love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ Everyone will know by this that you are my disciples – if you have love for one another.”

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later.” ³⁷ Peter said to him, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you!” ³⁸ Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? I tell you the solemn truth, the rooster will not crow until you have denied me three times!

14

¹ “Do not let your hearts be distressed. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² There are many dwelling places in my Father’s house. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going away to make ready a place for you. ³ And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be too. ⁴ And you know the way where I am going.”

⁵ Thomas said, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus replied, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you have known me, you will know my Father too. And from now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be content.” ⁹ Jesus replied, “Have I been with you for so long, and you have not known me, Philip? The person who has seen me has seen the Father! How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father residing in me performs his miraculous deeds. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, but if you do not believe me, believe because of the miraculous deeds themselves. ¹² I tell you the solemn truth, the person who believes in me will perform the miraculous deeds that I am doing, and will perform greater deeds than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

Teaching on the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ “If you love me, you will obey my commandments. ¹⁶ Then I will ask the Father, and he will give you another

Advocate to be with you forever – ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it does not see him or know him. But you know him, because he resides with you and will be in you.

¹⁸ “I will not abandon you as orphans, I will come to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will not see me any longer, but you will see me; because I live, you will live too. ²⁰ You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you. ²¹ The person who has my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will reveal myself to him.”

²² “Lord,” Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “what has happened that you are going to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?” ²³ Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and take up residence with him. ²⁴ The person who does not love me does not obey my words. And the word you hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me.

²⁵ “I have spoken these things while staying with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and will cause you to remember everything I said to you.

²⁷ “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be distressed or lacking in courage. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I am. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe. ³⁰ I will not speak with you much longer, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me, ³¹ but I am doing just what the Father commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Get up, let us go from here.”

15

¹ “I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. ² He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me. He prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit. ³ You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me – and I in him – bears much fruit, because

apart from me you can accomplish nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch, and dries up; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and are burned up. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is honored by this, that you bear much fruit and show that you are my disciples.

⁹ “Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you; remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be complete. ¹² My commandment is this – to love one another just as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this – that one lays down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I no longer call you slaves, because the slave does not understand what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because I have revealed to you everything I heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that remains, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. ¹⁷ This I command you – to love one another.

The World’s Hatred

¹⁸ “If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you do not belong to the world, but I chose you out of the world, for this reason the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember what I told you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they obeyed my word, they will obey yours too. ²¹ But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know the one who sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. But they no longer have any excuse for their sin. ²³ The one who hates me hates my Father too. ²⁴ If I had not performed among them the miraculous deeds that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen the deeds and have hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ Now this happened to fulfill the word that is written in their law, ‘*They hated me without reason.*’ ²⁶ When the Advocate comes, whom I will send you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me, ²⁷ and you also will testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

16

¹ “I have told you all these things so that you will not fall away. ² They will put you out of the synagogue, yet a time is coming when the one who kills you will think he is offering service to God. ³ They will do these things because they have not known the Father or me. ⁴ But I have told you these things so that when their time comes, you will remember that I told you about them.

“I did not tell you these things from the beginning because I was with you. ⁵ But now I am going to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶ Instead your hearts are filled with sadness because I have said these things to you. ⁷ But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I am going away. For if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong concerning sin and righteousness and judgment – ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹² “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but will speak whatever he hears, and will tell you what is to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, because he will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you. ¹⁵ Everything that the Father has is mine; that is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you. ¹⁶ In a little while you will see me no longer; again after a little while, you will see me.”

¹⁷ Then some of his disciples said to one another, “What is the meaning of what he is saying, ‘In a little while you will not see me; again after a little while, you will see me,’ and, ‘because I am going to the Father?’” ¹⁸ So they kept on repeating, “What is the meaning of what he says, ‘In a little while’? We do not understand what he is talking about.”

¹⁹ Jesus could see that they wanted to ask him about these things, so he said to them, “Are you asking each other about this – that I said, ‘In a little while you will not see me; again after a little while, you will see me’?” ²⁰ I tell you the solemn truth, you will weep and wail, but the world will rejoice; you will be sad, but your sadness will turn into joy. ²¹ When a woman gives birth, she has distress because her time has come, but when her child is born, she no longer remembers

the suffering because of her joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² So also you have sorrow now, but *I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.* ²³ At that time you will ask me nothing. I tell you the solemn truth, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive it, so that your joy may be complete.

²⁵ “I have told you these things in obscure figures of speech; a time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in obscure figures, but will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ At that time you will ask in my name, and I do not say that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and entered into the world, but in turn, I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

²⁹ His disciples said, “Look, now you are speaking plainly and not in obscure figures of speech! ³⁰ Now we know that you know everything and do not need anyone to ask you anything. Because of this we believe that you have come from God.”

³¹ Jesus replied, “Do you now believe? ³² Look, a time is coming – and has come – when you will be scattered, each one to his own home, and I will be left alone. Yet I am not alone, because my Father is with me. ³³ I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble and suffering, but take courage – I have conquered the world.”

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¹ When Jesus had finished saying these things, he looked upward to heaven and said, “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, so that your Son may glorify you – ² just as you have given him authority over all humanity, so that he may give eternal life to everyone you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life – that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me at your side with the glory I had with you before the world was created.

Jesus Prays for the Disciples

⁶ “I have revealed your name to the men you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they understand that everything you have given me comes from you, ⁸ because

I have given them the words you have given me. They accepted them and really understand that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am praying on behalf of them. I am not praying on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those you have given me, because they belong to you. ¹⁰ Everything I have belongs to you, and everything you have belongs to me, and I have been glorified by them. ¹¹ I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them safe in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one. ¹² When I was with them I kept them safe and watched over them in your name that you have given me. Not one of them was lost except the one destined for destruction, so that the scripture could be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so they may experience my joy completed in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵ I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but that you keep them safe from the evil one. ¹⁶ They do not belong to the world just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷ Set them apart in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ Just as you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And I set myself apart on their behalf, so that they too may be truly set apart.

Jesus Prays for Believers Everywhere

²⁰ “I am not praying only on their behalf, but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their testimony, ²¹ that they will all be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. I pray that they will be in us, so that the world will believe that you sent me. ²² The glory you gave to me I have given to them, that they may be one just as we are one – ²³ I in them and you in me – that they may be completely one, so that the world will know that you sent me, and you have loved them just as you have loved me.

²⁴ “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they can see my glory that you gave me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁵ Righteous Father, even if the world does not know you, I know you, and these men know that you sent me. ²⁶ I made known your name to them, and I will continue to make it known, so that the love you have loved me with may be in them, and I may be in them.”

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¹ When he had said these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley. There was an orchard there, and he and his disciples went into it. ² (Now Judas, the one who betrayed him, knew the place too, because Jesus had met there many times with his disciples.) ³ So Judas obtained a squad of soldiers and some officers of the chief priests and Pharisees. They came to the orchard with lanterns and torches and weapons.

⁴ Then Jesus, because he knew everything that was going to happen to him, came and asked them, “Who are you looking for?” ⁵ They replied, “Jesus the Nazarene.” He told them, “I am he.” (Now Judas, the one who betrayed him, was standing there with them.) ⁶ So when Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they retreated and fell to the ground. ⁷ Then Jesus asked them again, “Who are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus the Nazarene.” ⁸ Jesus replied, “I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, let these men go.” ⁹ He said this to fulfill the word he had spoken, “I have not lost a single one of those whom you gave me.”

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, pulled it out and struck the high priest’s slave, cutting off his right ear. (Now the slave’s name was Malchus.) ¹¹ But Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath! Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

Jesus Before Annas

¹² Then the squad of soldiers with their commanding officer and the officers of the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus and tied him up. ¹³ They brought him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ (Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was to their advantage that one man die for the people.)

Peter’s First Denial

¹⁵ Simon Peter and another disciple followed them as they brought Jesus to Annas. (Now the other disciple was acquainted with the high priest, and he went with Jesus into the high priest’s courtyard.) ¹⁶ But Simon Peter was left standing outside by the door. So the other disciple who was acquainted with the high priest came out and spoke to the slave girl who watched the door, and brought Peter inside. ¹⁷ The girl who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, “You’re not one of this man’s disciples too, are you?” He replied, “I am not.” ¹⁸ (Now the slaves and the guards were standing around a charcoal fire

they had made, warming themselves because it was cold. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.)

Jesus Questioned by Annas

¹⁹ While this was happening, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus replied, "I have spoken publicly to the world. I always taught in the synagogues and in the temple courts, where all the Jewish people assemble together. I have said nothing in secret. ²¹ Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said. They know what I said." ²² When Jesus had said this, one of the high priest's officers who stood nearby struck him on the face and said, "Is that the way you answer the high priest?" ²³ Jesus replied, "If I have said something wrong, confirm what is wrong. But if I spoke correctly, why strike me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the high priest.

Peter's Second and Third Denials

²⁵ Meanwhile Simon Peter was standing in the courtyard warming himself. They said to him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?" Peter denied it: "I am not!" ²⁶ One of the high priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the orchard with him?" ²⁷ Then Peter denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Jesus Brought Before Pilate

²⁸ Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the Roman governor's residence. (Now it was very early morning.) They did not go into the governor's residence so they would not be ceremonially defiled, but could eat the Passover meal. ²⁹ So Pilate came outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They replied, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you."

³¹ Pilate told them, "Take him yourselves and pass judgment on him according to your own law!" The Jewish leaders replied, "We cannot legally put anyone to death." ³² (This happened to fulfill the word Jesus had spoken when he indicated what kind of death he was going to die.)

Pilate Questions Jesus

³³ So Pilate went back into the governor's residence, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus replied, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or have others told you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "I am not

a Jew, am I? Your own people and your chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?"

³⁶ Jesus replied, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my servants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish authorities. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Then Pilate said, "So you are a king!" Jesus replied, "You say that I am a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world - to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate asked, "What is truth?"

When he had said this he went back outside to the Jewish leaders and announced, "I find no basis for an accusation against him. ³⁹ But it is your custom that I release one prisoner for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?" ⁴⁰ Then they shouted back, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" (Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.)

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¹ Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged severely. ² The soldiers braided a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they clothed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him again and again and said, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly in the face.

⁴ Again Pilate went out and said to the Jewish leaders, "Look, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find no reason for an accusation against him." ⁵ So Jesus came outside, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look, here is the man!" ⁶ When the chief priests and their officers saw him, they shouted out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said, "You take him and crucify him! Certainly I find no reason for an accusation against him!" ⁷ The Jewish leaders replied, "We have a law, and according to our law he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God!"

⁸ When Pilate heard what they said, he was more afraid than ever, ⁹ and he went back into the governor's residence and said to Jesus, "Where do you come from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Don't you know I have the authority to release you, and to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus replied, "You would have no authority over me at all, unless it was given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of greater sin."

¹² From this point on, Pilate tried to release him. But the Jewish leaders shouted out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar! Everyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar!" ¹³ When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus outside and sat down on the judgment seat in the place called "The Stone Pavement" (*Gabbatha* in Aramaic). ¹⁴ (Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, about noon.) Pilate said to the Jewish leaders, "Look, here is your king!"

¹⁵ Then they shouted out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked, "Shall I crucify your king?" The high priests replied, "We have no king except Caesar!"

¹⁶ Then Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

So they took Jesus, ¹⁷ and carrying his own cross he went out to the place called "The Place of the Skull" (called in Aramaic *Golgotha*). ¹⁸ There they crucified him along with two others, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹ Pilate also had a notice written and fastened to the cross, which read: "Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews." ²⁰ Thus many of the Jewish residents of Jerusalem read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the notice was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. ²¹ Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The king of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am king of the Jews.'" ²² Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

²³ Now when the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and made four shares, one for each soldier, and the tunic remained. (Now the tunic was seamless, woven from top to bottom as a single piece.) ²⁴ So the soldiers said to one another, "Let's not tear it, but throw dice to see who will get it." This took place to fulfill the scripture that says, "*They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they threw dice.*" So the soldiers did these things.

²⁵ Now standing beside Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ So when Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing there, he said to his mother, "Woman, look, here is your son!" ²⁷ He then said to his disciple, "Look, here is your mother!" From that very time the disciple took her into his own home.

Jesus' Death

²⁸ After this Jesus, realizing that by this time everything was completed, said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty!" ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was there, so they put a sponge soaked in sour wine on a branch of hyssop and lifted

it to his mouth. ³⁰ When he had received the sour wine, Jesus said, "It is completed!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹ Then, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies should not stay on the crosses on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was an especially important one), the Jewish leaders asked Pilate to have the victims' legs broken and the bodies taken down. ³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men who had been crucified with Jesus, first the one and then the other. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and blood and water flowed out immediately. ³⁵ And the person who saw it has testified (and his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth), so that you also may believe. ³⁶ For these things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled, "*Not a bone of his will be broken.*" ³⁷ And again another scripture says, "*They will look on the one whom they have pierced.*"

Jesus' Burial

³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus (but secretly, because he feared the Jewish leaders), asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission, so he went and took the body away. ³⁹ Nicodemus, the man who had previously come to Jesus at night, accompanied Joseph, carrying a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about seventy-five pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took Jesus' body and wrapped it, with the aromatic spices, in strips of linen cloth according to Jewish burial customs. ⁴¹ Now at the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden was a new tomb where no one had yet been buried. ⁴² And so, because it was the Jewish day of preparation and the tomb was nearby, they placed Jesus' body there.

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¹ Now very early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been moved away from the entrance. ² So she went running to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out to go to the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down and saw the strips of linen cloth lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter, who had been following him, arrived

and went right into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen cloth lying there,⁷ and the face cloth, which had been around Jesus' head, not lying with the strips of linen cloth but rolled up in a place by itself.⁸ Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, came in, and he saw and believed.⁹ (For they did not yet understand the scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead.)

Jesus' Appearance to Mary Magdalene

¹⁰ So the disciples went back to their homes. ¹¹ But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she bent down and looked into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white sitting where Jesus' body had been lying, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" Mary replied, "They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have put him!" ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?" Because she thought he was the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "*Rabboni*" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father. Go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and informed the disciples, "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them what Jesus had said to her.

Jesus' Appearance to the Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the disciples had gathered together and locked the doors of the place because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. Just as the Father has sent me, I also send you." ²² And after he said this, he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone's sins, they are retained."

The Response of Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he replied, "Unless I see the

wounds from the nails in his hands, and put my finger into the wounds from the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will never believe it!”

²⁶ Eight days later the disciples were again together in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and examine my hands. Extend your hand and put it into my side. Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe.” ²⁸ Thomas replied to him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are the people who have not seen and yet have believed.”

³⁰ Now Jesus performed many other miraculous signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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¹ After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. Now this is how he did so. ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael (who was from Cana in Galilee), the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of his were together. ³ Simon Peter told them, “I am going fishing.” “We will go with you,” they replied. They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴ When it was already very early morning, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ So Jesus said to them, “Children, you don’t have any fish, do you?” They replied, “No.” ⁶ He told them, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they threw the net, and were not able to pull it in because of the large number of fish.

⁷ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” So Simon Peter, when he heard that it was the Lord, tucked in his outer garment (for he had nothing on underneath it), and plunged into the sea. ⁸ Meanwhile the other disciples came with the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from land, only about a hundred yards.

⁹ When they got out on the beach, they saw a charcoal fire ready with a fish placed on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said, “Bring some of the fish you have just now caught.” ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and pulled the net to shore. It was full of large fish, one hundred fifty-three, but although there were

so many, the net was not torn. ¹² “Come, have breakfast,” Jesus said. But none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Peter's Restoration

¹⁵ Then when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these do?” He replied, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.” Jesus told him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶ Jesus said a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He replied, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.” Jesus told him, “Shepherd my sheep.” ¹⁷ Jesus said a third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was distressed that Jesus asked him a third time, “Do you love me?” and said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.” Jesus replied, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ I tell you the solemn truth, when you were young, you tied your clothes around you and went wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will tie you up and bring you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹ (Now Jesus said this to indicate clearly by what kind of death Peter was going to glorify God.) After he said this, Jesus told Peter, “Follow me.”

Peter and the Disciple Jesus Loved

²⁰ Peter turned around and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them. (This was the disciple who had leaned back against Jesus' chest at the meal and asked, “Lord, who is the one who is going to betray you?”) ²¹ So when Peter saw him, he asked Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” ²² Jesus replied, “If I want him to live until I come back, what concern is that of yours? You follow me!” ²³ So the saying circulated among the brothers and sisters that this disciple was not going to die. But Jesus did not say to him that he was not going to die, but rather, “If I want him to live until I come back, what concern is that of yours?”

A Final Note

²⁴ This is the disciple who testifies about these things and has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ There are many other things that Jesus did. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

Acts

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

¹ I wrote the former account, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after he had given orders by the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ To the same apostles also, after his suffering, he presented himself alive with many convincing proofs. He was seen by them over a forty-day period and spoke about matters concerning the kingdom of God. ⁴ While he was with them, he declared, “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait there for what my Father promised, which you heard about from me. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶ So when they had gathered together, they began to ask him, “Lord, is this the time when you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He told them, “You are not permitted to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth.” ⁹ After he had said this, while they were watching, he was lifted up and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ As they were still staring into the sky while he was going, suddenly two men in white clothing stood near them ¹¹ and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking up into the sky? This same Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come back in the same way you saw him go into heaven.”

A Replacement for Judas is Chosen

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain called the Mount of Olives (which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away). ¹³ When they had entered Jerusalem, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. Peter and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James were there. ¹⁴ All these continued together in prayer with one mind, together with the women, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. ¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty people) and said, ¹⁶ “Brothers, the scripture had to be fulfilled that the Holy Spirit foretold through David concerning Judas

- who became the guide for those who arrested Jesus - ¹⁷ for he was counted as one of us and received a share in this ministry." ¹⁸ (Now this man Judas acquired a field with the reward of his unjust deed, and falling headfirst he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. ¹⁹ This became known to all who lived in Jerusalem, so that in their own language they called that field *Hakeldama*, that is, "Field of Blood.") ²⁰ "For it is written in the book of Psalms, ' *Let his house become deserted, and let there be no one to live in it,*'

and ' *Let another take his position of responsibility.*' ²¹ Thus one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time the Lord Jesus associated with us, ²² beginning from his baptism by John until the day he was taken up from us - one of these must become a witness of his resurrection together with us." ²³ So they proposed two candidates: Joseph called Barsabbas (also called Justus) and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed, "Lord, you know the hearts of all. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to assume the task of this service and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." ²⁶ Then they cast lots for them, and the one chosen was Matthias; so he was counted with the eleven apostles.

2

¹ Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like a violent wind blowing came from heaven and filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And tongues spreading out like a fire appeared to them and came to rest on each one of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven residing in Jerusalem. ⁶ When this sound occurred, a crowd gathered and was in confusion, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷ Completely baffled, they said, "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ And how is it that each one of us hears them in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and the province of Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs - we hear them speaking in our own languages about the great deeds God has done!" ¹² All were astounded and greatly confused, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ But others jeered at the speakers, saying, "They are drunk on new wine!"

Peter's Address on the Day of Pentecost

¹⁴ But Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice, and addressed them: "You men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, know this and listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ In spite of what you think, these men are not drunk, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ *'And in the last days it will be,' God says, 'that I will pour out my Spirit on all people, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.*

¹⁸ *Even on my servants, both men and women,* I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.*

¹⁹ *And I will perform wonders in the sky above* and miraculous signs on the earth below, blood and fire and clouds of smoke.*

²⁰ *The sun will be changed to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.*

²¹ *And then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*

²² "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man clearly attested to you by God with powerful deeds, wonders, and miraculous signs that God performed among you through him, just as you yourselves know - ²³ this man, who was handed over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you executed by nailing him to a cross at the hands of Gentiles. ²⁴ But God raised him up, having released him from the pains of death, because it was not possible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵ For David says about him,

'I saw the Lord always in front of me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken.

²⁶ *Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced; my body also will live in hope,*

²⁷ *because you will not leave my soul in Hades, nor permit your Holy One to experience decay.*

²⁸ *You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of joy with your presence.'*

²⁹ "Brothers, I can speak confidently to you about our forefather David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ So then, because he was a prophet and knew that God *had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne,* ³¹ David by

foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that *he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his body experience decay.* ³² This Jesus God raised up, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ So then, exalted to the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out what you both see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into heaven, but he himself says,

'The Lord said to my lord,

*"Sit at my right hand**

³⁵ until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." '

³⁶ Therefore let all the house of Israel know beyond a doubt that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ."

The Response to Peter's Address

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were acutely distressed and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "What should we do, brothers?" ³⁸ Peter said to them, "Repent, and each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call to himself." ⁴⁰ With many other words he testified and exhorted them saying, "Save yourselves from this perverse generation!" ⁴¹ So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added.

The Fellowship of the Early Believers

⁴² They were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Reverential awe came over everyone, and many wonders and miraculous signs came about by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and held everything in common, ⁴⁵ and they began selling their property and possessions and distributing the proceeds to everyone, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to gather together by common consent in the temple courts, breaking bread from house to house, sharing their food with glad and humble hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the good will of all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number every day those who were being saved.

3

¹ Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time for prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. ² And a man lame from birth was being carried up, who was placed

at the temple gate called “the Beautiful Gate” every day so he could beg for money from those going into the temple courts. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple courts, he asked them for money. ⁴ Peter looked directly at him (as did John) and said, “Look at us!” ⁵ So the lame man paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ But Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, stand up and walk!” ⁷ Then Peter took hold of him by the right hand and raised him up, and at once the man’s feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ He jumped up, stood and began walking around, and he entered the temple courts with them, walking and leaping and praising God. ⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰ and they recognized him as the man who used to sit and ask for donations at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and they were filled with astonishment and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹¹ While the man was hanging on to Peter and John, all the people, completely astounded, ran together to them in the covered walkway called Solomon’s Portico. ¹² When Peter saw this, he declared to the people, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us as if we had made this man walk by our own power or piety? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our forefathers, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate after he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a man who was a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the Originator of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this fact we are witnesses! ¹⁶ And on the basis of faith in Jesus’ name, his very name has made this man – whom you see and know – strong. The faith that is through Jesus has given him this complete health in the presence of you all. ¹⁷ And now, brothers, I know you acted in ignorance, as your rulers did too. ¹⁸ But the things God foretold long ago through all the prophets – that his Christ would suffer – he has fulfilled in this way. ¹⁹ Therefore repent and turn back so that your sins may be wiped out, ²⁰ so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and so that he may send the Messiah appointed for you – that is, Jesus. ²¹ This one heaven must receive until the time all things are restored, which God declared from times long ago through his holy prophets. ²² Moses said, ‘*The Lord your God will raise up for*

you a prophet like me from among your brothers. You must obey him in everything he tells you.* ²³ Every person

who | strong="G3748" does not obey that prophet will be destroyed and thus removed

from | strong="G1537" the people.' ²⁴ And all the prophets, from Samuel and those who followed him, have spoken about and announced these days. ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors, saying to Abraham, ' *And in your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed: **' ²⁶ God raised up his servant and sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each one of you from your iniquities."

4

¹ While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and the commander of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, ² angry because they were teaching the people and announcing in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³ So they seized them and put them in jail until the next day (for it was already evening). ⁴ But many of those who had listened to the message believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

⁵ On the next day, their rulers, elders, and experts in the law came together in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and others who were members of the high priest's family. ⁷ After making Peter and John stand in their midst, they began to inquire, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, replied, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ if we are being examined today for a good deed done to a sick man - by what means this man was healed - ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, this man stands before you healthy.

¹¹ This Jesus is

the stone | strong="G3037" that was rejected by that was rejected by you, the builders, that has become the cornerstone. ¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among people by which we must be saved."

¹³ When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and discovered that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ And because they saw the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against this. ¹⁵ But when they had ordered them to go outside the

council, they began to confer with one another, ¹⁶ saying, “What should we do with these men? For it is plain to all who live in Jerusalem that a notable miraculous sign has come about through them, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But to keep this matter from spreading any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.” ¹⁸ And they called them in and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, “Whether it is right before God to obey you rather than God, you decide, ²⁰ for it is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard.” ²¹ After threatening them further, they released them, for they could not find how to punish them on account of the people, because they were all praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man, on whom this miraculous sign of healing had been performed, was over forty years old.

The Followers of Jesus Pray for Boldness

²³ When they were released, Peter and John went to their fellow believers and reported everything the high priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices to God with one mind and said, “Master of all, you who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them, ²⁵ who said by the Holy Spirit through your servant David our forefather,

*‘Why do the nations rage,
and the peoples plot foolish things?*

*²⁶ The kings of the earth stood together,
and the rulers assembled together,
against the Lord and against his Christ: *.’*

²⁷ “For indeed both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, ²⁸ to do as much as your power and your plan had decided beforehand would happen. ²⁹ And now, Lord, pay attention to their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your message with great courage, ³⁰ while you extend your hand to heal, and to bring about miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” ³¹ When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God courageously.

Conditions Among the Early Believers

³² The group of those who believed were of one heart and mind, and no one said that any of his possessions was his own,

but everything was held in common. ³³ With great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all. ³⁴ For there was no one needy among them, because those who were owners of land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds from the sales ³⁵ and placing them at the apostles' feet. The proceeds were distributed to each, as anyone had need. ³⁶ So Joseph, a Levite who was a native of Cyprus, called by the apostles Barnabas (which is translated "son of encouragement"), ³⁷ sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and placed it at the apostles' feet.

5

¹ Now a man named Ananias, together with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property. ² He kept back for himself part of the proceeds with his wife's knowledge; he brought only part of it and placed it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back for yourself part of the proceeds from the sale of the land? ⁴ Before it was sold, did it not belong to you? And when it was sold, was the money not at your disposal? How have you thought up this deed in your heart? You have not lied to people but to God!"

⁵ When Ananias heard these words he collapsed and died, and great fear gripped all who heard about it. ⁶ So the young men came, wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. ⁷ After an interval of about three hours, his wife came in, but she did not know what had happened. ⁸ Peter said to her, "Tell me, were the two of you paid this amount for the land?" Sapphira said, "Yes, that much." ⁹ Peter then told her, "Why have you agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out!" ¹⁰ At once she collapsed at his feet and died. So when the young men came in, they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great fear gripped the whole church and all who heard about these things.

The Apostles Perform Miraculous Signs and Wonders

¹² Now many miraculous signs and wonders came about among the people through the hands of the apostles. By common consent they were all meeting together in Solomon's Portico. ¹³ None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high honor. ¹⁴ More and more believers in the Lord were added to their number; crowds of both men and women. ¹⁵ Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets,

and put them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow would fall on some of them. ¹⁶ A crowd of people from the towns around Jerusalem also came together, bringing the sick and those troubled by unclean spirits. They were all being healed.

Further Trouble for the Apostles

¹⁷ Now the high priest rose up, and all those with him (that is, the religious party of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. ¹⁸ They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail. ¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, led them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go and stand in the temple courts and proclaim to the people all the words of this life." ²¹ When they heard this, they entered the temple courts at daybreak and began teaching.

Now when the high priest and those who were with him arrived, they summoned the Sanhedrin – that is, the whole high council of the Israelites – and sent to the jail to have the apostles brought before them. ²² But the officers who came for them did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, ²³ "We found the jail locked securely and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside." ²⁴ Now when the commander of the temple guard and the chief priests heard this report, they were greatly puzzled concerning it, wondering what this could be. ²⁵ But someone came and reported to them, "Look! The men you put in prison are standing in the temple courts and teaching the people!" ²⁶ Then the commander of the temple guard went with the officers and brought the apostles without the use of force (for they were afraid of being stoned by the people).

²⁷ When they had brought them, they stood them before the council, and the high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name. Look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood on us!" ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than people. ³⁰ The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you seized and killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him to his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses of these events, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

³³ Now when they heard this, they became furious and wanted to execute them. ³⁴ But a Pharisee whose name was Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was respected by all the

people, stood up in the council and ordered the men to be put outside for a short time. ³⁵ Then he said to the council, "Men of Israel, pay close attention to what you are about to do to these men. ³⁶ For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and nothing came of it. ³⁷ After him Judas the Galilean arose in the days of the census, and incited people to follow him in revolt. He too was killed, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸ So in this case I say to you, stay away from these men and leave them alone, because if this plan or this undertaking originates with people, it will come to nothing, ³⁹ but if it is from God, you will not be able to stop them, or you may even be found fighting against God." He convinced them, ⁴⁰ and they summoned the apostles and had them beaten. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus and released them. ⁴¹ So they left the council rejoicing because they had been considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name. ⁴² And every day both in the temple courts and from house to house, they did not stop teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus was the Christ.

6

¹ Now in those days, when the disciples were growing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Greek-speaking Jews against the native Hebraic Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the twelve called the whole group of the disciples together and said, "It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to wait on tables. ³ But carefully select from among you, brothers, seven men who are well-attested, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this necessary task. ⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵ The proposal pleased the entire group, so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a Gentile convert to Judaism from Antioch. ⁶ They stood these men before the apostles, who prayed and placed their hands on them. ⁷ The word of God continued to spread, the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large group of priests became obedient to the faith.

Stephen is Arrested

⁸ Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. ⁹ But some men from the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was

called), both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, as well as some from Cilicia and the province of Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. ¹⁰ Yet they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. ¹¹ Then they secretly instigated some men to say, "We have heard this man speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God." ¹² They incited the people, the elders, and the experts in the law; then they approached Stephen, seized him, and brought him before the council. ¹³ They brought forward false witnesses who said, "This man does not stop saying things against this holy place and the law. ¹⁴ For we have heard him saying that Jesus the Nazarene will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us." ¹⁵ All who were sitting in the council looked intently at Stephen and saw his face was like the face of an angel.

7

¹ Then the high priest said, "Are these things true?" ² So he replied, "Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he settled in Haran, ³ and said to him, '*Go out from your country and from your relatives, and come to the land I will show you.*' ⁴ Then he went out from the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God made him move to this country where you now live. ⁵ He did not give any of it to him for an inheritance, not even a foot of ground, yet God promised *to give it to him as his possession, and to his descendants after him*, even though Abraham as yet had no child. ⁶ But God spoke as follows: '*Your descendants will be foreigners in a foreign country, whose citizens will enslave them and mistreat them for four hundred years.* ⁷ *But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,*' said God, '*and after these things they will come out of there and worship me in this place.*' ⁸ Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, and so he became the father of Isaac and circumcised him when he was eight days old, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs. ⁹ The patriarchs, because they were jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt. But God was with him, ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his troubles, and granted him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. ¹¹ Then a famine occurred throughout Egypt and Canaan, causing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food. ¹² So when Jacob heard that there was grain

in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there the first time. ¹³ On their second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers again, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. ¹⁴ So Joseph sent a message and invited his father Jacob and all his relatives to come, seventy-five people in all. ¹⁵ So Jacob went down to Egypt and died there, along with our ancestors, ¹⁶ and their bones were later moved to Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a certain sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

¹⁷ "But as the time drew near for God to fulfill the promise he had declared to Abraham, the people increased greatly in number in Egypt, ¹⁸ until *another king who did not know about Joseph ruled over Egypt*. ¹⁹ This was the one who exploited our people and was cruel to our ancestors, forcing them to abandon their infants so they would die. ²⁰ At that time Moses was born, and he was beautiful to God. For three months he was brought up in his father's house, ²¹ and when he had been abandoned, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. ²² So Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds. ²³ But when he was about forty years old, it entered his mind to visit his fellow countrymen the Israelites. ²⁴ When he saw one of them being hurt unfairly, Moses came to his defense and avenged the person who was mistreated by striking down the Egyptian. ²⁵ He thought his own people would understand that God was delivering them through him, but they did not understand. ²⁶ The next day Moses saw two men fighting, and tried to make peace between them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you hurting one another?' ²⁷ But the man who was unfairly hurting his neighbor pushed Moses aside, saying, '*Who made you a ruler and judge over us?* ²⁸ *You don't want to kill me the way you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?*' ²⁹ When the man said this, Moses fled and became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰ "After forty years had passed, *an angel appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush*. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and when he approached to investigate, there came the voice of the Lord, ³² '*I am the God of your forefathers, the God | strong="G2316" of Abraham, Isaac, and | strong="G2532" Jacob.*' Moses began to tremble and did not dare to look more closely. ³³ *But the Lord said to him, 'Take the sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.* ³⁴ *I have certainly seen the suffering*

of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Now come, I will send you to Egypt.*' ³⁵ This same Moses they had rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and judge?' God sent as both ruler and deliverer through the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶ This man led them out, performing wonders and miraculous signs in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. ³⁷ This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, '

God | strong="G2316" will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers.' ³⁸ This is the man who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors, and he received living oracles to give to you. ³⁹ Our ancestors were unwilling to obey him, but pushed him aside and turned back to Egypt in their hearts, ⁴⁰ saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go in front of us, for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt - we do not know what has happened to him!' ⁴¹ At that time they made an idol in the form of a calf, brought a sacrifice to the idol, and began rejoicing in the works of their hands. ⁴² But God turned away from them and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets: 'It was not to me that you offered slain animals and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, house of Israel?' ⁴³ But you took along the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of the god Rephan, the images you made to worship, but I will deport you beyond Babylon*.' ⁴⁴ Our ancestors had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as God who spoke to Moses ordered him to make it according to the design he had seen. ⁴⁵ Our ancestors received possession of it and brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors, until the time of David. ⁴⁶ He found favor with God and asked that he could find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. ⁴⁷ But Solomon built a house for him. ⁴⁸ Yet the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands, as the prophet says,

⁴⁹ 'Heaven is my throne,
and earth is the footstool for my feet.

*What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord,
or what is my resting place?*

⁵⁰ *Did my hand not make all these things?'*

⁵¹ "You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, like your

ancestors did! ⁵² Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become! ⁵³ You received the law by decrees given by angels, but you did not obey it.”

Stephen is Killed

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they became furious and ground their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently toward heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ “Look!” he said. “I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, shouting out with a loud voice, and rushed at him with one intent. ⁵⁸ When they had driven him out of the city, they began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They continued to stone Stephen while he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” ⁶⁰ Then he fell to his knees and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” When he had said this, he died.

8

¹ And Saul agreed completely with killing him.

Saul Begins to Persecute the Church

Now on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were forced to scatter throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. ² Some devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. ³ But Saul was trying to destroy the church; entering one house after another, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

Philip Preaches in Samaria

⁴ Now those who had been forced to scatter went around proclaiming the good news of the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the main city of Samaria and began proclaiming the Christ to them. ⁶ The crowds were paying attention with one mind to what Philip said, as they heard and saw the miraculous signs he was performing. ⁷ For unclean spirits, crying with loud shrieks, were coming out of many who were possessed, and many paralyzed and lame people were healed. ⁸ So there was great joy in that city.

⁹ Now in that city was a man named Simon, who had been practicing magic and amazing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great. ¹⁰ All the people, from the

least to the greatest, paid close attention to him, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called 'Great.'" ¹¹ And they paid close attention to him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they began to be baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Even Simon himself believed, and after he was baptized, he stayed close to Philip constantly, and when he saw the signs and great miracles that were occurring, he was amazed.

¹⁴ Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ These two went down and prayed for them so that they would receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ (For the Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on the Samaritans, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸ Now Simon, when he saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, "Give me this power too, so that everyone I place my hands on may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰ But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could acquire God's gift with money! ²¹ You have no share or part in this matter because your heart is not right before God! ²² Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that he may perhaps forgive you for the intent of your heart. ²³ For I see that you are bitterly envious and in bondage to sin." ²⁴ But Simon replied, "You pray to the Lord for me so that nothing of what you have said may happen to me."

²⁵ So after Peter and John had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, proclaiming the good news to many Samaritan villages as they went.

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

²⁶ Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go south on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went. There he met an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and was returning home, sitting in his chariot, reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." ³⁰ So Philip ran up to it and heard the man reading Isaiah the

prophet. He asked him, “Do you understand what you’re reading?” ³¹ The man replied, “How in the world can I, unless someone guides me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² Now the passage of scripture the man was reading was this:

*“He was led like a sheep to slaughter,
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.*

³³ In humiliation justice was taken from him.
Who can describe his posterity?
For his life was taken away from the earth.”*

³⁴ Then the eunuch said to Philip, “Please tell me, who is the prophet saying this about – himself or someone else?” ³⁵ So Philip started speaking, and beginning with this scripture proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him. ³⁶ Now as they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, there is water! What is to stop me from being baptized?” ³⁷ * ³⁸ So he ordered the chariot to stop, and both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him any more, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through the area, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

9

¹ Meanwhile Saul, still breathing out threats to murder the Lord’s disciples, went to the high priest ² and requested letters from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, either men or women, he could bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he was going along, approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” ⁵ So he said, “Who are you, Lord?” He replied, “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting! ⁶ But stand up and enter the city and you will be told what you must do.” ⁷ (Now the men who were traveling with him stood there speechless, because they heard the voice but saw no one.) ⁸ So Saul got up from the ground, but although his eyes were open, he could see nothing. Leading him by the hand, his companions brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he could not see, and he neither ate nor drank anything.

* 8:37 [[EMPTY]]

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias,” and he replied, “Here I am, Lord.” ¹¹ Then the Lord told him, “Get up and go to the street called ‘Straight,’ and at Judas’ house look for a man from Tarsus named Saul. For he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and place his hands on him so that he may see again.” ¹³ But Ananias replied, “Lord, I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to imprison all who call on your name!” ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, because this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.” ¹⁷ So Ananias departed and entered the house, placed his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ Immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, his strength returned.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, ²⁰ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “This man is the Son of God.” ²¹ All who heard him were amazed and were saying, “Is this not the man who in Jerusalem was ravaging those who call on this name, and who had come here to bring them as prisoners to the chief priests?” ²² But Saul became more and more capable, and was causing consternation among the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Saul’s Escape from Damascus

²³ Now after some days had passed, the Jews plotted together to kill him, ²⁴ but Saul learned of their plot against him. They were also watching the city gates day and night so that they could kill him. ²⁵ But his disciples took him at night and let him down through an opening in the wall by lowering him in a basket.

Saul Returns to Jerusalem

²⁶ When he arrived in Jerusalem, he attempted to associate with the disciples, and they were all afraid of him, because they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took Saul, brought him to the apostles, and related to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken out

boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ So he was staying with them, associating openly with them in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹ He was speaking and debating with the Greek-speaking Jews, but they were trying to kill him. ³⁰ When the brothers found out about this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹ Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria experienced peace and thus was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, the church increased in numbers.

Peter Heals Aeneas

³² Now as Peter was traveling around from place to place, he also came down to the saints who lived in Lydda. ³³ He found there a man named Aeneas who had been confined to a mattress for eight years because he was paralyzed. ³⁴ Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Get up and make your own bed!" And immediately he got up. ³⁵ All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

Peter Raises Dorcas

³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which in translation means Dorcas). She was continually doing good deeds and acts of charity. ³⁷ At that time she became sick and died. When they had washed her body, they placed it in an upstairs room. ³⁸ Because Lydda was near Joppa, when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Come to us without delay." ³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them, and when he arrived they brought him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him, crying and showing him the tunics and other clothing Dorcas used to make while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter sent them all outside, knelt down, and prayed. Turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her get up. Then he called the saints and widows and presented her alive. ⁴² This became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ So Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a man named Simon, a tanner.

10

¹ Now there was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort. ² He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was all his household; he did many acts of charity for the people and prayed to God regularly. ³ About three o'clock one afternoon he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God who came in and said to him,

“Cornelius.” ⁴ Staring at him and becoming greatly afraid, Cornelius replied, “What is it, Lord?” The angel said to him, “Your prayers and your acts of charity have gone up as a memorial before God. ⁵ Now send men to Joppa and summon a man named Simon, who is called Peter. ⁶ This man is staying as a guest with a man named Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea.” ⁷ When the angel who had spoken to him departed, Cornelius called two of his personal servants and a devout soldier from among those who served him, ⁸ and when he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

⁹ About noon the next day, while they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. ¹⁰ He became hungry and wanted to eat, but while they were preparing the meal, a trance came over him. ¹¹ He saw heaven opened and an object something like a large sheet descending, being let down to earth by its four corners. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals and reptiles of the earth and wild birds. ¹³ Then a voice said to him, “Get up, Peter; slaughter and eat!” ¹⁴ But Peter said, “Certainly not, Lord, for I have never eaten anything defiled and ritually unclean!” ¹⁵ The voice spoke to him again, a second time, “What God has made clean, you must not consider ritually unclean!” ¹⁶ This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into heaven.

¹⁷ Now while Peter was puzzling over what the vision he had seen could signify, the men sent by Cornelius had learned where Simon’s house was and approached the gate. ¹⁸ They called out to ask if Simon, known as Peter, was staying there as a guest. ¹⁹ While Peter was still thinking seriously about the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Look! Three men are looking for you. ²⁰ But get up, go down, and accompany them without hesitation, because I have sent them.” ²¹ So Peter went down to the men and said, “Here I am, the person you’re looking for. Why have you come?” ²² They said, “Cornelius the centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man, well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear a message from you.” ²³ So Peter invited them in and entertained them as guests.

On the next day he got up and set out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴ The following day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting anxiously for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ So when Peter came in, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet, and worshiped him. ²⁶ But Peter helped him

up, saying, "Stand up. I too am a mere mortal." ²⁷ Peter continued talking with him as he went in, and he found many people gathered together. ²⁸ He said to them, "You know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile, yet God has shown me that I should call no person defiled or ritually unclean. ²⁹ Therefore when you sent for me, I came without any objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?" ³⁰ Cornelius replied, "Four days ago at this very hour, at three o'clock in the afternoon, I was praying in my house, and suddenly a man in shining clothing stood before me ³¹ and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your acts of charity have been remembered before God. ³² Therefore send to Joppa and summon Simon, who is called Peter. This man is staying as a guest in the house of Simon the tanner, by the sea.' ³³ Therefore I sent for you at once, and you were kind enough to come. So now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to say to us."

³⁴ Then Peter started speaking: "I now truly understand that God does not show favoritism in dealing with people, ³⁵ but in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is welcomed before him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all) – ³⁷ you know what happened throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ with respect to Jesus from Nazareth, that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses of all the things he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen, ⁴¹ not by all the people, but by us, the witnesses God had already chosen, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to warn them that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ About him all the prophets testify, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

The Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were greatly astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured

out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶ for they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ “No one can withhold the water for these people to be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” ⁴⁸ So he gave orders to have them baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for several days.

11

¹ Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles too had accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers took issue with him, ³ saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and shared a meal with them.” ⁴ But Peter began and explained it to them point by point, saying, ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, an object something like a large sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came to me. ⁶ As I stared I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, reptiles, and wild birds. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; slaughter and eat!’ ⁸ But I said, ‘Certainly not, Lord, for nothing defiled or ritually unclean has ever entered my mouth!’ ⁹ But the voice replied a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, you must not consider ritually unclean!’ ¹⁰ This happened three times, and then everything was pulled up to heaven again. ¹¹ At that very moment, three men sent to me from Caesarea approached the house where we were staying. ¹² The Spirit told me to accompany them without hesitation. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He informed us how he had seen an angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and summon Simon, who is called Peter, ¹⁴ who will speak a message to you by which you and your entire household will be saved.’ ¹⁵ Then as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as he did on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, as he used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ Therefore if God gave them the same gift as he also gave us after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to hinder God?” ¹⁸ When they heard this, they ceased their objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted the repentance that leads to life even to the Gentiles.”

Activity in the Church at Antioch

¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen went as far as Phoenicia,

Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the message to no one but Jews. ²⁰ But there were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene among them who came to Antioch and began to speak to the Greeks too, proclaiming the good news of the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. ²² A report about them came to the attention of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³ When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts, ²⁴ because he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and a significant number of people were brought to the Lord. ²⁵ Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught a significant number of people. Now it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.

Famine Relief for Judea

²⁷ At that time some prophets came down from Jerusalem ²⁸ One of them, named Agabus, got up and predicted by the Spirit that a severe famine was about to come over the whole inhabited world. (This took place during the reign of Claudius.) ²⁹ So the disciples, each in accordance with his financial ability, decided to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. ³⁰ They did so, sending their financial aid to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

12

¹ About that time King Herod laid hands on some from the church to harm them. ² He had James, the brother of John, executed with a sword. ³ When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter too. (This took place during the feast of Unleavened Bread.) ⁴ When he had seized him, he put him in prison, handing him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him. Herod planned to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. ⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but those in the church were earnestly praying to God for him. ⁶ On that very night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the prison cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly!" And the chains fell off Peter's wrists. ⁸ The angel said to him, "Fasten your belt and put on your sandals." Peter

did so. Then the angel said to him, "Put on your cloak and follow me." ⁹ Peter went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening through the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ After they had passed the first and second guards, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went outside and walked down one narrow street, when at once the angel left him. ¹¹ When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from everything the Jewish people were expecting to happen."

¹² When Peter realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many people had gathered together and were praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the door of the outer gate, a slave girl named Rhoda answered. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she did not open the gate, but ran back in and told them that Peter was standing at the gate. ¹⁵ But they said to her, "You've lost your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was Peter, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!" ¹⁶ Now Peter continued knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were greatly astonished. ¹⁷ He motioned to them with his hand to be quiet and then related how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. He said, "Tell James and the brothers these things," and then he left and went to another place.

¹⁸ At daybreak there was great consternation among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. ¹⁹ When Herod had searched for him and did not find him, he questioned the guards and commanded that they be led away to execution. Then Herod went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

²⁰ Now Herod was having an angry quarrel with the people of Tyre So they joined together and presented themselves before him. And after convincing Blastus, the king's personal assistant, to help them, they asked for peace, because their country's food supply was provided by the king's country. ²¹ On a day determined in advance, Herod put on his royal robes, sat down on the judgment seat, and made a speech to them. ²² But the crowd began to shout, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" ²³ Immediately an angel of the Lord struck Herod down because he did not give the glory to God, and he was eaten by worms and died. ²⁴ But the word of God kept on increasing and multiplying.

²⁵ So Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem when they had completed their mission, bringing along with them John

Mark.

13

¹ Now there were these prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaen (a close friend of Herod the tetrarch from childhood) and Saul. ² While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then, after they had fasted and prayed and placed their hands on them, they sent them off.

Paul and Barnabas Preach in Cyprus

⁴ So Barnabas and Saul, sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived in Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. (Now they also had John as their assistant.) ⁶ When they had crossed over the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus, ⁷ who was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. The proconsul summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸ But the magician Elymas (for that is the way his name is translated) opposed them, trying to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ But Saul (also known as Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, stared straight at him ¹⁰ and said, "You who are full of all deceit and all wrongdoing, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness - will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ¹¹ Now look, the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind, unable to see the sun for a time!" Immediately mistiness and darkness came over him, and he went around seeking people to lead him by the hand. ¹² Then when the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, because he was greatly astounded at the teaching about the Lord.

Paul and Barnabas at Pisidian Antioch

¹³ Then Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia, but John left them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ Moving on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. ¹⁵ After the reading from the law and the prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, "Brothers, if you have any message of exhortation for the people, speak it." ¹⁶ So Paul stood up, gestured with his hand and said,

“Men of Israel, and you Gentiles who fear God, listen: ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay as foreigners in the country of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. ¹⁸ For a period of about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. ¹⁹ After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave his people their land as an inheritance. ²⁰ All this took about four hundred fifty years. After this he gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. ²¹ Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. ²² After removing him, God raised up David their king. He testified about him: ‘*I have found David the son of Jesse to be a man after my heart, who will accomplish everything I want him to do.*’ ²³ From the descendants of this man God brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, just as he promised. ²⁴ Before Jesus arrived, John had proclaimed a baptism for repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵ But while John was completing his mission, he said repeatedly, ‘What do you think I am? I am not he. But look, one is coming after me. I am not worthy to untie the sandals on his feet!’ ²⁶ Brothers, descendants of Abraham’s family, and those Gentiles among you who fear God, the message of this salvation has been sent to us. ²⁷ For the people who live in Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize him, and they fulfilled the sayings of the prophets that are read every Sabbath by condemning him. ²⁸ Though they found no basis for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. ²⁹ When they had accomplished everything that was written about him, they took him down from the cross and placed him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him from the dead, ³¹ and for many days he appeared to those who had accompanied him from Galilee to Jerusalem. These are now his witnesses to the people. ³² And we proclaim to you the good news about the promise to our ancestors, ³³ that this promise God has fulfilled to us, their children, by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second psalm, ‘*You are my Son; today I have fathered you**.’ ³⁴ But regarding the fact that he has raised Jesus from the dead, never again to be in a state of decay, God has spoken in this way: ‘*I will give you the holy and trustworthy promises made to David**.’ ³⁵ Therefore he also says in another psalm, ‘*You will not permit your Holy One to experience decay**.’ ³⁶ For David, after he had served God’s purpose in his own generation, died, was buried with his ancestors, and experienced decay, ³⁷ but the one whom God raised up did not experience decay.

³⁸ Therefore let it be known to you, brothers, that through this one forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, ³⁹ and by this one everyone who believes is justified from everything from which the law of Moses could not justify you. ⁴⁰ Watch out, then, that what is spoken about by the prophets does not happen to you:

⁴¹ *‘Look, you scoffers; be amazed and perish!*

For I am doing a work in your days,

a work you would never believe, even if someone tells you.’ ”

⁴² As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people were urging them to speak about these things on the next Sabbath.

⁴³ When the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who were speaking with them and were persuading them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴ On the next Sabbath almost the whole city assembled together to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy, and they began to contradict what Paul was saying by reviling him. ⁴⁶ Both Paul and Barnabas replied courageously, “It was necessary to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we are turning to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For this is what the Lord has commanded us: *‘I have appointed you to be a light for the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”* ⁴⁸ When the Gentiles heard this, they began to rejoice and praise the word of the Lord, and all who had been appointed for eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ So the word of the Lord was spreading through the entire region. ⁵⁰ But the Jews incited the God-fearing women of high social standing and the prominent men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and threw them out of their region. ⁵¹ So after they shook the dust off their feet in protest against them, they went to Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

14

¹ The same thing happened in Iconium when Paul and Barnabas went into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a large group of both Jews and Greeks believed. ² But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ³ So they stayed there for a considerable time, speaking out courageously for the Lord, who testified to the message of his grace, granting miraculous signs and wonders to be performed through their hands. ⁴ But the population of the city was divided; some

sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles. ⁵ When both the Gentiles and the Jews (together with their rulers) made an attempt to mistreat them and stone them, ⁶ Paul and Barnabas learned about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and the surrounding region. ⁷ There they continued to proclaim the good news.

Paul and Barnabas at Lystra

⁸ In Lystra sat a man who could not use his feet, lame from birth, who had never walked. ⁹ This man was listening to Paul as he was speaking. When Paul stared intently at him and saw he had faith to be healed, ¹⁰ he said with a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And the man leaped up and began walking. ¹¹ So when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!” ¹² They began to call Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ The priest of the temple of Zeus, located just outside the city, brought bulls and garlands to the city gates; he and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifices to them. ¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard about it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting, ¹⁵ “Men, why are you doing these things? We too are men, with human natures just like you! We are proclaiming the good news to you, so that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them. ¹⁶ In past generations he allowed all the nations to go their own ways, ¹⁷ yet he did not leave himself without a witness by doing good, by giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying you with food and your hearts with joy.” ¹⁸ Even by saying these things, they scarcely persuaded the crowds not to offer sacrifice to them.

¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and after winning the crowds over, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, presuming him to be dead. ²⁰ But after the disciples had surrounded him, he got up and went back into the city. On the next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.

Paul and Barnabas Return to Antioch in Syria

²¹ After they had proclaimed the good news in that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, ²² They strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, “We must enter the kingdom of God through many persecutions.” ²³ When they had appointed elders for them in the various churches, with

prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the protection of the Lord in whom they had believed. ²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia, ²⁵ and when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶ From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. ²⁷ When they arrived and gathered the church together, they reported all the things God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. ²⁸ So they spent considerable time with the disciples.

15

¹ Now some men came down from Judea and began to teach the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." ² When Paul and Barnabas had a major argument and debate with them, the church appointed Paul and Barnabas and some others from among them to go up to meet with the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this point of disagreement. ³ So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they were relating at length the conversion of the Gentiles and bringing great joy to all the brothers. ⁴ When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all the things God had done with them. ⁵ But some from the religious party of the Pharisees who had believed stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise the Gentiles and to order them to observe the law of Moses."

⁶ Both the apostles and the elders met together to deliberate about this matter. ⁷ After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that some time ago God chose me to preach to the Gentiles so they would hear the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸ And God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, ⁹ and he made no distinction between them and us, cleansing their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ So now why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹ On the contrary, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they are."

¹² The whole group kept quiet and listened to Barnabas and Paul while they explained all the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. ¹³ After they stopped speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me.

¹⁴ Simeon has explained how God first concerned himself to select from among the Gentiles a people for his name. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written, ¹⁶ ‘*After this I will return, and I will rebuild the fallen tent of David;* I will rebuild its ruins and restore it,** ¹⁷ *so that the rest of humanity may seek the Lord,* namely, all the Gentiles I have called to be my own,’* says the Lord,* *who makes these things* ¹⁸ *known from long ago.*

¹⁹ “Therefore I conclude that we should not cause extra difficulty for those among the Gentiles who are turning to God, ²⁰ but that we should write them a letter telling them to abstain from things defiled by idols and from sexual immorality and from what has been strangled and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has had those who proclaim him in every town from ancient times, because he is read aloud in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

²² Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to send men chosen from among them, Judas called Barsabbas and Silas, leaders among the brothers, to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. ²³ They sent this letter with them:

From the apostles and elders, your brothers, to the Gentile brothers and sisters in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, greetings! ²⁴ Since we have heard that some have gone out from among us with no orders from us and have confused you, upsetting your minds by what they said, ²⁵ we have unanimously decided to choose men to send to you along with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas who will tell you these things themselves in person. ²⁸ For it seemed best to the Holy Spirit and to us not to place any greater burden on you than these necessary rules: ²⁹ that you abstain from meat that has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what has been strangled and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from doing these things, you will do well. Farewell.

³⁰ So when they were dismissed, they went down to Antioch, and after gathering the entire group together, they delivered the letter. ³¹ When they read it aloud, the people rejoiced at its encouragement. ³² Both Judas and Silas, who were prophets themselves, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with a long speech. ³³ After they had spent some time there, they were sent off in peace by the brothers to those who had sent them. ³⁴ * ³⁵ But Paul and Barnabas remained in

* 15:34 [[EMPTY]]

Antioch, teaching and proclaiming (along with many others) the word of the Lord.

Paul and Barnabas Part Company

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's return and visit the brothers in every town where we proclaimed the word of the Lord to see how they are doing." ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to bring John called Mark along with them too, ³⁸ but Paul insisted that they should not take along this one who had left them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. ³⁹ They had a sharp disagreement, so that they parted company. Barnabas took along Mark and sailed away to Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and set out, commended to the grace of the Lord by the brothers and sisters. ⁴¹ He passed through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

16

¹ He also came to Derbe. A disciple named Timothy was there, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but whose father was a Greek. ² The brothers in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was Greek. ⁴ As they went through the towns, they passed on the decrees that had been decided on by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the Gentile believers to obey. ⁵ So the churches were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in number every day.

Paul's Vision of the Macedonian Man

⁶ They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the message in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to do this, ⁸ so they passed through Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ A vision appeared to Paul during the night: A Macedonian man was standing there urging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" ¹⁰ After Paul saw the vision, we attempted immediately to go over to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

Arrival at Philippi

¹¹ We put out to sea from Troas and sailed a straight course to Samothrace, the next day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of that district of Macedonia, a Roman colony. We stayed in this city for some days. ¹³ On

the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate to the side of the river, where we thought there would be a place of prayer, and we sat down and began to speak to the women who had assembled there. ¹⁴A woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, a God-fearing woman, listened to us. The Lord opened her heart to respond to what Paul was saying. ¹⁵After she and her household were baptized, she urged us, "If you consider me to be a believer in the Lord, come and stay in my house." And she persuaded us.

Paul and Silas Are Thrown Into Prison

¹⁶Now as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave girl met us who had a spirit that enabled her to foretell the future by supernatural means. She brought her owners a great profit by fortune-telling. ¹⁷She followed behind Paul and us and kept crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸She continued to do this for many days. But Paul became greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out of her at once. ¹⁹But when her owners saw their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. ²⁰When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion. They are Jews ²¹and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us to accept or practice, since we are Romans."

²²The crowd joined the attack against them, and the magistrates tore the clothes off Paul and Silas and ordered them to be beaten with rods. ²³After they had beaten them severely, they threw them into prison and commanded the jailer to guard them securely. ²⁴Receiving such orders, he threw them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the rest of the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶Suddenly a great earthquake occurred, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors flew open, and the bonds of all the prisoners came loose. ²⁷When the jailer woke up and saw the doors of the prison standing open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he assumed the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸But Paul called out loudly, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" ²⁹Calling for lights, the jailer rushed in and fell down trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. ³⁰Then he brought them outside and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus

and you will be saved, you and your household.” ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him, along with all those who were in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and all his family were baptized right away. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set food before them, and he rejoiced greatly that he had come to believe in God, together with his entire household. ³⁵ At daybreak the magistrates sent their police officers, saying, “Release those men.” ³⁶ The jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent orders to release you. So come out now and go in peace.” ³⁷ But Paul said to the police officers, “They had us beaten in public without a proper trial – even though we are Roman citizens – and they threw us in prison. And now they want to send us away secretly? Absolutely not! They themselves must come and escort us out!” ³⁸ The police officers reported these words to the magistrates. They were frightened when they heard Paul and Silas were Roman citizens ³⁹ and came and apologized to them. After they brought them out, they asked them repeatedly to leave the city. ⁴⁰ When they came out of the prison, they entered Lydia’s house, and when they saw the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed.

17

¹ After they traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² Paul went to the Jews in the synagogue, as he customarily did, and on three Sabbath days he addressed them from the scriptures, ³ explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and to rise from the dead, saying, “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.” ⁴ Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large group of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women. ⁵ But the Jews became jealous, and gathering together some worthless men from the rabble in the marketplace, they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar. They attacked Jason’s house, trying to find Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly. ⁶ When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city officials, screaming, “These people who have stirred up trouble throughout the world have come here too, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them as guests! They are all acting against Caesar’s decrees, saying there is another king named Jesus!” ⁸ They caused confusion among the crowd and the city

officials who heard these things. ⁹ After the city officials had received bail from Jason and the others, they released them.

Paul and Silas at Berea

¹⁰ The brothers sent Paul and Silas off to Berea at once, during the night. When they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ These Jews were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they eagerly received the message, examining the scriptures carefully every day to see if these things were so. ¹² Therefore many of them believed, along with quite a few prominent Greek women and men. ¹³ But when the Jews from Thessalonica heard that Paul had also proclaimed the word of God in Berea, they came there too, inciting and disturbing the crowds. ¹⁴ Then the brothers sent Paul away to the coast at once, but Silas and Timothy remained in Berea. ¹⁵ Those who accompanied Paul escorted him as far as Athens, and after receiving an order for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

Paul at Athens

¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was greatly upset because he saw the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he was addressing the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles in the synagogue, and in the marketplace every day those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him, and some were asking, "What does this foolish babbler want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods." (They said this because he was proclaiming the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) ¹⁹ So they took Paul and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are proclaiming?" ²⁰ For you are bringing some surprising things to our ears, so we want to know what they mean." ²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there used to spend their time in nothing else than telling or listening to something new.)

²² So Paul stood before the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in all respects. ²³ For as I went around and observed closely your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: 'To an unknown god.' Therefore what you worship without knowing it, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives life and breath and everything to everyone. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of the human race

to inhabit the entire earth, determining their set times and the fixed limits of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God and perhaps grope around for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For in him we live and move about and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.' ²⁹ So since we are God's offspring, we should not think the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image made by human skill and imagination. ³⁰ Therefore, although God has overlooked such times of ignorance, he now commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has set a day on which he is going to judge the world in righteousness, by a man whom he designated, having provided proof to everyone by raising him from the dead."

³² Now when they heard about the resurrection from the dead, some began to scoff, but others said, "We will hear you again about this." ³³ So Paul left the Areopagus. ³⁴ But some people joined him and believed. Among them were Dionysius, who was a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

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¹ After this Paul departed from Athens ² There he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to depart from Rome. Paul approached them, ³ and because he worked at the same trade, he stayed with them and worked with them (for they were tentmakers by trade). ⁴ He addressed both Jews and Greeks in the synagogue every Sabbath, attempting to persuade them.

⁵ Now when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul became wholly absorbed with proclaiming the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ⁶ When they opposed him and reviled him, he protested by shaking out his clothes and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am guiltless! From now on I will go to the Gentiles!" ⁷ Then Paul left the synagogue and went to the house of a person named Titius Justus, a Gentile who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸ Crispus, the president of the synagogue, believed in the Lord together with his entire household, and many of the Corinthians who heard about it believed and were baptized. ⁹ The Lord said to Paul by a vision in the night, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent, ¹⁰ because I am with you, and no one will assault you to harm you, because I have many people in this

city.”¹¹ So he stayed there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Paul Before the Proconsul Gallio

¹² Now while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews attacked Paul together and brought him before the judgment seat, ¹³ saying, “This man is persuading people to worship God in a way contrary to the law!” ¹⁴ But just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of some crime or serious piece of villainy, I would have been justified in accepting the complaint of you Jews, ¹⁵ but since it concerns points of disagreement about words and names and your own law, settle it yourselves. I will not be a judge of these things!” ¹⁶ Then he had them forced away from the judgment seat. ¹⁷ So they all seized Sosthenes, the president of the synagogue, and began to beat him in front of the judgment seat. Yet none of these things were of any concern to Gallio.

Paul Returns to Antioch in Syria

¹⁸ Paul, after staying many more days in Corinth, said farewell to the brothers and sailed away to Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because he had made a vow. ¹⁹ When they reached Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila behind there, but he himself went into the synagogue and addressed the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked him to stay longer, he would not consent, ²¹ but said farewell to them and added, “I will come back to you again if God wills.” Then he set sail from Ephesus, ²² and when he arrived at Caesarea, ²³ After he spent some time there, Paul left and went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Apollos Begins His Ministry

²⁴ Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, arrived in Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker, well-versed in the scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm he spoke and taught accurately the facts about Jesus, although he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak out fearlessly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God to him more accurately. ²⁷ When Apollos wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he assisted greatly those

who had believed by grace, ²⁸ for he refuted the Jews vigorously in public debate, demonstrating from the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

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¹ While Apollos was in Corinth, He found some disciples there ² and said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” They replied, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ So Paul said, “Into what then were you baptized?” “Into John’s baptism,” they replied. ⁴ Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, ⁶ and when Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy. ⁷ (Now there were about twelve men in all.)

Paul Continues to Minister at Ephesus

⁸ So Paul entered the synagogue and spoke out fearlessly for three months, addressing and convincing them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some were stubborn and refused to believe, reviling the Way before the congregation, he left them and took the disciples with him, addressing them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

The Seven Sons of Sceva

¹¹ God was performing extraordinary miracles by Paul’s hands, ¹² so that when even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his body were brought to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. ¹³ But some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were possessed by evil spirits, saying, “I sternly warn you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.” ¹⁴ (Now seven sons of a man named Sceva, a Jewish high priest, were doing this.) ¹⁵ But the evil spirit replied to them, “I know about Jesus and I am acquainted with Paul, but who are you?” ¹⁶ Then the man who was possessed by the evil spirit jumped on them and beat them all into submission. He prevailed against them so that they fled from that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known to all who lived in Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks; fear came over them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was praised. ¹⁸ Many of those who had believed came forward, confessing and making their deeds known. ¹⁹ Large numbers of those who

had practiced magic collected their books and burned them up in the presence of everyone. When the value of the books was added up, it was found to total fifty thousand silver coins. ²⁰ In this way the word of the Lord continued to grow in power and to prevail.

A Riot in Ephesus

²¹ Now after all these things had taken place, Paul resolved to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. He said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." ²² So after sending two of his assistants, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, he himself stayed on for a while in the province of Asia.

²³ At that time a great disturbance took place concerning the Way. ²⁴ For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought a great deal of business to the craftsmen. ²⁵ He gathered these together, along with the workmen in similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity comes from this business. ²⁶ And you see and hear that this Paul has persuaded and turned away a large crowd, not only in Ephesus but in practically all of the province of Asia, by saying that gods made by hands are not gods at all. ²⁷ There is danger not only that this business of ours will come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be regarded as nothing, and she whom all the province of Asia and the world worship will suffer the loss of her greatness."

²⁸ When they heard this they became enraged and began to shout, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹ The city was filled with the uproar, and the crowd rushed to the theater together, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, the Macedonians who were Paul's traveling companions. ³⁰ But when Paul wanted to enter the public assembly, the disciples would not let him. ³¹ Even some of the provincial authorities who were his friends sent a message to him, urging him not to venture into the theater. ³² So then some were shouting one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had met together. ³³ Some of the crowd concluded it was about Alexander because the Jews had pushed him to the front. Alexander, gesturing with his hand, was wanting to make a defense before the public assembly. ³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" for about two hours. ³⁵ After the city secretary quieted the crowd, he said, "Men of Ephesus, what person is there who does not know that

the city of the Ephesians is the keeper of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image that fell from heaven? ³⁶ So because these facts are indisputable, you must keep quiet and not do anything reckless. ³⁷ For you have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸ If then Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against someone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges against one another there. ³⁹ But if you want anything in addition, it will have to be settled in a legal assembly. ⁴⁰ For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause we can give to explain this disorderly gathering.” ⁴¹ After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

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¹ After the disturbance had ended, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left to go to Macedonia. ² After he had gone through those regions and spoken many words of encouragement to the believers there, he came to Greece, ³ where he stayed for three months. Because the Jews had made a plot against him as he was intending to sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴ Paul was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, and Timothy, as well as Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. ⁵ These had gone on ahead and were waiting for us in Troas. ⁶ We sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and within five days we came to the others in Troas, where we stayed for seven days. ⁷ On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul began to speak to the people, and because he intended to leave the next day, he extended his message until midnight. ⁸ (Now there were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting.) ⁹ A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, was sinking into a deep sleep while Paul continued to speak for a long time. Fast asleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. ¹⁰ But Paul went down, threw himself on the young man, put his arms around him, and said, “Do not be distressed, for he is still alive!” ¹¹ Then Paul went back upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he talked with them a long time, until dawn. Then he left. ¹² They took the boy home alive and were greatly comforted.

The Voyage to Miletus

¹³ We went on ahead to the ship and put out to sea for Assos, intending to take Paul aboard there, for he had arranged

it this way. He himself was intending to go there by land. ¹⁴ When he met us in Assos, we took him aboard and went to Mitylene. ¹⁵ We set sail from there, and on the following day we arrived off Chios. The next day we approached Samos, and the day after that we arrived at Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus if possible, by the day of Pentecost. ¹⁷ From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, telling the elders of the church to come to him.

¹⁸ When they arrived, he said to them, “You yourselves know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I set foot in the province of Asia, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, and with the trials that happened to me because of the plots of the Jews. ²⁰ You know that I did not hold back from proclaiming to you anything that would be helpful, and from teaching you publicly and from house to house, ²¹ testifying to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus. ²² And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem without knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit warns me in town after town that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. ²⁴ But I do not consider my life worth anything to myself, so that I may finish my task and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace.

²⁵ “And now I know that none of you among whom I went around proclaiming the kingdom will see me again. ²⁶ Therefore I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of you all. ²⁷ For I did not hold back from announcing to you the whole purpose of God. ²⁸ Watch out for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. ²⁹ I know that after I am gone fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Even from among your own group men will arise, teaching perversions of the truth to draw the disciples away after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that night and day for three years I did not stop warning each one of you with tears. ³² And now I entrust you to God and to the message of his grace. This message is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I have desired no one’s silver or gold or clothing. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands of mine provided for my needs and the needs of those who were with me. ³⁵ By all these things, I have shown you that by working in this way we must help the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he

himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

³⁶ When he had said these things, he knelt down with them all and prayed. ³⁷ They all began to weep loudly, and hugged Paul and kissed him, ³⁸ especially saddened by what he had said, that they were not going to see him again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

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¹ After we tore ourselves away from them, we put out to sea, and sailing a straight course, we came to Cos, on the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. ² We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went aboard, and put out to sea. ³ After we sighted Cyprus and left it behind on our port side, we sailed on to Syria and put in at Tyre, because the ship was to unload its cargo there. ⁴ After we located the disciples, we stayed there seven days. They repeatedly told Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem. ⁵ When our time was over, we left and went on our way. All of them, with their wives and children, accompanied us outside of the city. After kneeling down on the beach and praying, ⁶ we said farewell to one another. Then we went aboard the ship, and they returned to their own homes. ⁷ We continued the voyage from Tyre and arrived at Ptolemais, and when we had greeted the brothers, we stayed with them for one day. ⁸ On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. ⁹ (He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.)

¹⁰ While we remained there for a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ He came to us, took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it, and said, "The Holy Spirit says this: 'This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up the man whose belt this is, and will hand him over to the Gentiles.' " ¹² When we heard this, both we and the local people begged him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul replied, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be tied up, but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." ¹⁴ Because he could not be persuaded, we said no more except, "The Lord's will be done."

¹⁵ After these days we got ready and started up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ Some of the disciples from Caesarea came along with us too, and brought us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus, a disciple from the earliest times, with whom we were to stay. ¹⁷ When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly. ¹⁸ The next day Paul went in with us to see James, and

all the elders were there. ¹⁹ When Paul had greeted them, he began to explain in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all ardent observers of the law. ²¹ They have been informed about you – that you teach all the Jews now living among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. ²² What then should we do? They will no doubt hear that you have come. ²³ So do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow; ²⁴ take them and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses, so that they may have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself live in conformity with the law. ²⁵ But regarding the Gentiles who have believed, we have written a letter, having decided that they should avoid meat that has been sacrificed to idols and blood and what has been strangled and sexual immorality." ²⁶ Then Paul took the men the next day, and after he had purified himself along with them, he went to the temple and gave notice of the completion of the days of purification, when the sacrifice would be offered for each of them. ²⁷ When the seven days were almost over, the Jews from the province of Asia who had seen him in the temple area stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, ²⁸ shouting, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against our people, our law, and this sanctuary! Furthermore he has brought Greeks into the inner courts of the temple and made this holy place ritually unclean!" ²⁹ (For they had seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him previously, and they assumed Paul had brought him into the inner temple courts.) ³⁰ The whole city was stirred up, and the people rushed together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple courts, and immediately the doors were shut. ³¹ While they were trying to kill him, a report was sent up to the commanding officer of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. ³² He immediately took soldiers and centurions and ran down to the crowd. When they saw the commanding officer and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the commanding officer came up and arrested him and ordered him to be tied up with two chains; he then asked who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ But some in the crowd shouted one thing, and others something else, and when the commanding officer was unable to find

out the truth because of the disturbance, he ordered Paul to be brought into the barracks. ³⁵ When he came to the steps, Paul had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob, ³⁶ for a crowd of people followed them, screaming, "Away with him!" ³⁷ As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commanding officer, "May I say something to you?" The officer replied, "Do you know Greek? ³⁸ Then you're not that Egyptian who started a rebellion and led the four thousand men of the 'Assassins' into the wilderness some time ago?" ³⁹ Paul answered, "I am a Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city. Please allow me to speak to the people." ⁴⁰ When the commanding officer had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and gestured to the people with his hand. When they had become silent, he addressed them in Aramaic,

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¹ "Brothers and fathers, listen to my defense that I now make to you." ² (When they heard that he was addressing them in Aramaic, they became even quieter.) Then Paul said, ³ "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated with strictness under Gamaliel according to the law of our ancestors, and was zealous for God just as all of you are today. ⁴ I persecuted this Way even to the point of death, tying up both men and women and putting them in prison, ⁵ as both the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me. From them I also received letters to the brothers in Damascus, and I was on my way to make arrests there and bring the prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished. ⁶ As I was en route and near Damascus, about noon a very bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around me. ⁷ Then I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' ⁸ I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.' ⁹ Those who were with me saw the light, but did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ So I asked, 'What should I do, Lord?' The Lord said to me, 'Get up and go to Damascus; there you will be told about everything that you have been designated to do.' ¹¹ Since I could not see because of the brilliance of that light, I came to Damascus led by the hand of those who were with me. ¹² A man named Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who live there, ¹³ came to me and stood beside me and said to me, 'Brother Saul, regain your sight!' And at that very moment I looked up and saw him. ¹⁴ Then he said, 'The God of our ancestors

has already chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear a command from his mouth,¹⁵ because you will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard.¹⁶ And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name.’¹⁷ When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance¹⁸ and saw the Lord saying to me, ‘Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’¹⁹ I replied, ‘Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat those in the various synagogues who believed in you.’²⁰ And when the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I myself was standing nearby, approving, and guarding the cloaks of those who were killing him.’²¹ Then he said to me, ‘Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’ ”

The Roman Commander Questions Paul

²² The crowd was listening to him until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Away with this man from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live!”²³ While they were screaming and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust in the air,²⁴ the commanding officer ordered Paul to be brought back into the barracks. He told them to interrogate Paul by beating him with a lash so that he could find out the reason the crowd was shouting at Paul in this way.²⁵ When they had stretched him out for the lash, Paul said to the centurion standing nearby, “Is it legal for you to lash a man who is a Roman citizen without a proper trial?”²⁶ When the centurion heard this, he went to the commanding officer and reported it, saying, “What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen.”²⁷ So the commanding officer came and asked Paul, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” He replied, “Yes.”²⁸ The commanding officer answered, “I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money.” “But I was even born a citizen,” Paul replied.²⁹ Then those who were about to interrogate him stayed away from him, and the commanding officer was frightened when he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had had him tied up.

Paul Before the Sanhedrin

³⁰ The next day, because the commanding officer wanted to know the true reason Paul was being accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and the whole council to assemble. He then brought Paul down and had him stand before them.

23

¹ Paul looked directly at the council and said, “Brothers, I have lived my life with a clear conscience before God to this day.” ² At that the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth. ³ Then Paul said to him, “God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit there judging me according to the law, and in violation of the law you order me to be struck?” ⁴ Those standing near him said, “Do you dare insult God’s high priest?” ⁵ Paul replied, “I did not realize, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, ‘*You must not speak evil about a ruler of your people.*’”

⁶ Then when Paul noticed that part of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, he shouted out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead!” ⁷ When he said this, an argument began between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. ⁸ (For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, or angel, or spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.) ⁹ There was a great commotion, and some experts in the law from the party of the Pharisees stood up and protested strongly, “We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?” ¹⁰ When the argument became so great the commanding officer feared that they would tear Paul to pieces, he ordered the detachment to go down, take him away from them by force, and bring him into the barracks.

¹¹ The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Have courage, for just as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”

The Plot to Kill Paul

¹² When morning came, the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than forty of them who formed this conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the chief priests and the elders and said, “We have bound ourselves with a solemn oath not to partake of anything until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ So now you and the council request the commanding officer to bring him down to you, as if you were going to determine his case by conducting a more thorough inquiry. We are ready to kill him before he comes near this place.”

¹⁶ But when the son of Paul’s sister heard about the ambush, he came and entered the barracks and told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called one of the centurions and said, “Take this young man to the commanding officer, for he has something to report

to him.”¹⁸ So the centurion took him and brought him to the commanding officer and said, “The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you.”¹⁹ The commanding officer took him by the hand, withdrew privately, and asked, “What is it that you want to report to me?”²⁰ He replied, “The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as if they were going to inquire more thoroughly about him.”²¹ So do not let them persuade you to do this, because more than forty of them are lying in ambush for him. They have bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink anything until they have killed him, and now they are ready, waiting for you to agree to their request.”²² Then the commanding officer sent the young man away, directing him, “Tell no one that you have reported these things to me.”²³ Then he summoned two of the centurions and said, “Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Caesarea along with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen by nine o’clock tonight,²⁴ and provide mounts for Paul to ride so that he may be brought safely to Felix the governor.”²⁵ He wrote a letter that went like this:

²⁶ Claudius Lysias to His Excellency Governor Felix, greetings.²⁷ This man was seized by the Jews and they were about to kill him, when I came up with the detachment and rescued him, because I had learned that he was a Roman citizen.²⁸ Since I wanted to know what charge they were accusing him of, I brought him down to their council.²⁹ I found he was accused with reference to controversial questions about their law, but no charge against him deserved death or imprisonment.³⁰ When I was informed there would be a plot against this man, I sent him to you at once, also ordering his accusers to state their charges against him before you.

³¹ So the soldiers, in accordance with their orders, took Paul and brought him to Antipatris during the night.³² The next day they let the horsemen go on with him, and they returned to the barracks.³³ When the horsemen came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him.³⁴ When the governor had read the letter, he asked what province he was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia,³⁵ he said, “I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive too.” Then he ordered that Paul be kept under guard in Herod’s palace.

24

¹ After five days the high priest Ananias came down

with some elders and an attorney named Tertullus, and they brought formal charges against Paul to the governor. ² When Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, "We have experienced a lengthy time of peace through your rule, and reforms are being made in this nation through your foresight. ³ Most excellent Felix, we acknowledge this everywhere and in every way with all gratitude. ⁴ But so that I may not delay you any further, I beg you to hear us briefly with your customary graciousness. ⁵ For we have found this man to be a troublemaker, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶ He even tried to desecrate the temple, so we arrested him. ⁷ * ⁸ When you examine him yourself, you will be able to learn from him about all these things we are accusing him of doing." ⁹ The Jews also joined in the verbal attack, claiming that these things were true.

Paul's Defense Before Felix

¹⁰ When the governor gestured for him to speak, Paul replied, "Because I know that you have been a judge over this nation for many years, I confidently make my defense. ¹¹ As you can verify for yourself, not more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹² They did not find me arguing with anyone or stirring up a crowd in the temple courts or in the synagogues or throughout the city, ¹³ nor can they prove to you the things they are accusing me of doing. ¹⁴ But I confess this to you, that I worship the God of our ancestors according to the Way (which they call a sect), believing everything that is according to the law and that is written in the prophets. ¹⁵ I have a hope in God (a hope that these men themselves accept too) that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous. ¹⁶ This is the reason I do my best to always have a clear conscience toward God and toward people. ¹⁷ After several years I came to bring to my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings, ¹⁸ which I was doing when they found me in the temple, ritually purified, without a crowd or a disturbance. ¹⁹ But there are some Jews from the province of Asia who should be here before you and bring charges, if they have anything against me. ²⁰ Or these men here should tell what crime they found me guilty of when I stood before the council, ²¹ other than this one thing I shouted out while I stood before them: 'I am on trial before you today concerning the resurrection of the dead.' "

* 24:7 [[EMPTY]]

²² Then Felix, who understood the facts concerning the Way more accurately, adjourned their hearing, saying, “When Lysias the commanding officer comes down, I will decide your case.” ²³ He ordered the centurion to guard Paul, but to let him have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from meeting his needs.

Paul Speaks Repeatedly to Felix

²⁴ Some days later, when Felix arrived with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ While Paul was discussing righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for now, and when I have an opportunity, I will send for you.” ²⁶ At the same time he was also hoping that Paul would give him money, and for this reason he sent for Paul as often as possible and talked with him. ²⁷ After two years had passed, Porcius Festus succeeded Felix, and because he wanted to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

25

Paul Appeals to Caesar

¹ Now three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. ² So the chief priests and the most prominent men of the Jews brought formal charges against Paul to him. ³ Requesting him to do them a favor against Paul, they urged Festus to summon him to Jerusalem, planning an ambush to kill him along the way. ⁴ Then Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and he himself intended to go there shortly. ⁵ “So,” he said, “let your leaders go down there with me, and if this man has done anything wrong, they may bring charges against him.”

⁶ After Festus had stayed not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, and the next day he sat on the judgment seat and ordered Paul to be brought. ⁷ When he arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many serious charges that they were not able to prove. ⁸ Paul said in his defense, “I have committed no offense against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar.” ⁹ But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and be tried before me there on these charges?” ¹⁰ Paul replied, “I am standing before Caesar’s judgment seat, where I should be tried. I have done nothing wrong to the Jews, as you also know very well. ¹¹ If then I am in the wrong

and have done anything that deserves death, I am not trying to escape dying, but if not one of their charges against me is true, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!"¹² Then, after conferring with his council, Festus replied, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go!"

Festus Asks King Agrippa for Advice

¹³ After several days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus. ¹⁴ While they were staying there many days, Festus explained Paul's case to the king to get his opinion, saying, "There is a man left here as a prisoner by Felix. ¹⁵ When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me about him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him. ¹⁶ I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had met his accusers face to face and had been given an opportunity to make a defense against the accusation. ¹⁷ So after they came back here with me, I did not postpone the case, but the next day I sat on the judgment seat and ordered the man to be brought. ¹⁸ When his accusers stood up, they did not charge him with any of the evil deeds I had suspected. ¹⁹ Rather they had several points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a man named Jesus who was dead, whom Paul claimed to be alive. ²⁰ Because I was at a loss how I could investigate these matters, I asked if he were willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these charges. ²¹ But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of His Majesty the Emperor, I ordered him to be kept under guard until I could send him to Caesar." ²² Agrippa said to Festus, "I would also like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he replied, "you will hear him."

Paul Before King Agrippa and Bernice

²³ So the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience hall, along with the senior military officers and the prominent men of the city. When Festus gave the order, Paul was brought in. ²⁴ Then Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you who are present here with us, you see this man about whom the entire Jewish populace petitioned me both in Jerusalem and here, shouting loudly that he ought not to live any longer. ²⁵ But I found that he had done nothing that deserved death, and when he appealed to His Majesty the Emperor, I decided to send him. ²⁶ But I have nothing definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after this preliminary hearing I may

have something to write. ²⁷ For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without clearly indicating the charges against him.”

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¹ So Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.” Then Paul held out his hand and began his defense:

² “Regarding all the things I have been accused of by the Jews, King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate that I am about to make my defense before you today, ³ because you are especially familiar with all the customs and controversial issues of the Jews. Therefore I ask you to listen to me patiently. ⁴ Now all the Jews know the way I lived from my youth, spending my life from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem. ⁵ They know, because they have known me from time past, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest party of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee. ⁶ And now I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors, ⁷ a promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain as they earnestly serve God night and day. Concerning this hope the Jews are accusing me, Your Majesty! ⁸ Why do you people think it is unbelievable that God raises the dead? ⁹ Of course, I myself was convinced that it was necessary to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus the Nazarene. ¹⁰ And that is what I did in Jerusalem: Not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons by the authority I received from the chief priests, but I also cast my vote against them when they were sentenced to death. ¹¹ I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to force them to blaspheme. Because I was so furiously enraged at them, I went to persecute them even in foreign cities.

¹² “While doing this very thing, as I was going to Damascus with authority and complete power from the chief priests, ¹³ about noon along the road, Your Majesty, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining everywhere around me and those traveling with me. ¹⁴ When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? You are hurting yourself by kicking against the goads.’ ¹⁵ So I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord replied, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But get up and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this reason, to designate you in advance as a servant and witness to the things you have seen and to the things in which I will appear to you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending

you ¹⁸ to open their eyes so that they turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

¹⁹ “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but I declared to those in Damascus first, and then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds consistent with repentance. ²¹ For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple courts and were trying to kill me. ²² I have experienced help from God to this day, and so I stand testifying to both small and great, saying nothing except what the prophets and Moses said was going to happen: ²³ that the Christ was to suffer and be the first to rise from the dead, to proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴ As Paul was saying these things in his defense, Festus exclaimed loudly, “You have lost your mind, Paul! Your great learning is driving you insane!” ²⁵ But Paul replied, “I have not lost my mind, most excellent Festus, but am speaking true and rational words. ²⁶ For the king knows about these things, and I am speaking freely to him, because I cannot believe that any of these things has escaped his notice, for this was not done in a corner. ²⁷ Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe.” ²⁸ Agrippa said to Paul, “In such a short time are you persuading me to become a Christian?” ²⁹ Paul replied, “I pray to God that whether in a short or a long time not only you but also all those who are listening to me today could become such as I am, except for these chains.”

³⁰ So the king got up, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them, ³¹ and as they were leaving they said to one another, “This man is not doing anything deserving death or imprisonment.” ³² Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

27

¹ When it was decided we would sail to Italy, they handed over Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named Julius. ² We went on board a ship from Adramyttium that was about to sail to various ports along the coast of the province of Asia and put out to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. ³ The next day we put in at Sidon, and Julius, treating Paul kindly, allowed him to go to his friends so they could provide him with what he needed. ⁴ From there we put out to sea and

sailed under the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. ⁵ After we had sailed across the open sea off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we put in at Myra in Lycia. ⁶ There the centurion found a ship from Alexandria sailing for Italy, and he put us aboard it. ⁷ We sailed slowly for many days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus. Because the wind prevented us from going any farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone. ⁸ With difficulty we sailed along the coast of Crete and came to a place called Fair Havens that was near the town of Lasea.

Caught in a Violent Storm

⁹ Since considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous because the fast was already over, Paul advised them, ¹⁰ “Men, I can see the voyage is going to end in disaster and great loss not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.” ¹¹ But the centurion was more convinced by the captain and the ship’s owner than by what Paul said. ¹² Because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there. They hoped that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there. ¹³ When a gentle south wind sprang up, they thought they could carry out their purpose, so they weighed anchor and sailed close along the coast of Crete. ¹⁴ Not long after this, a hurricane-force wind called the northeaster blew down from the island. ¹⁵ When the ship was caught in it and could not head into the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶ As we ran under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were able with difficulty to get the ship’s boat under control. ¹⁷ After the crew had hoisted it aboard, they used supports to undergird the ship. Fearing they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor, thus letting themselves be driven along. ¹⁸ The next day, because we were violently battered by the storm, they began throwing the cargo overboard, ¹⁹ and on the third day they threw the ship’s gear overboard with their own hands. ²⁰ When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and a violent storm continued to batter us, we finally abandoned all hope of being saved.

²¹ Since many of them had no desire to eat, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not put out to sea from Crete, thus avoiding this damage and loss. ²² And now I advise you to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the ship will be lost. ²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom

I belong and whom I serve came to me ²⁴ and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul! You must stand before Caesar, and God has graciously granted you the safety of all who are sailing with you.' ²⁵ Therefore keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will be just as I have been told. ²⁶ But we must run aground on some island."

²⁷ When the fourteenth night had come, while we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected they were approaching some land. ²⁸ They took soundings and found the water was twenty fathoms deep; when they had sailed a little farther they took soundings again and found it was fifteen fathoms deep. ²⁹ Because they were afraid that we would run aground on the rocky coast, they threw out four anchors from the stern and wished for day to appear. ³⁰ Then when the sailors tried to escape from the ship and were lowering the ship's boat into the sea, pretending that they were going to put out anchors from the bow, ³¹ Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." ³² Then the soldiers cut the ropes of the ship's boat and let it drift away.

³³ As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day you have been in suspense and have gone without food; you have eaten nothing. ³⁴ Therefore I urge you to take some food, for this is important for your survival. For not one of you will lose a hair from his head." ³⁵ After he said this, Paul took bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all, broke it, and began to eat. ³⁶ So all of them were encouraged and took food themselves. ³⁷ (We were in all two hundred seventy-six persons on the ship.) ³⁸ When they had eaten enough to be satisfied, they lightened the ship by throwing the wheat into the sea.

Paul is Shipwrecked

³⁹ When day came, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. ⁴⁰ So they slipped the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the linkage that bound the steering oars together. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and steered toward the beach. ⁴¹ But they encountered a patch of crosscurrents and ran the ship aground; the bow stuck fast and could not be moved, but the stern was being broken up by the force of the waves. ⁴² Now the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners so that none of them would escape by swimming away. ⁴³ But the centurion, wanting to save Paul's life, prevented them from carrying

out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land,⁴⁴ and the rest were to follow, some on planks and some on pieces of the ship. And in this way all were brought safely to land.

28

¹ After we had safely reached shore, we learned that the island was called Malta. ² The local inhabitants showed us extraordinary kindness, for they built a fire and welcomed us all because it had started to rain and was cold. ³ When Paul had gathered a bundle of brushwood and was putting it on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. ⁴ When the local people saw the creature hanging from Paul's hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer! Although he has escaped from the sea, Justice herself has not allowed him to live!" ⁵ However, Paul shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ But they were expecting that he was going to swell up or suddenly drop dead. So after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

⁷ Now in the region around that place were fields belonging to the chief official of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us hospitably as guests for three days. ⁸ The father of Publius lay sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and after praying, placed his hands on him and healed him. ⁹ After this had happened, many of the people on the island who were sick also came and were healed. ¹⁰ They also bestowed many honors, and when we were preparing to sail, they gave us all the supplies we needed.

Paul Finally Reaches Rome

¹¹ After three months we put out to sea in an Alexandrian ship that had wintered at the island and had the "Heavenly Twins" as its figurehead. ¹² We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. ¹³ From there we cast off and arrived at Rhegium, and after one day a south wind sprang up and on the second day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them seven days. And in this way we came to Rome. ¹⁵ The brothers from there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. When he saw them, Paul thanked God and took courage. ¹⁶ When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

Paul Addresses the Jewish Community in Rome

¹⁷ After three days Paul called the local Jewish leaders together. When they had assembled, he said to them, “Brothers, although I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors, from Jerusalem I was handed over as a prisoner to the Romans. ¹⁸ When they had heard my case, they wanted to release me, because there was no basis for a death sentence against me. ¹⁹ But when the Jews objected, I was forced to appeal to Caesar – not that I had some charge to bring against my own people. ²⁰ So for this reason I have asked to see you and speak with you, for I am bound with this chain because of the hope of Israel.” ²¹ They replied, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, nor have any of the brothers come from there and reported or said anything bad about you. ²² But we would like to hear from you what you think, for regarding this sect we know that people everywhere speak against it.”

²³ They set a day to meet with him, and they came to him where he was staying in even greater numbers. From morning until evening he explained things to them, testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus from both the law of Moses and the prophets. ²⁴ Some were convinced by what he said, but others refused to believe. ²⁵ So they began to leave, unable to agree among themselves, after Paul made one last statement: “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah ²⁶ when he said,

‘Go to this people and say,

*“You will keep on hearing, but will never understand,
and you will keep on looking, but will never perceive.*

²⁷ *For the heart of this people has become dull,*

and their ears are hard of hearing,

*and they have closed their eyes,
so that they would not see with their eyes*

and hear with their ears

*and understand with their heart
and turn, and I would heal them.”’*

²⁸ “Therefore be advised that this salvation from God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen!” ²⁹*

³⁰ Paul lived there two whole years in his own rented quarters and welcomed all who came to him, ³¹ proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with complete boldness and without restriction.

* 28:29 [[EMPTY]]

Romans

Salutation

¹ From Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God. ² This gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ concerning his Son who was a descendant of David with reference to the flesh, ⁴ who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we have received grace and our apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of his name. ⁶ You also are among them, called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷ To all those loved by God in Rome, called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul's Desire to Visit Rome

⁸ First of all, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. ⁹ For God, whom I serve in my spirit by preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness that I continually remember you ¹⁰ and I always ask in my prayers, if perhaps now at last I may succeed in visiting you according to the will of God. ¹¹ For I long to see you, so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, ¹² that is, that we may be mutually comforted by one another's faith, both yours and mine. ¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I often intended to come to you (and was prevented until now), so that I may have some fruit even among you, just as I already have among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵ Thus I am eager also to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome.

The Power of the Gospel

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, "*The righteous by faith will live.*"

The Condemnation of the Unrighteous

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress

the truth by their unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, because they are understood through what has been made. So people are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give him thanks, but they became futile in their thoughts and their senseless hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an image resembling mortal human beings or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the desires of their hearts to impurity, to dishonor their bodies among themselves. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶ For this reason God gave them over to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged the natural sexual relations for unnatural ones, ²⁷ and likewise the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed in their passions for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what should not be done. ²⁹ They are filled with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, malice. They are rife with envy, murder, strife, deceit, hostility. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, contrivers of all sorts of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ senseless, covenant-breakers, heartless, ruthless. ³² Although they fully know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but also approve of those who practice them.

2

¹ Therefore you are without excuse, whoever you are, when you judge someone else. For on whatever grounds you judge another, you condemn yourself, because you who judge practice the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment is in accordance with truth against those who practice such things. ³ And do you think, whoever you are, when you judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself, that you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you have contempt for the wealth of his kindness, forbearance,

and patience, and yet do not know that God's kindness leads you to repentance? ⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourselves in the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed! ⁶ He *will reward each one according to his works*: ⁷ eternal life to those who by perseverance in good works seek glory and honor and immortality, ⁸ but wrath and anger to those who live in selfish ambition and do not obey the truth but follow unrighteousness. ⁹ There will be affliction and distress on everyone who does evil, on the Jew first and also the Greek, ¹⁰ but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, for the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹ For there is no partiality with God. ¹² For all who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous before God, but those who do the law will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ For whenever the Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature the things required by the law, these who do not have the law are a law to themselves. ¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written in their hearts, as their conscience bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or else defend them, ¹⁶ on the day when God will judge the secrets of human hearts, according to my gospel through Christ Jesus.

The Condemnation of the Jew

¹⁷ But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast of your relationship to God ¹⁸ and know his will and approve the superior things because you receive instruction from the law, ¹⁹ and if you are convinced that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, ²⁰ an educator of the senseless, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the essential features of knowledge and of the truth – ²¹ therefore you who teach someone else, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²² You who tell others not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who boast in the law dishonor God by transgressing the law! ²⁴ For just as it is written, “*the name of God is being blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.*”

²⁵ For circumcision has its value if you practice the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. ²⁶ Therefore if the uncircumcised man obeys the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷ And will not the

physically uncircumcised man who keeps the law judge you who, despite the written code and circumcision, transgress the law? ²⁸ For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision something that is outward in the flesh, ²⁹ but someone is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart by the Spirit and not by the written code. This person's praise is not from people but from God.

3

¹ Therefore what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the value of circumcision? ² Actually, there are many advantages. First of all, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What then? If some did not believe, does their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? ⁴ Absolutely not! Let God be proven true, and every human being shown up as a liar, just as it is written: “ **so that you will be justified in your words and will prevail when you are judged.**”

⁵ But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is he? (I am speaking in human terms.)

⁶ Absolutely not! For otherwise how could God judge the world? ⁷ For if by my lie the truth of God enhances his glory, why am I still actually being judged as a sinner? ⁸ And why not say, “Let us do evil so that good may come of it”? – as some who slander us allege that we say. (Their condemnation is deserved!)

The Condemnation of the World

⁹ What then? Are we better off? Certainly not, for we have already charged that Jews and Greeks alike are all under sin, ¹⁰ just as it is written:

“ **There is no one righteous, not even one,**

¹¹ **there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God.**

¹² **All have turned away,**

together they have become worthless;

there is no one who shows kindness, not even one.”

¹³ “ **Their throats are open graves,**

they deceive with their tongues, the poison of asps is under their lips.”

¹⁴ “ **Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”**

¹⁵ “ **Their feet are swift to shed blood,**

¹⁶ **ruin and misery are in their paths,**

¹⁷ **and the way of peace they have not known.”**

¹⁸ “ **There is no fear of God before their eyes.”**

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For *no one is declared righteous before him* by the works of the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God (which is attested by the law and the prophets) has been disclosed – ²² namely, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. ²⁴ But they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God publicly displayed him at his death as the mercy seat accessible through faith. This was to demonstrate his righteousness, because God in his forbearance had passed over the sins previously committed. ²⁶ This was also to demonstrate his righteousness in the present time, so that he would be just and the justifier of the one who lives because of Jesus' faithfulness.

²⁷ Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded! By what principle? Of works? No, but by the principle of faith! ²⁸ For we consider that a person is declared righteous by faith apart from the works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles too? Yes, of the Gentiles too! ³⁰ Since God is one, he will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then nullify the law through faith? Absolutely not! Instead we uphold the law.

4

¹ What then shall we say that Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh, has discovered regarding this matter? ² For if Abraham was declared righteous by the works of the law, he has something to boast about – but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? “*Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness**.” ⁴ Now to the one who works, his pay is not credited due to grace but due to obligation. ⁵ But to the one who does not work, but believes in the one who declares the ungodly righteous, his faith is credited as righteousness.

⁶ So even David himself speaks regarding the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

⁷ “

***Blessed* | strong="G3107"**

are those whose | strong="G3739" lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;

8 *blessed is the one against whom the Lord will never count sin*.*"

⁹ Is this blessedness then for the circumcision or also for the uncircumcision? For we say, "*faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.*" ¹⁰ How then was it credited to him? Was he circumcised at the time, or not? No, he was not circumcised but uncircumcised! ¹¹ And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised, so that he would become the father of all those who believe but have never been circumcised, that they too could have righteousness credited to them. ¹² And he is also the father of the circumcised, who are not only circumcised, but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham possessed when he was still uncircumcised.

¹³ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would inherit the world was not fulfilled through the law, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if they become heirs by the law, faith is empty and the promise is nullified. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, because where there is no law there is no transgression either. ¹⁶ For this reason it is by faith so that it may be by grace, with the result that the promise may be certain to all the descendants - not only to those who are under the law, but also to those who have the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all ¹⁷ (as it is written, "*I have made you the father of many nations*"). He is our father in the presence of God whom he believed - the God who makes the dead alive and summons the things that do not yet exist as though they already do. ¹⁸ Against hope Abraham believed in hope with the result that he became *the father of many nations* according to the pronouncement, "*so will your descendants be.*" ¹⁹ Without being weak in faith, he considered his own body as dead (because he was about one hundred years old) and the deadness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰ He did not waver in unbelief about the promise of God but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God. ²¹ He was fully convinced that what God promised he was also able to do. ²² So indeed it was credited to Abraham as righteousness.

²³ But the statement *it was credited to him* was not written only for Abraham's sake, ²⁴ but also for our sake, to whom it will be credited, those who believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was given over because of our transgressions and was raised for the sake of our justification.

5

¹ Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by

faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of God's glory. ³ Not only this, but we also rejoice in sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance, character, and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ (For rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person perhaps someone might possibly dare to die.) ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, because we have now been declared righteous by his blood, we will be saved through him from God's wrath. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, since we have been reconciled, will we be saved by his life? ¹¹ Not only this, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.

The Amplification of Justification

¹² So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all people because all sinned – ¹³ for before the law was given, sin was in the world, but there is no accounting for sin when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who did not sin in the same way that Adam (who is a type of the coming one) transgressed. ¹⁵ But the gracious gift is not like the transgression. For if the many died through the transgression of the one man, how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ multiply to the many! ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the one who sinned. For judgment, resulting from the one transgression, led to condemnation, but the gracious gift from the many failures led to justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the transgression of the one man, death reigned through the one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ!

¹⁸ Consequently, just as condemnation for all people came through one transgression, so too through the one righteous act came righteousness leading to life for all people. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of one man many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in so that the

transgression may increase, but where sin increased, grace multiplied all the more,²¹ so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace will reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to remain in sin so that grace may increase? ² Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united in the likeness of his resurrection. ⁶ We know that our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ (For someone who has died has been freed from sin.)

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead, he is never going to die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So you too consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires,¹³ and do not present your members to sin as instruments to be used for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead and your members to God as instruments to be used for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no mastery over you, because you are not under law but under grace.

The Believer's Enslavement to God's Righteousness

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Absolutely not! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or obedience resulting in righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that though you were slaves to sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching you were entrusted to,¹⁸ and having been freed from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness. ¹⁹ (I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.)

For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. ²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness.

²¹ So what benefit did you then reap from those things that you are now ashamed of? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now, freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your benefit leading to sanctification, and the end is eternal life. ²³ For the payoff of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7

¹ Or do you not know, brothers and sisters (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law is lord over a person as long as he lives? ² For a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of the marriage. ³ So then, if she is joined to another man while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she is joined to another man, she is not an adulteress. ⁴ So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you could be joined to another, to the one who was raised from the dead, to bear fruit to God. ⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful desires, aroused by the law, were active in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we have been released from the law, because we have died to what controlled us, so that we may serve in the new life of the Spirit and not under the old written code.

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Absolutely not! Certainly, I would not have known sin except through the law. For indeed I would not have known what it means to desire something belonging to someone else if the law had not said, “*Do not covet.*” ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of wrong desires. For apart from the law, sin is dead. ⁹ And I was once alive apart from the law, but with the coming of the commandment sin became alive ¹⁰ and I died. So I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life brought death! ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it I died. ¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.

¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? Absolutely not! But sin, so that it would be shown to be sin,

produced death in me through what is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual – but I am unspiritual, sold into slavery to sin. ¹⁵ For I don't understand what I am doing. For I do not do what I want – instead, I do what I hate. ¹⁶ But if I do what I don't want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But now it is no longer me doing it, but sin that lives in me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For I want to do the good, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but I do the very evil I do not want! ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer me doing it but sin that lives in me.

²¹ So, I find the law that when I want to do good, evil is present with me. ²² For I delight in the law of God in my inner being. ²³ But I see a different law in my members waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that is in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For God achieved what the law could not do because it was weakened through the flesh. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and concerning sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh have their outlook shaped by the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit have their outlook shaped by the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For the outlook of the flesh is death, but the outlook of the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷ because the outlook of the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to the law of God, nor is it able to do so. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is your life because of righteousness. ¹¹ Moreover if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised

Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through his Spirit who lives in you.

¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh ¹³ (for if you live according to the flesh, you will die), but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness to our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs (namely, heirs of God and also fellow heirs with Christ) – if indeed we suffer with him so we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸ For I consider that our present sufferings cannot even be compared to the glory that will be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility – not willingly but because of God who subjected it – in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God’s children. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers together until now. ²³ Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with endurance.

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes on behalf of the saints according to God’s will. ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, ²⁹ because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.

³¹ What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, freely give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is the one who will condemn? Christ is the one who

died (and more than that, he was raised), who is at the right hand of God, and who also is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, “*For your sake we encounter death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.*” ³⁷ No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor heavenly rulers, nor things that are present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9

¹ I am telling the truth in Christ (I am not lying!), for my conscience assures me in the Holy Spirit – ² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed – cut off from Christ – for the sake of my people, my fellow countrymen, ⁴ who are Israelites. To them belong the adoption as sons, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from them, by human descent, came the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever! Amen.

⁶ It is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all those who are descended from Israel are truly Israel, ⁷ nor are all the children Abraham’s true descendants; rather “*through Isaac will your descendants be counted.*” ⁸ This means it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God; rather, the children of promise are counted as descendants. ⁹ For this is what the promise declared: “*About a year from now I will return and Sarah will have a son.*” ¹⁰ Not only that, but when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our ancestor Isaac – ¹¹ even before they were born or had done anything good or bad (so that God’s purpose in election would stand, not by works but by his calling) – ¹² it was said to her, “*The older will serve the younger,*” ¹³ just as it is written: “*Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*”

¹⁴ What shall we say then? Is there injustice with God? Absolutely not! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses: “*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.*” ¹⁶ So then, it does not depend on human desire or exertion, but on God who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the scripture says to Pharaoh: “*For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may demonstrate my power in you, and that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.*” ¹⁸ So then, God has

mercy on whom he chooses to have mercy, and he hardens whom he chooses to harden.

¹⁹ You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who has ever resisted his will?” ²⁰ But who indeed are you – a mere human being – to talk back to God? *Does what is molded say to the molder, “Why have you made me like this?”* ²¹ Has the potter no right to make from the same lump of clay one vessel for special use and another for ordinary use? ²² But what if God, willing to demonstrate his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath prepared for destruction? ²³ And what if he is willing to make known the wealth of his glory on the objects of mercy that he has prepared beforehand for glory – ²⁴ even us, whom he has called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵ As he also says in Hosea:

“I will call those who were not my people, ‘My people,’ and I will call her who was unloved, ‘My beloved.’”*

²⁶ *“And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,*’*

there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

²⁷ And Isaiah cries out on behalf of Israel, *“Though the number of the children of Israel are as the sand of the sea, only the remnant will be saved,²⁸ for the Lord will execute his sentence on the earth completely and quickly.”* ²⁹ Just as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of armies had not left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have resembled Gomorrah.”*

Israel’s Rejection Culpable

³⁰ What shall we say then? – that the Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness obtained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith, ³¹ but Israel even though pursuing a law of righteousness did not attain it. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but (as if it were possible) by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ just as it is written,

“Look, I am laying in Zion a stone that will cause people to stumble and a rock that will make them fall, yet the one who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

10

¹ Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God on behalf of my fellow Israelites is for their salvation. ² For I can testify that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not in line with the truth. ³ For ignoring the righteousness that

comes from God, and seeking instead to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law, with the result that there is righteousness for everyone who believes.

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is by the law: "*The one who does these things will live by them.*" ⁶ But the righteousness that is by faith says: "*Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'*" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ or "*Who will descend into the abyss?*" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? "*The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart*" (that is, the word of faith that we preach), ⁹ because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation. ¹¹ For the scripture says, "*Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.*" ¹² For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses all who call on him. ¹³ For *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

¹⁴ How are they to call on one they have not believed in? And how are they to believe in one they have not heard of? And how are they to hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "*How timely is the arrival of those who proclaim the good news*.*" ¹⁶ But not all have obeyed the good news, for Isaiah says, "*Lord, who has believed our report?*" ¹⁷ Consequently faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the preached word of Christ.

¹⁸ But I ask, have they not heard? Yes, they have: *Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.* ¹⁹ But again I ask, didn't Israel understand? First Moses says, "*I will make you jealous by those who are not a nation; with a senseless nation I will provoke you to anger.*" ²⁰ And Isaiah is even bold enough to say, "*I was found by those who did not seek me; I became well known to those who did not ask for me.*" ²¹ But about Israel he says, "*All day long I held out my hands to this disobedient and stubborn people!*"

11

¹ So I ask, God has not rejected his people, has he? Absolutely not! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. ² God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew! Do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?

³ “Lord, *they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left and they are seeking my life!*” ⁴ But what was the divine response to him? “*I have kept for myself seven thousand people who have not bent the knee to Baal**.”

⁵ So in the same way at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶ And if it is by grace, it is no longer by works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace. ⁷ What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was diligently seeking, but the elect obtained it. The rest were hardened, ⁸ as it is written,

*“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear,
to this very day.”*

⁹ And David says,
*“Let their table become a snare and trap,
a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
¹⁰ let their eyes be darkened so that they may not see,
and make their backs bend continually.”*

¹¹ I ask then, they did not stumble into an irrevocable fall, did they? Absolutely not! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make Israel jealous. ¹² Now if their transgression means riches for the world and their defeat means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full restoration bring?

¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Seeing that I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, ¹⁴ if somehow I could provoke my people to jealousy and save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? ¹⁶ If the first portion of the dough offered is holy, then the whole batch is holy, and if the root is holy, so too are the branches.

¹⁷ Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among them and participated in the richness of the olive root, ¹⁸ do not boast over the branches. But if you boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹ Then you will say, “The branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” ²⁰ Granted! They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but fear! ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you. ²² Notice therefore the kindness and harshness of God – harshness toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³ And even they – if they do not continue in their unbelief – will be grafted in, for God

is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree?

²⁵ For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: A partial hardening has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

*“The Deliverer will come out of Zion;
he will remove ungodliness from Jacob.*

*²⁷ And this is my covenant with them,
when I take away their sins.”*

²⁸ In regard to the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but in regard to election they are dearly loved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were formerly disobedient to God, but have now received mercy due to their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. ³² For God has consigned all people to disobedience so that he may show mercy to them all.

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how fathomless his ways!

*³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?*

*³⁵ Or who has first given to God,
that God needs to repay him?*

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever! Amen.

12

¹ Therefore I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice – alive, holy, and pleasing to God – which is your reasonable service. ² Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God – what is good and well-pleasing and perfect.

Conduct in Humility

³ For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith. ⁴ For just as in one body

we have many members, and not all the members serve the same function,⁵ so we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members who belong to one another.⁶ And we have different gifts according to the grace given to us. If the gift is prophecy, that individual must use it in proportion to his faith.⁷ If it is service, he must serve; if it is teaching, he must teach;⁸ if it is exhortation, he must exhort; if it is contributing, he must do so with sincerity; if it is leadership, he must do so with diligence; if it is showing mercy, he must do so with cheerfulness.

Conduct in Love

⁹ Love must be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good.¹⁰ Be devoted to one another with mutual love, showing eagerness in honoring one another.¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be enthusiastic in spirit, serve the Lord.¹² Rejoice in hope, endure in suffering, persist in prayer.¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints, pursue hospitality.¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse.¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly. Do not be conceited.¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil; consider what is good before all people.¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all people.¹⁹ Do not avenge yourselves, dear friends, but give place to God's wrath, for it is written, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord.²⁰ Rather, *if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing this you will be heaping burning coals on his head.*²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

13

¹ Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except by God's appointment, and the authorities that exist have been instituted by God.² So the person who resists such authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will incur judgment³ (for rulers cause no fear for good conduct but for bad). Do you desire not to fear authority? Do good and you will receive its commendation,⁴ for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be in fear, for it does not bear the sword in vain. It is God's servant to administer retribution on the wrongdoer.⁵ Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath of the authorities but also because of your conscience.⁶ For this reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants devoted to governing.

⁷ Pay everyone what is owed: taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.

Exhortation to Love Neighbors

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For the commandments, “*Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet,*” (and if there is any other commandment) are summed up in this, “*Love your neighbor as yourself.*” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Motivation to Godly Conduct

¹¹ And do this because we know the time, that it is already the hour for us to awake from sleep, for our salvation is now nearer than when we became believers. ¹² The night has advanced toward dawn; the day is near. So then we must lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the weapons of light. ¹³ Let us live decently as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in discord and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to arouse its desires.

14

¹ Now receive the one who is weak in the faith, and do not have disputes over differing opinions. ² One person believes in eating everything, but the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ The one who eats everything must not despise the one who does not, and the one who abstains must not judge the one who eats everything, for God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on another’s servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵ One person regards one day holier than other days, and another regards them all alike. Each must be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ The one who observes the day does it for the Lord. The one who eats, eats for the Lord because he gives thanks to God, and the one who abstains from eating abstains for the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives for himself and none dies for himself. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. ⁹ For this reason Christ died and returned to life, so that he may be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ But you who eat vegetables only – why do you judge your brother or sister? And you who eat everything – why do you

despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, “*As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God.*” ¹² Therefore, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Exhortation for the Strong not to Destroy the Weak

¹³ Therefore we must not pass judgment on one another, but rather determine never to place an obstacle or a trap before a brother or sister. ¹⁴ I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean in itself; still, it is unclean to the one who considers it unclean. ¹⁵ For if your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy by your food someone for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what you consider good be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God does not consist of food and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ For the one who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by people.

¹⁹ So then, let us pursue what makes for peace and for building up one another. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. For although all things are clean, it is wrong to cause anyone to stumble by what you eat. ²¹ It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything that causes your brother to stumble. ²² The faith you have, keep to yourself before God. Blessed is the one who does not judge himself by what he approves. ²³ But the man who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not do so from faith, and whatever is not from faith is sin.

15

¹ But we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not just please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good to build him up. ³ For even Christ did not please himself, but just as it is written, “*The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.*” ⁴ For everything that was written in former times was written for our instruction, so that through endurance and through encouragement of the scriptures we may have hope. ⁵ Now may the God of endurance and comfort give you unity with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Exhortation to Mutual Acceptance

⁷ Receive one another, then, just as Christ also received you, to God’s glory. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of God’s truth to confirm the

promises made to the fathers,⁹ and thus the Gentiles glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, “*Because of this I will confess you among the Gentiles, and I will sing praises to your name.*”¹⁰ And again it says: “*Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.*”¹¹ And again, “*Praise the Lord all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him.*”¹² And again Isaiah says, “*The root of Jesse will come, and the one who rises to rule over the Gentiles, in him will the Gentiles hope.*”¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe in him, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's Motivation for Writing the Letter

¹⁴ But I myself am fully convinced about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.¹⁵ But I have written more boldly to you on some points so as to remind you, because of the grace given to me by God¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. I serve the gospel of God like a priest, so that the Gentiles may become an acceptable offering, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷ So I boast in Christ Jesus about the things that pertain to God.¹⁸ For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in order to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,¹⁹ in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem even as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.²⁰ And in this way I desire to preach where Christ has not been named, so as not to build on another person's foundation,²¹ but as it is written: “*Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.*”

Paul's Intention of Visiting the Romans

²² This is the reason I was often hindered from coming to you.²³ But now there is nothing more to keep me in these regions, and I have for many years desired to come to you²⁴ when I go to Spain. For I hope to visit you when I pass through and that you will help me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

²⁵ But now I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia are pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.²⁷ For they were pleased to do this, and indeed they are indebted to the Jerusalem saints. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are obligated also to minister to them in material things.²⁸ Therefore after I have completed this

and have safely delivered this bounty to them, I will set out for Spain by way of you,²⁹ and I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of Christ's blessing.

³⁰ Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to join fervently with me in prayer to God on my behalf. ³¹ Pray that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea and that my ministry in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,³² so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. ³³ Now may the God of peace be with all of you. Amen.

16

¹ Now I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea,² so that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and provide her with whatever help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many, including me.

³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,⁴ who risked their own necks for my life. Not only I, but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. ⁵ Also greet the church in their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia. ⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked very hard for you. ⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my compatriots and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. ⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord. ⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my good friend Stachys. ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus. ¹¹ Greet Herodion, my compatriot. Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord. ¹² Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, laborers in the Lord. Greet my dear friend Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother who was also a mother to me. ¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters with them. ¹⁵ Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the believers who are with them. ¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

¹⁷ Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who create dissensions and obstacles contrary to the teaching that you learned. Avoid them! ¹⁸ For these are the kind who do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By their smooth talk and flattery they deceive the

minds of the naive. ¹⁹Your obedience is known to all and thus I rejoice over you. But I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. ²⁰The God of peace will quickly crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my compatriots. ²² I, Tertius, who am writing this letter, greet you in the Lord. ²³ Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus the city treasurer and our brother Quartus greet you. ²⁴ * ²⁵

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages, ²⁶ but now is disclosed, and through the prophetic scriptures has been made known to all the nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith - ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever! Amen.

* 16:24 [[EMPTY]]

1 Corinthians

Salutation

¹ From Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, ² to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. ³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanksgiving

⁴ I always thank my God for you because of the grace of God that was given to you in Christ Jesus. ⁵ For you were made rich in every way in him, in all your speech and in every kind of knowledge – ⁶ just as the testimony about Christ has been confirmed among you – ⁷ so that you do not lack any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Divisions in the Church

¹⁰ I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to agree together, to end your divisions, and to be united by the same mind and purpose. ¹¹ For members of Chloe's household have made it clear to me, my brothers and sisters, that there are quarrels among you. ¹² Now I mean this, that each of you is saying, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," or "I am with Cephas," or "I am with Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Paul wasn't crucified for you, was he? Or were you in fact baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name! ¹⁶ (I also baptized the household of Stephanus. Otherwise, I do not remember whether I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel – and not with clever speech, so that the cross of Christ would not become useless.

The Message of the Cross

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, "*I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will thwart the cleverness of the intelligent.*"

²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the expert in the Mosaic law? Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made the wisdom of the world foolish? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world by its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased to save those who believe by the foolishness of preaching. ²² For Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks ask for wisdom, ²³ but we preach about a crucified Christ, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. ²⁴ But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Think about the circumstances of your call, brothers and sisters. Not many were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were born to a privileged position. ²⁷ But God chose what the world thinks foolish to shame the wise, and God chose what the world thinks weak to shame the strong. ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, what is regarded as nothing, to set aside what is regarded as something, ²⁹ so that no one can boast in his presence. ³⁰ He is the reason you have a relationship with Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “*Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.*”

2

¹ When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come with superior eloquence or wisdom as I proclaimed the testimony of God. ² For I decided to be concerned about nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and with much trembling. ⁴ My conversation and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith would not be based on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Wisdom from God

⁶ Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing. ⁷ Instead we speak the wisdom of God, hidden in a mystery, that God determined before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it. If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But just as it is written, “*Things that no eye has seen, or ear heard, or mind imagined, are the things God has prepared for those who love him.*” ¹⁰ God has revealed these to us by the

Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the things of a man except the man's spirit within him? So too, no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things that are freely given to us by God. ¹³ And we speak about these things, not with words taught us by human wisdom, but with those taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people. ¹⁴ The unbeliever does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. And he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The one who is spiritual discerns all things, yet he himself is understood by no one. ¹⁶ *For who has known the mind of the Lord, so as to advise him?* But we have the mind of Christ.

3

¹ So, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but instead as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready. In fact, you are still not ready, ³ for you are still influenced by the flesh. For since there is still jealousy and dissension among you, are you not influenced by the flesh and behaving like unregenerate people? ⁴ For whenever someone says, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," are you not merely human?

⁵ What is Apollos, really? Or what is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, and each of us in the ministry the Lord gave us. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused it to grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants counts for anything, nor the one who waters, but God who causes the growth. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters work as one, but each will receive his reward according to his work. ⁹ We are coworkers belonging to God. You are God's field, God's building. ¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master-builder I laid a foundation, but someone else builds on it. And each one must be careful how he builds. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than what is being laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, ¹³ each builder's work will be plainly seen, for the Day will make it clear, because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test what kind of work each has done. ¹⁴ If what someone has built survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If someone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? ¹⁷ If someone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, which is what you are.

¹⁸ Guard against self-deception, each of you. If someone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become foolish so that he can become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this age is foolishness with God. As it is written, "*He catches the wise in their craftiness.*" ²⁰ And again, "*The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.*" ²¹ So then, no more boasting about mere mortals! For everything belongs to you, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future. Everything belongs to you, ²³ and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

4

¹ One should think about us this way – as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² Now what is sought in stewards is that one be found faithful. ³ So for me, it is a minor matter that I am judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not acquitted because of this. The one who judges me is the Lord. ⁵ So then, do not judge anything before the time. Wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the motives of hearts. Then each will receive recognition from God.

⁶ I have applied these things to myself and Apollos because of you, brothers and sisters, so that through us you may learn "not to go beyond what is written," so that none of you will be puffed up in favor of the one against the other. ⁷ For who concedes you any superiority? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as though you did not? ⁸ Already you are satisfied! Already you are rich! You have become kings without us! I wish you had become kings so that we could reign with you! ⁹ For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to die, because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to people. ¹⁰ We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, we are dishonored! ¹¹ To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, poorly clothed, brutally treated, and without a roof over our heads. ¹² We do hard work, toiling with our own hands. When we are verbally abused, we respond with a blessing, when persecuted, we endure, ¹³ when people lie about us, we answer in a friendly manner. We are the world's dirt and scum, even now.

A Father's Warning

¹⁴I am not writing these things to shame you, but to correct you as my dear children. ¹⁵For though you may have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, because I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ¹⁶I encourage you, then, be imitators of me. ¹⁷For this reason, I have sent Timothy to you, who is my dear and faithful son in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church. ¹⁸Some have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. ¹⁹But I will come to you soon, if the Lord is willing, and I will find out not only the talk of these arrogant people, but also their power. ²⁰For the kingdom of God is demonstrated not in idle talk but with power. ²¹What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline or with love and a spirit of gentleness?

5

¹It is actually reported that sexual immorality exists among you, the kind of immorality that is not permitted even among the Gentiles, so that someone is cohabiting with his father's wife. ²And you are proud! Shouldn't you have been deeply sorrowful instead and removed the one who did this from among you? ³For even though I am absent physically, I am present in spirit. And I have already judged the one who did this, just as though I were present. ⁴When you gather together in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit, along with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵turn this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

⁶Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast affects the whole batch of dough? ⁷Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough - you are, in fact, without yeast. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸So then, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of vice and evil, but with the bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹I wrote you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. ¹⁰In no way did I mean the immoral people of this world, or the greedy and swindlers and idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world. ¹¹But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who calls himself a Christian who is sexually immoral, or greedy, or an idolater, or verbally abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Do not even eat with such a person. ¹²For what do I have to do with judging those outside? Are you not to judge those inside?

¹³ But God will judge those outside. *Remove the evil person from among you.*

6

¹ When any of you has a legal dispute with another, does he dare go to court before the unrighteous rather than before the saints? ² Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you not competent to settle trivial suits? ³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? Why not ordinary matters! ⁴ So if you have ordinary lawsuits, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? ⁵ I say this to your shame! Is there no one among you wise enough to settle disputes between fellow Christians? ⁶ Instead, does a Christian sue a Christian, and do this before unbelievers? ⁷ The fact that you have lawsuits among yourselves demonstrates that you have already been defeated. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? ⁸ But you yourselves wrong and cheat, and you do this to your brothers and sisters!

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners, practicing homosexuals, ¹⁰ thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ Some of you once lived this way. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Flee Sexual Immorality

¹² “All things are lawful for me” – but not everything is beneficial. “All things are lawful for me” – but I will not be controlled by anything. ¹³ “Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both.” The body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ Now God indeed raised the Lord and he will raise us by his power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that anyone who is united with a prostitute is one body with her? For it is said, “*The two will become one flesh.*” ¹⁷ But the one united with the Lord is one spirit with him. ¹⁸ Flee sexual immorality! “Every sin a person commits is outside of the body” – but the immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from

God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

7

¹ Now with regard to the issues you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." ² But because of immoralities, each man should have relations with his own wife and each woman with her own husband. ³ A husband should give to his wife her sexual rights, and likewise a wife to her husband. ⁴ It is not the wife who has the rights to her own body, but the husband. In the same way, it is not the husband who has the rights to his own body, but the wife. ⁵ Do not deprive each other, except by mutual agreement for a specified time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then resume your relationship, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. ⁶ I say this as a concession, not as a command. ⁷ I wish that everyone was as I am. But each has his own gift from God, one this way, another that.

⁸ To the unmarried and widows I say that it is best for them to remain as I am. ⁹ But if they do not have self-control, let them get married. For it is better to marry than to burn with sexual desire.

¹⁰ To the married I give this command – not I, but the Lord – a wife should not divorce a husband ¹¹ (but if she does, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband), and a husband should not divorce his wife.

¹² To the rest I say – I, not the Lord – if a brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is happy to live with him, he should not divorce her. ¹³ And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is happy to live with her, she should not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified because of the wife, and the unbelieving wife because of her husband. Otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbeliever wants a divorce, let it take place. In these circumstances the brother or sister is not bound. God has called you in peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, wife, whether you will bring your husband to salvation? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will bring your wife to salvation?

The Circumstances of Your Calling

¹⁷ Nevertheless, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each person, so must he live. I give this sort of direction in all the churches. ¹⁸ Was anyone called after he had been circumcised? He should not try to undo his circumcision. Was anyone called who is uncircumcised? He

should not get circumcised. ¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Instead, keeping God's commandments is what counts. ²⁰ Let each one remain in that situation in life in which he was called. ²¹ Were you called as a slave? Do not worry about it. But if indeed you are able to be free, make the most of the opportunity. ²² For the one who was called in the Lord as a slave is the Lord's freedman. In the same way, the one who was called as a free person is Christ's slave. ²³ You were bought with a price. Do not become slaves of men. ²⁴ In whatever situation someone was called, brothers and sisters, let him remain in it with God.

Remaining Unmarried

²⁵ With regard to the question about people who have never married, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one shown mercy by the Lord to be trustworthy. ²⁶ Because of the impending crisis I think it best for you to remain as you are. ²⁷ The one bound to a wife should not seek divorce. The one released from a wife should not seek marriage. ²⁸ But if you marry, you have not sinned. And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face difficult circumstances, and I am trying to spare you such problems. ²⁹ And I say this, brothers and sisters: The time is short. So then those who have wives should be as those who have none, ³⁰ those with tears like those not weeping, those who rejoice like those not rejoicing, those who buy like those without possessions, ³¹ those who use the world as though they were not using it to the full. For the present shape of this world is passing away.

³² And I want you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. ³³ But a married man is concerned about the things of the world, how to please his wife, ³⁴ and he is divided. An unmarried woman or a virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the things of the world, how to please her husband. ³⁵ I am saying this for your benefit, not to place a limitation on you, but so that without distraction you may give notable and constant service to the Lord.

³⁶ If anyone thinks he is acting inappropriately toward his virgin, if she is past the bloom of youth and it seems necessary, he should do what he wishes; he does not sin. Let them marry. ³⁷ But the man who is firm in his commitment, and is under no necessity but has control over his will, and has decided in his own mind to keep his own virgin, does well. ³⁸ So then, the one who marries his own virgin does well, but the one who does not, does better.

³⁹ A wife is bound as long as her husband is living. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes (only someone in the Lord). ⁴⁰ But in my opinion, she will be happier if she remains as she is – and I think that I too have the Spirit of God!

8

¹ With regard to food sacrificed to idols, we know that “we all have knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² If someone thinks he knows something, he does not yet know to the degree that he needs to know. ³ But if someone loves God, he is known by God.

⁴ With regard then to eating food sacrificed to idols, we know that “an idol in this world is nothing,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵ If after all there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), ⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we live, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we live.

⁷ But this knowledge is not shared by all. And some, by being accustomed to idols in former times, eat this food as an idol sacrifice, and their conscience, because it is weak, is defiled. ⁸ Now food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse if we do not eat and no better if we do. ⁹ But be careful that this liberty of yours does not become a hindrance to the weak. ¹⁰ For if someone weak sees you who possess knowledge dining in an idol’s temple, will not his conscience be “strengthened” to eat food offered to idols? ¹¹ So by your knowledge the weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed. ¹² If you sin against your brothers or sisters in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ For this reason, if food causes my brother or sister to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause one of them to sin.

9

¹ Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ² If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you, for you are the confirming sign of my apostleship in the Lord. ³ This is my defense to those who examine me. ⁴ Do we not have the right to financial support? ⁵ Do we not have the right to the company of a believing wife, like the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas? ⁶ Or do only Barnabas and I lack the right not to work? ⁷ Who ever serves in the army at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its

fruit? Who tends a flock and does not consume its milk? ⁸ Am I saying these things only on the basis of common sense, or does the law not say this as well? ⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, “*Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.*” God is not concerned here about oxen, is he? ¹⁰ Or is he not surely speaking for our benefit? It was written for us, because the one plowing and threshing ought to work in hope of enjoying the harvest. ¹¹ If we sowed spiritual blessings among you, is it too much to reap material things from you? ¹² If others receive this right from you, are we not more deserving?

But we have not made use of this right. Instead we endure everything so that we may not be a hindrance to the gospel of Christ. ¹³ Don't you know that those who serve in the temple eat food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar receive a part of the offerings? ¹⁴ In the same way the Lord commanded those who proclaim the gospel to receive their living by the gospel. ¹⁵ But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing these things so that something will be done for me. In fact, it would be better for me to die than – no one will deprive me of my reason for boasting! ¹⁶ For if I preach the gospel, I have no reason for boasting, because I am compelled to do this. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward. But if I do it unwillingly, I am entrusted with a responsibility. ¹⁸ What then is my reward? That when I preach the gospel I may offer the gospel free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹ For since I am free from all I can make myself a slave to all, in order to gain even more people. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew to gain the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) to gain those under the law. ²¹ To those free from the law I became like one free from the law (though I am not free from God's law but under the law of Christ) to gain those free from the law. ²² To the weak I became weak in order to gain the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that by all means I may save some.

²³ I do all these things because of the gospel, so that I can be a participant in it.

²⁴ Do you not know that all the runners in a stadium compete, but only one receives the prize? So run to win. ²⁵ Each competitor must exercise self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.

²⁶ So I do not run uncertainly or box like one who hits only air. ²⁷ Instead I subdue my body and make it my slave, so that after preaching to others I myself will not be disqualified.

10

¹ For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they were all drinking from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵ But God was not pleased with most of them, for they were cut down in the wilderness. ⁶ These things happened as examples for us, so that we will not crave evil things as they did. ⁷ So do not be idolaters, as some of them were. As it is written, “*The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.*” ⁸ And let us not be immoral, as some of them were, and twenty-three thousand died in a single day. ⁹ And let us not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by snakes. ¹⁰ And do not complain, as some of them did, and were killed by the destroying angel. ¹¹ These things happened to them as examples and were written for our instruction, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So let the one who thinks he is standing be careful that he does not fall. ¹³ No trial has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tried beyond what you are able to bear, but with the trial will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Avoid Idol Feasts

¹⁴ So then, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I am speaking to thoughtful people. Consider what I say. ¹⁶ Is not the cup of blessing that we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread that we break a sharing in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all share the one bread. ¹⁸ Look at the people of Israel. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? ¹⁹ Am I saying that idols or food sacrificed to them amount to anything? ²⁰ No, I mean that what the pagans sacrifice is to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot take part in the table of the Lord and the table of demons. ²² Or are we trying to provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we really stronger than he is?

Live to Glorify God

²³ “Everything is lawful,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is lawful,” but not everything builds others up. ²⁴ Do not seek your own good, but the good of the other person. ²⁵ Eat anything that is sold in the marketplace without questions of conscience, ²⁶ for *the earth and its abundance are the Lord’s*. ²⁷ If an unbeliever invites you to dinner and you want to go, eat whatever is served without asking questions of conscience. ²⁸ But if someone says to you, “This is from a sacrifice,” do not eat, because of the one who told you and because of conscience – ²⁹ I do not mean yours but the other person’s. For why is my freedom being judged by another’s conscience? ³⁰ If I partake with thankfulness, why am I blamed for the food that I give thanks for? ³¹ So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. ³² Do not give offense to Jews or Greeks or to the church of God, ³³ just as I also try to please everyone in all things. I do not seek my own benefit, but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved.

11

¹ Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

Women’s Head Coverings

² I praise you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions just as I passed them on to you. ³ But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. ⁴ Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered disgraces his head. ⁵ But any woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered disgraces her head, for it is one and the same thing as having a shaved head. ⁶ For if a woman will not cover her head, she should cut off her hair. But if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, she should cover her head. ⁷ For a man should not have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of the man. ⁸ For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. ⁹ Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for man. ¹⁰ For this reason a woman should have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹ In any case, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. ¹² For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman. But all things come from God. ¹³ Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴ Does not nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace for him, ¹⁵ but if a woman

has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. ¹⁶ If anyone intends to quarrel about this, we have no other practice, nor do the churches of God.

The Lord's Supper

¹⁷ Now in giving the following instruction I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For in the first place, when you come together as a church I hear there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must in fact be divisions among you, so that those of you who are approved may be evident. ²⁰ Now when you come together at the same place, you are not really eating the Lord's Supper. ²¹ For when it is time to eat, everyone proceeds with his own supper. One is hungry and another becomes drunk. ²² Do you not have houses so that you can eat and drink? Or are you trying to show contempt for the church of God by shaming those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I will not praise you for this!

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and after he had given thanks he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, every time you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

²⁷ For this reason, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A person should examine himself first, and in this way let him eat the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For the one who eats and drinks without careful regard for the body eats and drinks judgment against himself. ³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and sick, and quite a few are dead. ³¹ But if we examined ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned with the world. ³³ So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that when you assemble it does not lead to judgment. I will give directions about other matters when I come.

12

¹ With regard to spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans you were often led astray by speechless idols, however you were led. ³ So I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ And there are different ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are different results, but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. ⁷ To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the benefit of all. ⁸ For one person is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, and another the message of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another performance of miracles, to another prophecy, and to another discernment of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ It is one and the same Spirit, distributing as he decides to each person, who produces all these things.

Different Members in One Body

¹² For just as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body – though many – are one body, so too is Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Whether Jews or Greeks or slaves or free, we were all made to drink of the one Spirit. ¹⁴ For in fact the body is not a single member, but many. ¹⁵ If the foot says, “Since I am not a hand, I am not part of the body,” it does not lose its membership in the body because of that. ¹⁶ And if the ear says, “Since I am not an eye, I am not part of the body,” it does not lose its membership in the body because of that. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, what part would do the hearing? If the whole were an ear, what part would exercise the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as a matter of fact, God has placed each of the members in the body just as he decided. ¹⁹ If they were all the same member, where would the body be? ²⁰ So now there are many members, but one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need you,” nor in turn can the head say to the foot, “I do not need you.” ²² On the contrary, those members that seem to be weaker are essential, ²³ and those members we consider less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our unpresentable members are clothed with dignity, ²⁴ but our presentable members do not need this. Instead, God has blended together the body, giving greater honor to the lesser

member, ²⁵ so that there may be no division in the body, but the members may have mutual concern for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, everyone suffers with it. If a member is honored, all rejoice with it.

²⁷ Now you are Christ's body, and each of you is a member of it. ²⁸ And God has placed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, gifts of healing, helps, gifts of leadership, different kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Not all are apostles, are they? Not all are prophets, are they? Not all are teachers, are they? Not all perform miracles, do they? ³⁰ Not all have gifts of healing, do they? Not all speak in tongues, do they? Not all interpret, do they? ³¹ But you should be eager for the greater gifts.

And now I will show you a way that is beyond comparison.

13

¹ If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but I do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away everything I own, and if I give over my body in order to boast, but do not have love, I receive no benefit.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind, it is not envious. Love does not brag, it is not puffed up. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-serving, it is not easily angered or resentful. ⁶ It is not glad about injustice, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. But if there are prophecies, they will be set aside; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be set aside. ⁹ For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when what is perfect comes, the partial will be set aside. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. But when I became an adult, I set aside childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror indirectly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I have been fully known. ¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

14

¹ Pursue love and be eager for the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. ² For the one speaking in a tongue does not speak to people but to God, for no one understands; he is speaking mysteries by the Spirit. ³ But the one who

prophecies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement, and consolation. ⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds himself up, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. ⁵ I wish you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets so that the church may be strengthened.

⁶ Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I help you unless I speak to you with a revelation or with knowledge or prophecy or teaching? ⁷ It is similar for lifeless things that make a sound, like a flute or harp. Unless they make a distinction in the notes, how can what is played on the flute or harp be understood? ⁸ If, for example, the trumpet makes an unclear sound, who will get ready for battle? ⁹ It is the same for you. If you do not speak clearly with your tongue, how will anyone know what is being said? For you will be speaking into the air. ¹⁰ There are probably many kinds of languages in the world, and none is without meaning. ¹¹ If then I do not know the meaning of a language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. ¹² It is the same with you. Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, seek to abound in order to strengthen the church.

¹³ So then, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret. ¹⁴ If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unproductive. ¹⁵ What should I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing praises with my spirit, but I will also sing praises with my mind. ¹⁶ Otherwise, if you are praising God with your spirit, how can someone without the gift say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? ¹⁷ For you are certainly giving thanks well, but the other person is not strengthened. ¹⁸ I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you, ¹⁹ but in the church I want to speak five words with my mind to instruct others, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

²⁰ Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking. Instead, be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. ²¹ It is written in the law: "*By people with strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, yet not even in this way will they listen to me,*" says the Lord. ²² So then, tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers. Prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers. ²³ So if the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and unbelievers or uninformed people enter, will

they not say that you have lost your minds? ²⁴ But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or uninformed person enters, he will be convicted by all, he will be called to account by all. ²⁵ The secrets of his heart are disclosed, and in this way he will fall down with his face to the ground and worship God, declaring, "God is really among you."

Church Order

²⁶ What should you do then, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each one has a song, has a lesson, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all these things be done for the strengthening of the church. ²⁷ If someone speaks in a tongue, it should be two, or at the most three, one after the other, and someone must interpret. ²⁸ But if there is no interpreter, he should be silent in the church. Let him speak to himself and to God. ²⁹ Two or three prophets should speak and the others should evaluate what is said. ³⁰ And if someone sitting down receives a revelation, the person who is speaking should conclude. ³¹ For you can all prophesy one after another, so all can learn and be encouraged. ³² Indeed, the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, ³³ for God is not characterized by disorder but by peace.

As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ the women should be silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak. Rather, let them be in submission, as in fact the law says. ³⁵ If they want to find out about something, they should ask their husbands at home, because it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church. ³⁶ Did the word of God begin with you, or did it come to you alone?

³⁷ If anyone considers himself a prophet or spiritual person, he should acknowledge that what I write to you is the Lord's command. ³⁸ If someone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. ³⁹ So then, brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid anyone from speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ And do everything in a decent and orderly manner.

15

¹ Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you - unless you believed in vain. ³ For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received - that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, ⁴ and that he was buried, and that he was raised

on the third day according to the scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been in vain. In fact, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God with me. ¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, this is the way we preach and this is the way you believed.

No Resurrection?

¹² Now if Christ is being preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is futile and your faith is empty. ¹⁵ Also, we are found to be false witnesses about God, because we have testified against God that he raised Christ from the dead, when in reality he did not raise him, if indeed the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is useless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Furthermore, those who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished. ¹⁹ For if only in this life we have hope in Christ, we should be pitied more than anyone.

²⁰ But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man. ²² For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; then when Christ comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when he has brought to an end all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be eliminated is death. ²⁷ For

he has put | strong="G5293" everything in subjection under his feet everything in subjection under his feet. But when it says “everything” has been put in subjection, it is clear that this does not include the one who put everything in subjection to him. ²⁸ And when all things are subjected to

him, then the Son himself will be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

²⁹ Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, then why are they baptized for them? ³⁰ Why too are we in danger every hour? ³¹ Every day I am in danger of death! This is as sure as my boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If from a human point of view I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what did it benefit me? If the dead are not raised, *let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.* ³³ Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." ³⁴ Sober up as you should, and stop sinning! For some have no knowledge of God – I say this to your shame!

The Resurrection Body

³⁵ But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" ³⁶ Fool! What you sow will not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare seed – perhaps of wheat or something else. ³⁸ But God gives it a body just as he planned, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. ³⁹ All flesh is not the same: People have one flesh, animals have another, birds and fish another. ⁴⁰ And there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. The glory of the heavenly body is one sort and the earthly another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory.

⁴² It is the same with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ So also it is written, "*The first man, Adam, became a living person*"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ However, the spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man is from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ Like the one made of dust, so too are those made of dust, and like the one from heaven, so too those who are heavenly. ⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, let us also bear the image of the man of heaven.

⁵⁰ Now this is what I am saying, brothers and sisters: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Listen, I will tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – ⁵² in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ Now when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen,

“ **Death has been swallowed up in victory.**”

⁵⁵ “ *Where, O death, is your victory?*

Where, O death, is your sting?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! ⁵⁸ So then, dear brothers and sisters, be firm. Do not be moved! Always be outstanding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

16

¹ With regard to the collection for the saints, please follow the directions that I gave to the churches of Galatia: ² On the first day of the week, each of you should set aside some income and save it to the extent that God has blessed you, so that a collection will not have to be made when I come. ³ Then, when I arrive, I will send those whom you approve with letters of explanation to carry your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴ And if it seems advisable that I should go also, they will go with me.

Paul's Plans to Visit

⁵ But I will come to you after I have gone through Macedonia – for I will be going through Macedonia – ⁶ and perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you can send me on my journey, wherever I go. ⁷ For I do not want to see you now in passing, since I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord allows. ⁸ But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, ⁹ because a door of great opportunity stands wide open for me, but there are many opponents.

¹⁰ Now if Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear among you, for he is doing the Lord's work, as I am too. ¹¹ So then, let no one treat him with contempt. But send him on his way in peace so that he may come to me. For I am expecting him with the brothers.

¹² With regard to our brother Apollos: I strongly encouraged him to visit you with the other brothers, but it was simply not his intention to come now. He will come when he has the opportunity.

Final Challenge and Blessing

¹³ Stay alert, stand firm in the faith, show courage, be strong. ¹⁴ Everything you do should be done in love.

¹⁵ Now, brothers and sisters, you know about the household of Stephanus, that as the first converts of Achaia, they devoted themselves to ministry for the saints. I urge you ¹⁶ also to submit to people like this, and to everyone who cooperates in the work and labors hard. ¹⁷ I was glad about the arrival of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus because they have supplied the fellowship with you that I lacked. ¹⁸ For they refreshed my spirit and yours. So then, recognize people like this.

¹⁹ The churches in the province of Asia send greetings to you. Aquila and Prisca greet you warmly in the Lord, with the church that meets in their house. ²⁰ All the brothers and sisters send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

²¹ I, Paul, send this greeting with my own hand.

²² Let anyone who has no love for the Lord be accursed. Our Lord, come!

²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

²⁴ My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia. ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanksgiving for God's Comfort

³ Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles so that we may be able to comfort those experiencing any trouble with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow toward us, so also our comfort through Christ overflows to you. ⁶ But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort that you experience in your patient endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer. ⁷ And our hope for you is steadfast because we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you will share in our comfort. ⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, regarding the affliction that happened to us in the province of Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of living. ⁹ Indeed we felt as if the sentence of death had been passed against us, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He delivered us from so great a risk of death, and he will deliver us. We have set our hope on him that he will deliver us yet again, ¹¹ as you also join in helping us by prayer, so that many people may give thanks to God on our behalf for the gracious gift given to us through the help of many.

Paul Defends His Changed Plans

¹² For our reason for confidence is this: the testimony of our conscience, that with pure motives and sincerity which are from God – not by human wisdom but by the grace of God – we conducted ourselves in the world, and all the more toward you. ¹³ For we do not write you anything other than what you can read and also understand. But I hope that you will understand completely ¹⁴ just as also you have partly understood us, that we are your source of pride just as you also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁵ And with this confidence I intended to come to you first so that you would get a second opportunity to see us, ¹⁶ and through your help

to go on into Macedonia and then from Macedonia to come back to you and be helped on our way into Judea by you. ¹⁷ Therefore when I was planning to do this, I did not do so without thinking about what I was doing, did I? Or do I make my plans according to mere human standards so that I would be saying both “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time? ¹⁸ But as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” ¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the one who was proclaimed among you by us – by me and Silvanus and Timothy – was not “Yes” and “No,” but it has always been “Yes” in him. ²⁰ For every one of God’s promises are “Yes” in him; therefore also through him the “Amen” is spoken, to the glory we give to God. ²¹ But it is God who establishes us together with you in Christ and who anointed us, ²² who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a down payment.

Why Paul Postponed His Visit

²³ Now I appeal to God as my witness, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth. ²⁴ I do not mean that we rule over your faith, but we are workers with you for your joy, because by faith you stand firm.

2

¹ So I made up my own mind not to pay you another painful visit. ² For if I make you sad, who would be left to make me glad but the one I caused to be sad? ³ And I wrote this very thing to you, so that when I came I would not have sadness from those who ought to make me rejoice, since I am confident in you all that my joy would be yours. ⁴ For out of great distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not to make you sad, but to let you know the love that I have especially for you. ⁵ But if anyone has caused sadness, he has not saddened me alone, but to some extent (not to exaggerate) he has saddened all of you as well. ⁶ This punishment on such an individual by the majority is enough for him, ⁷ so that now instead you should rather forgive and comfort him. This will keep him from being overwhelmed by excessive grief to the point of despair. ⁸ Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. ⁹ For this reason also I wrote you: to test you to see if you are obedient in everything. ¹⁰ If you forgive anyone for anything, I also forgive him – for indeed what I have forgiven (if I have forgiven anything) I did so for you in the presence of Christ, ¹¹ so that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes). ¹² Now when I arrived in Troas to proclaim the gospel of Christ, even though the Lord had opened a door of

opportunity for me, ¹³ I had no relief in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and set out for Macedonia.

Apostolic Ministry

¹⁴ But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place. ¹⁵ For we are a sweet aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing - ¹⁶ to the latter an odor from death to death, but to the former a fragrance from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? ¹⁷ For we are not like so many others, hucksters who peddle the word of God for profit, but we are speaking in Christ before God as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God.

3

¹ Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? We don't need letters of recommendation to you or from you as some other people do, do we? ² You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone, ³ revealing that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not *on stone tablets* but on tablets of human hearts.

⁴ Now we have such confidence in God through Christ. ⁵ Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as if it were coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, ⁶ who made us adequate to be servants of a new covenant not based on the letter but on the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

The Greater Glory of the Spirit's Ministry

⁷ But if the ministry that produced death - carved in letters on stone tablets - came with glory, so that the Israelites could not keep their eyes fixed on the face of Moses because of the glory of his face (a glory which was made ineffective), ⁸ how much more glorious will the ministry of the Spirit be? ⁹ For if there was glory in the ministry that produced condemnation, how much more does the ministry that produces righteousness excel in glory! ¹⁰ For indeed, what had been glorious now has no glory because of the tremendously greater glory of what replaced it. ¹¹ For if what was made ineffective came with glory, how much more has what remains come in glory! ¹² Therefore, since we have such a hope, we behave with great boldness, ¹³ and not like Moses who used to put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from staring at the result of

the glory that was made ineffective. ¹⁴ But their minds were closed. For to this very day, the same veil remains when they hear the old covenant read. It has not been removed because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ But until this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds, ¹⁶ but when one turns to the Lord, *the veil is removed*. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled faces reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

4

¹ Therefore, since we have this ministry, just as God has shown us mercy, we do not become discouraged. ² But we have rejected shameful hidden deeds, not behaving with deceptiveness or distorting the word of God, but by open proclamation of the truth we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience before God. ³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing, ⁴ among whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe so they would not see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said "*Let light shine out of darkness*," is the one who shined in our hearts to give us the light of the glorious knowledge of God in the face of Christ.

An Eternal Weight of Glory

⁷ But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that the extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. ⁸ We are experiencing trouble on every side, but are not crushed; we are perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ we are persecuted, but not abandoned; we are knocked down, but not destroyed, ¹⁰ always carrying around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our body. ¹¹ For we who are alive are constantly being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our mortal body. ¹² As a result, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. ¹³ But since we have the same spirit of faith as that shown in what has been written, "*I believed; therefore I spoke*," we also believe, therefore we also speak. ¹⁴ We do so because we know that the one who raised up Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus and will bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵ For all these things are for your sake, so that the grace that

is including more and more people may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God. ¹⁶ Therefore we do not despair, but even if our physical body is wearing away, our inner person is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our momentary, light suffering is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison ¹⁸ because we are not looking at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen. For what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

5

¹ For we know that if our earthly house, the tent we live in, is dismantled, we have a building from God, a house not built by human hands, that is eternal in the heavens. ² For in this earthly house we groan, because we desire to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³ if indeed, after we have put on our heavenly house, we will not be found naked. ⁴ For we groan while we are in this tent, since we are weighed down, because we do not want to be unclothed, but clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now the one who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a down payment. ⁶ Therefore we are always full of courage, and we know that as long as we are alive here on earth we are absent from the Lord – ⁷ for we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ Thus we are full of courage and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So then whether we are alive or away, we make it our ambition to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be paid back according to what he has done while in the body, whether good or evil.

The Message of Reconciliation

¹¹ Therefore, because we know the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade people, but we are well known to God, and I hope we are well known to your consciences too. ¹² We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to be proud of us, so that you may be able to answer those who take pride in outward appearance and not in what is in the heart. ¹³ For if we are out of our minds, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For the love of Christ controls us, since we have concluded this, that Christ died for all; therefore all have died. ¹⁵ And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised. ¹⁶ So then from now on we acknowledge no one from an outward human point of view. Even though we have known Christ from such a human point of view, now we do not know

him in that way any longer. ¹⁷ So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away – look, what is new has come! ¹⁸ And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. ¹⁹ In other words, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people's trespasses against them, and he has given us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His plea through us. We plead with you on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God!" ²¹ God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the righteousness of God.

6

¹ Now because we are fellow workers, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For he says, "*I heard you at the acceptable time, and in the day of salvation I helped you.*" Look, now is *the acceptable time*; look, now is *the day of salvation*! ³ We do not give anyone an occasion for taking an offense in anything, so that no fault may be found with our ministry. ⁴ But as God's servants, we have commended ourselves in every way, with great endurance, in persecutions, in difficulties, in distresses, ⁵ in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in troubles, in sleepless nights, in hunger, ⁶ by purity, by knowledge, by patience, by benevolence, by the Holy Spirit, by genuine love, ⁷ by truthful teaching, by the power of God, with weapons of righteousness both for the right hand and for the left, ⁸ through glory and dishonor, through slander and praise; regarded as impostors, and yet true; ⁹ as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying and yet – see! – we continue to live; as those who are scourged and yet not executed; ¹⁰ as sorrowful, but always rejoicing, as poor, but making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

¹¹ We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart has been opened wide to you. ¹² Our affection for you is not restricted, but you are restricted in your affections for us. ¹³ Now as a fair exchange – I speak as to my children – open wide your hearts to us also.

Unequal Partners

¹⁴ Do not become partners with those who do not believe, for what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship does light have with darkness? ¹⁵ And what agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share in common with an

unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what mutual agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said, “*I will live in them and will walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people: **.” ¹⁷ Therefore “*come out from their midst, and be separate,*” says the Lord, “**and touch no unclean thing,** and I will welcome you,” ¹⁸ and I will be a father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,” says the All-Powerful Lord.

7

¹ Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that could defile the body and the spirit, and thus accomplish holiness out of reverence for God. ² Make room for us in your hearts; we have wronged no one, we have ruined no one, we have exploited no one. ³ I do not say this to condemn you, for I told you before that you are in our hearts so that we die together and live together with you.

A Letter That Caused Sadness

⁴ I have great confidence in you; I take great pride on your behalf. I am filled with encouragement; I am overflowing with joy in the midst of all our suffering. ⁵ For even when we came into Macedonia, our body had no rest at all, but we were troubled in every way – struggles from the outside, fears from within. ⁶ But God, who encourages the downhearted, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus. ⁷ We were encouraged not only by his arrival, but also by the encouragement you gave him, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your deep concern for me, so that I rejoiced more than ever. ⁸ For even if I made you sad by my letter, I do not regret having written it (even though I did regret it, for I see that my letter made you sad, though only for a short time). ⁹ Now I rejoice, not because you were made sad, but because you were made sad to the point of repentance. For you were made sad as God intended, so that you were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰ For sadness as intended by God produces a repentance that leads to salvation, leaving no regret, but worldly sadness brings about death. ¹¹ For see what this very thing, this sadness as God intended, has produced in you: what eagerness, what defense of yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what deep concern, what punishment! In everything you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. ¹² So then, even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did wrong, or on account of the one who was wronged, but to reveal to you your eagerness on our

behalf before God. ¹³ Therefore we have been encouraged. And in addition to our own encouragement, we rejoiced even more at the joy of Titus, because all of you have refreshed his spirit. ¹⁴ For if I have boasted to him about anything concerning you, I have not been embarrassed by you, but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus about you has proved true as well. ¹⁵ And his affection for you is much greater when he remembers the obedience of you all, how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ I rejoice because in everything I am fully confident in you.

8

¹ Now we make known to you, brothers and sisters, the grace of God given to the churches of Macedonia, ² that during a severe ordeal of suffering, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in the wealth of their generosity. ³ For I testify, they gave according to their means and beyond their means. They did so voluntarily, ⁴ begging us with great earnestness for the blessing and fellowship of helping the saints. ⁵ And they did this not just as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us by the will of God. ⁶ Thus we urged Titus that, just as he had previously begun this work, so also he should complete this act of kindness for you. ⁷ But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, and in all eagerness and in the love from us that is in you – make sure that you excel in this act of kindness too. ⁸ I am not saying this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love by comparison with the eagerness of others. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although he was rich, he became poor for your sakes, so that you by his poverty could become rich. ¹⁰ So here is my opinion on this matter: It is to your advantage, since you made a good start last year both in your giving and your desire to give, ¹¹ to finish what you started, so that just as you wanted to do it eagerly, you can also complete it according to your means. ¹² For if the eagerness is present, the gift itself is acceptable according to whatever one has, not according to what he does not have. ¹³ For I do not say this so there would be relief for others and suffering for you, but as a matter of equality. ¹⁴ At the present time, your abundance will meet their need, so that one day their abundance may also meet your need, and thus there may be equality, ¹⁵ as it is written: “*The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little.*”

¹⁶ But thanks be to God who put in the heart of Titus the same devotion I have for you, ¹⁷ because he not only accepted our request, but since he was very eager, he is coming to you of his own accord. ¹⁸ And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his work in spreading the gospel. ¹⁹ In addition, this brother has also been chosen by the churches as our traveling companion as we administer this generous gift to the glory of the Lord himself and to show our readiness to help. ²⁰ We did this as a precaution so that no one should blame us in regard to this generous gift we are administering. ²¹ For we are *concerned about what is right not only before the Lord but also before men*. ²² And we are sending with them our brother whom we have tested many times and found eager in many matters, but who now is much more eager than ever because of the great confidence he has in you. ²³ If there is any question about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; if there is any question about our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ. ²⁴ Therefore show them openly before the churches the proof of your love and of our pride in you.

9

¹ For it is not necessary for me to write you about this service to the saints, ² because I know your eagerness to help. I keep boasting to the Macedonians about this eagerness of yours, that Achaia has been ready to give since last year, and your zeal to participate has stirred up most of them. ³ But I am sending these brothers so that our boasting about you may not be empty in this case, so that you may be ready just as I kept telling them. ⁴ For if any of the Macedonians should come with me and find that you are not ready to give, we would be humiliated (not to mention you) by this confidence we had in you. ⁵ Therefore I thought it necessary to urge these brothers to go to you in advance and to arrange ahead of time the generous contribution you had promised, so this may be ready as a generous gift and not as something you feel forced to do. ⁶ My point is this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each one of you should give just as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, because God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace overflow to you so that because you have enough of everything in every way at all times, you will overflow in every good work. ⁹ Just as

it is written, “*He has scattered widely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever.*”¹⁰ Now God who provides seed for the sower and bread for food will provide and multiply your supply of seed and will cause the harvest of your righteousness to grow.¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you may be generous on every occasion, which is producing through us thanksgiving to God,¹² because the service of this ministry is not only providing for the needs of the saints but is also overflowing with many thanks to God.¹³ Through the evidence of this service they will glorify God because of your obedience to your confession in the gospel of Christ and the generosity of your sharing with them and with everyone.¹⁴ And in their prayers on your behalf they long for you because of the extraordinary grace God has shown to you.¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

10

¹ Now I, Paul, appeal to you personally by the meekness and gentleness of Christ (I who am meek when present among you, but am full of courage toward you when away!) – ² now I ask that when I am present I may not have to be bold with the confidence that (I expect) I will dare to use against some who consider us to be behaving according to human standards.³ For though we live as human beings, we do not wage war according to human standards,⁴ for the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments⁵ and every arrogant obstacle that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obey Christ.⁶ We are also ready to punish every act of disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.⁷ You are looking at outward appearances. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should reflect on this again: Just as he himself belongs to Christ, so too do we.⁸ For if I boast somewhat more about our authority that the Lord gave us for building you up and not for tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of doing so.⁹ I do not want to seem as though I am trying to terrify you with my letters,¹⁰ because some say, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but his physical presence is weak and his speech is of no account.”¹¹ Let such a person consider this: What we say by letters when we are absent, we also are in actions when we are present.

Paul's Mission

¹² For we would not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who recommend themselves. But when

they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding. ¹³ But we will not boast beyond certain limits, but will confine our boasting according to the limits of the work to which God has appointed us, that reaches even as far as you. ¹⁴ For we were not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach as far as you, because we were the first to reach as far as you with the gospel about Christ. ¹⁵ Nor do we boast beyond certain limits in the work done by others, but we hope that as your faith continues to grow, our work may be greatly expanded among you according to our limits, ¹⁶ so that we may preach the gospel in the regions that lie beyond you, and not boast of work already done in another person's area. ¹⁷ But

the one who boasts | strong="G2744" must boast in the Lord must boast in the Lord. ¹⁸ For it is not the person who commends himself who is approved, but the person the Lord commends.

11

¹ I wish that you would be patient with me in a little foolishness, but indeed you are being patient with me! ² For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy, because I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. ³ But I am afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by his treachery, your minds may be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. ⁴ For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus different from the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit than the one you received, or a different gospel than the one you accepted, you put up with it well enough! ⁵ For I consider myself not at all inferior to those "super-apostles." ⁶ And even if I am unskilled in speaking, yet I am certainly not so in knowledge. Indeed, we have made this plain to you in everything in every way. ⁷ Or did I commit a sin by humbling myself so that you could be exalted, because I proclaimed the gospel of God to you free of charge? ⁸ I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so that I could serve you! ⁹ When I was with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia fully supplied my needs. I kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so. ¹⁰ As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹ Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! ¹² And what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may eliminate any opportunity for those who want a chance to be

regarded as our equals in the things they boast about. ¹³ For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is not surprising his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will correspond to their actions.

Paul's Sufferings for Christ

¹⁶ I say again, let no one think that I am a fool. But if you do, then at least accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. ¹⁷ What I am saying with this boastful confidence I do not say the way the Lord would. Instead it is, as it were, foolishness. ¹⁸ Since many are boasting according to human standards, I too will boast. ¹⁹ For since you are so wise, you put up with fools gladly. ²⁰ For you put up with it if someone makes slaves of you, if someone exploits you, if someone takes advantage of you, if someone behaves arrogantly toward you, if someone strikes you in the face. ²¹ (To my disgrace I must say that we were too weak for that!) But whatever anyone else dares to boast about (I am speaking foolishly), I also dare to boast about the same thing. ²² Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. ²³ Are they servants of Christ? (I am talking like I am out of my mind!) I am even more so: with much greater labors, with far more imprisonments, with more severe beatings, facing death many times. ²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes less one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with a rod. Once I received a stoning. Three times I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I spent adrift in the open sea. ²⁶ I have been on journeys many times, in dangers from rivers, in dangers from robbers, in dangers from my own countrymen, in dangers from Gentiles, in dangers in the city, in dangers in the wilderness, in dangers at sea, in dangers from false brothers, ²⁷ in hard work and toil, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, many times without food, in cold and without enough clothing. ²⁸ Apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxious concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not burn with indignation? ³⁰ If I must boast, I will boast about the things that show my weakness. ³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is blessed forever, knows I am not lying. ³² In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to arrest me, ³³ but I was let down in

a rope-basket through a window in the city wall, and escaped his hands.

12

¹ It is necessary to go on boasting. Though it is not profitable, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows) was caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I know that this man (whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows) ⁴ was caught up into paradise and heard things too sacred to be put into words, things that a person is not permitted to speak. ⁵ On behalf of such an individual I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except about my weaknesses. ⁶ For even if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I would be telling the truth, but I refrain from this so that no one may regard me beyond what he sees in me or what he hears from me, ⁷ even because of the extraordinary character of the revelations. Therefore, so that I would not become arrogant, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to trouble me – so that I would not become arrogant. ⁸ I asked the Lord three times about this, that it would depart from me. ⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is enough for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” So then, I will boast most gladly about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may reside in me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am content with weaknesses, with insults, with troubles, with persecutions and difficulties for the sake of Christ, for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

The Signs of an Apostle

¹¹ I have become a fool. You yourselves forced me to do it, for I should have been commended by you. For I lack nothing in comparison to those “super-apostles,” even though I am nothing. ¹² Indeed, the signs of an apostle were performed among you with great perseverance by signs and wonders and powerful deeds. ¹³ For how were you treated worse than the other churches, except that I myself was not a burden to you? Forgive me this injustice! ¹⁴ Look, for the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you, because I do not want your possessions, but you. For children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. ¹⁵ Now I will most gladly spend and be spent for your lives! If I love you more, am I to be loved less? ¹⁶ But be that as it may, I have not burdened you. Yet because I was a crafty person, I took you in by deceit! ¹⁷ I have not

taken advantage of you through anyone I have sent to you, have I? ¹⁸ I urged Titus to visit you and I sent our brother along with him. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit? Did we not behave in the same way? ¹⁹ Have you been thinking all this time that we have been defending ourselves to you? We are speaking in Christ before God, and everything we do, dear friends, is to build you up. ²⁰ For I am afraid that somehow when I come I will not find you what I wish, and you will find me not what you wish. I am afraid that somehow there may be quarreling, jealousy, intense anger, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder. ²¹ I am afraid that when I come again, my God may humiliate me before you, and I will grieve for many of those who previously sinned and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and licentiousness that they have practiced.

13

¹ This is the third time I am coming to visit you.

By | strong="G1909" the testimony the testimony of two | strong="G1417" or three witnesses every matter will be established. ² I said before when I was present the second time and now, though absent, I say again to those who sinned previously and to all the rest, that if I come again, I will not spare anyone, ³ since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak toward you but is powerful among you. ⁴ For indeed he was crucified by reason of weakness, but he lives because of God's power. For we also are weak in him, but we will live together with him, because of God's power toward you. ⁵ Put yourselves to the test to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize regarding yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you – unless, indeed, you fail the test! ⁶ And I hope that you will realize that we have not failed the test! ⁷ Now we pray to God that you may not do anything wrong, not so that we may appear to have passed the test, but so that you may do what is right even if we may appear to have failed the test. ⁸ For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the sake of the truth. ⁹ For we rejoice whenever we are weak, but you are strong. And we pray for this: that you may become fully qualified. ¹⁰ Because of this I am writing these things while absent, so that when I arrive I may not have to deal harshly with you by using my authority – the Lord gave it to me for building up, not for tearing down!

Final Exhortations and Greetings

¹¹ Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice, set things right, be encouraged, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. ¹³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. ¹⁴ *

* 13:14 [[EMPTY]]

Galatians

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle (not from men, nor by human agency, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead) ² and all the brothers with me, to the churches of Galatia. ³ Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be glory forever and ever! Amen.

Occasion of the Letter

⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are following a different gospel – ⁷ not that there really is another gospel, but there are some who are disturbing you and wanting to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we (or an angel from heaven) should preach a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be condemned to hell! ⁹ As we have said before, and now I say again, if any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let him be condemned to hell! ¹⁰ Am I now trying to gain the approval of people, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ!

Paul's Vindication of His Apostleship

¹¹ Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ¹² For I did not receive it or learn it from any human source; instead I received it by a revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³ For you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I was savagely persecuting the church of God and trying to destroy it. ¹⁴ I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my nation, and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. ¹⁵ But when the one who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me so that I could preach him among the Gentiles, I did not go to ask advice from any human being, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, but right away I departed to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and get information from him, and I stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I saw none of the other apostles except

James the Lord's brother. ²⁰ I assure you that, before God, I am not lying about what I am writing to you! ²¹ Afterward I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² But I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³ They were only hearing, "The one who once persecuted us is now proclaiming the good news of the faith he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ So they glorified God because of me.

2

¹ Then after fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem again with Barnabas, taking Titus along too. ² I went there because of a revelation and presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did so only in a private meeting with the influential people, to make sure that I was not running – or had not run – in vain. ³ Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Greek. ⁴ Now this matter arose because of the false brothers with false pretenses who slipped in unnoticed to spy on our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, to make us slaves. ⁵ But we did not surrender to them even for a moment, in order that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

⁶ But from those who were influential (whatever they were makes no difference to me; God shows no favoritism between people) – those influential leaders added nothing to my message. ⁷ On the contrary, when they saw that I was entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised just as Peter was to the circumcised ⁸ (for he who empowered Peter for his apostleship to the circumcised also empowered me for my apostleship to the Gentiles) ⁹ and when James, Cephas, and John, who had a reputation as pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we would go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ¹⁰ They requested only that we remember the poor, the very thing I also was eager to do.

Paul Rebukes Peter

¹¹ But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he had clearly done wrong. ¹² Until certain people came from James, he had been eating with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he stopped doing this and separated himself because he was afraid of those who were pro-circumcision. ¹³ And the rest of the Jews also joined with him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray with them by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that they were not behaving consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "If you, although you are a

Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you try to force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

Jews and Gentiles are Justified by Faith

¹⁵ We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, ¹⁶ yet we know that no one is justified by the works of the law but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. ¹⁷ But if while seeking to be justified in Christ we ourselves have also been found to be sinners, is Christ then one who encourages sin? Absolutely not! ¹⁸ But if I build up again those things I once destroyed, I demonstrate that I am one who breaks God's law. ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law so that I may live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside God's grace, because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing!

3

¹ You foolish Galatians! Who has cast a spell on you? Before your eyes Jesus Christ was vividly portrayed as crucified! ² The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? ³ Are you so foolish? Although you began with the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by human effort? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things for nothing? – if indeed it was for nothing. ⁵ Does God then give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law or by your believing what you heard?

⁶ Just as Abraham *believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness*, ⁷ so then, understand that those who believe are the sons of Abraham. ⁸ And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the gospel to Abraham ahead of time, saying, “*All the nations will be blessed in you**.” ⁹ So then those who believe are blessed along with Abraham the believer. ¹⁰ For all who rely on doing the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, “*Cursed is everyone who does not keep on doing everything written in the book of the law.*” ¹¹ Now it is clear no one is justified before God by the law, because ***the righteous one will live by faith.*** ¹² But the law is not based on faith, but *the one who does the works of the law will live by them.* ¹³ Christ

redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (because it is written, “*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree*”) ¹⁴ in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles, so that we could receive the promise of the Spirit by faith.

Inheritance Comes from Promises and not Law

¹⁵ Brothers and sisters, I offer an example from everyday life: When a covenant has been ratified, even though it is only a human contract, no one can set it aside or add anything to it. ¹⁶ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his descendant. Scripture does not say, “and to the descendants,” referring to many, but “*and to your descendant,*” referring to one, who is Christ. ¹⁷ What I am saying is this: The law that came four hundred thirty years later does not cancel a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to invalidate the promise. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance is based on the law, it is no longer based on the promise, but God graciously gave it to Abraham through the promise.

¹⁹ Why then was the law given? It was added because of transgressions, until the arrival of the descendant to whom the promise had been made. It was administered through angels by an intermediary. ²⁰ Now an intermediary is not for one party alone, but God is one. ²¹ Is the law therefore opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that was able to give life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²² But the scripture imprisoned everything and everyone under sin so that the promise could be given – because of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ – to those who believe.

Sons of God Are Heirs of Promise

²³ Now before faith came we were held in custody under the law, being kept as prisoners until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴ Thus the law had become our guardian until Christ, so that we could be declared righteous by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. ²⁶ For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. ²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female – for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to the promise.

4

¹ Now I mean that the heir, as long as he is a minor, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything. ² But he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³ So also we, when we were minors, were enslaved under the basic forces of the world. ⁴ But when the appropriate time had come, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we may be adopted as sons with full rights. ⁶ And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who calls “*Abba!* Father!” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if you are a son, then you are also an heir through God.

Heirs of Promise Are Not to Return to Law

⁸ Formerly when you did not know God, you were enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods at all. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God (or rather to be known by God), how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless basic forces? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again? ¹⁰ You are observing religious days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹ I fear for you that my work for you may have been in vain. ¹² I beg you, brothers and sisters, become like me, because I have become like you. You have done me no wrong!

Personal Appeal of Paul

¹³ But you know it was because of a physical illness that I first proclaimed the gospel to you, ¹⁴ and though my physical condition put you to the test, you did not despise or reject me. Instead, you welcomed me as though I were an angel of God, as though I were Christ Jesus himself! ¹⁵ Where then is your sense of happiness now? For I testify about you that if it were possible, you would have pulled out your eyes and given them to me! ¹⁶ So then, have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?

¹⁷ They court you eagerly, but for no good purpose; they want to exclude you, so that you would seek them eagerly. ¹⁸ However, it is good to be sought eagerly for a good purpose at all times, and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹ My children – I am again undergoing birth pains until Christ is formed in you! ²⁰ I wish I could be with you now and change my tone of voice, because I am perplexed about you.

An Appeal from Allegory

²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under the law, do you not understand the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had

two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. ²³ But one, the son by the slave woman, was born by natural descent, while the other, the son by the free woman, was born through the promise. ²⁴ These things may be treated as an allegory, for these women represent two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai bearing children for slavery; this is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written:

“ Rejoice, O barren woman who does not bear children; break forth and shout, you who have no birth pains, because the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than those of the woman who has a husband.”

²⁸ But you, brothers and sisters, are children of the promise like Isaac. ²⁹ But just as at that time the one born by natural descent persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, so it is now. ³⁰ But what does the scripture say? *“ Throw out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman will not share the inheritance with the son”* of the free woman. ³¹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free woman.

5

¹ For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery. ² Listen! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you at all! ³ And I testify again to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are trying to be declared righteous by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace! ⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait expectantly for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision carries any weight – the only thing that matters is faith working through love.

⁷ You were running well; who prevented you from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion does not come from the one who calls you! ⁹ A little yeast makes the whole batch of dough rise! ¹⁰ I am confident in the Lord that you will accept no other view. But the one who is confusing you will pay the penalty, whoever he may be. ¹¹ Now, brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹² I wish those agitators would go so far as to castrate themselves!

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity to indulge your flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law can be summed up in a single commandment, namely, “*You must love your neighbor as yourself.*” ¹⁵ However, if you continually bite and devour one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another. ¹⁶ But I say, live by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh has desires that are opposed to the Spirit, and the Spirit has desires that are opposed to the flesh, for these are in opposition to each other, so that you cannot do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, depravity, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envying, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and similar things. I am warning you, as I had warned you before: Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God!

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also behave in accordance with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, being jealous of one another.

6

¹ Brothers and sisters, if a person is discovered in some sin, you who are spiritual restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. Pay close attention to yourselves, so that you are not tempted too. ² Carry one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ Let each one examine his own work. Then he can take pride in himself and not compare himself with someone else. ⁵ For each one will carry his own load.

⁶ Now the one who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with the one who teaches it. ⁷ Do not be deceived. God will not be made a fool. For a person will reap what he sows, ⁸ because the person who sows to his own flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit. ⁹ So we must not grow weary in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, whenever we have

an opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who belong to the family of faith.

Final Instructions and Benediction

¹¹ See what big letters I make as I write to you with my own hand!

¹² Those who want to make a good showing in external matters are trying to force you to be circumcised. They do so only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ For those who are circumcised do not obey the law themselves, but they want you to be circumcised so that they can boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that matters is a new creation! ¹⁶ And all who will behave in accordance with this rule, peace and mercy be on them, and on the Israel of God.

¹⁷ From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear the marks of Jesus on my body.

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

Ephesians

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints [in Ephesus], the faithful in Christ Jesus. ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we may be holy and unblemished in his sight in love. ⁵ He did this by predestining us to adoption as his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will – ⁶ to the praise of the glory of his grace that he has freely bestowed on us in his dearly loved Son. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us in all wisdom and insight. ⁹ He did this when he revealed to us the secret of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ toward the administration of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ – the things in heaven and the things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we too have been claimed as God's own possession, since we were predestined according to the one purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, would be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ And when you heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation) – when you believed in Christ – you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory.

Prayer for Wisdom and Revelation

¹⁵ For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you when I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you spiritual wisdom and revelation in your growing knowledge of him, ¹⁸ – since the eyes of your heart have been enlightened – so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the incomparable

greatness of his power toward us who believe, as displayed in the exercise of his immense strength. ²⁰ This power he exercised in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms ²¹ far above every rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And God *put all things under Christ's feet*, and he gave him to the church as head over all things. ²³ Now the church is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

2

¹ And although you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you formerly lived according to this world's present path, according to the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the ruler of the spirit that is now energizing the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom all of us also formerly lived out our lives in the cravings of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath even as the rest...

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even though we were dead in transgressions, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you are saved! - ⁶ and he raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ to demonstrate in the coming ages the surpassing wealth of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ it is not from works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them.

New Life Corporately

¹¹ Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh - who are called "uncircumcision" by the so-called "circumcision" that is performed on the body by human hands - ¹² that you were at that time without the Messiah, alienated from the citizenship of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace, the one who made both groups into one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, ¹⁵ when he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees. He did this to create in himself one new man out of two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and to reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which the hostility

has been killed. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, ¹⁸ so that through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer foreigners and noncitizens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household, ²⁰ because you have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

3

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – ² if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that by revelation the divine secret was made known to me, as I wrote before briefly. ⁴ When reading this, you will be able to understand my insight into this secret of Christ. ⁵ Now this secret was not disclosed to people in former generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, ⁶ namely, that through the gospel the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. ⁷ I became a servant of this gospel according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the exercise of his power. ⁸ To me – less than the least of all the saints – this grace was given, to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ ⁹ and to enlighten everyone about God's secret plan – a secret that has been hidden for ages in God who has created all things. ¹⁰ The purpose of this enlightenment is that through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God should now be disclosed to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and confident access to God because of Christ's faithfulness. ¹³ For this reason I ask you not to lose heart because of what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

Prayer for Strengthened Love

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on the earth is named. ¹⁶ I pray that according to the wealth of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, so that, because you have been rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and thus to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who by the power that is working within us is able to do far beyond all that we ask or think, ²¹ to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

4

¹ I, therefore, the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live worthily of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you too were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. ⁸ Therefore it says, “*When he ascended on high he captured captives; he gave gifts to men.*” ⁹ Now what is the meaning of “*he ascended,*” except that he also descended to the lower regions, namely, the earth? ¹⁰ He, the very one who descended, is also the one who ascended above all the heavens, in order to fill all things. ¹¹ It was he who gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God – a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ’s full stature. ¹⁴ So we are no longer to be children, tossed back and forth by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching by the trickery of people who craftily carry out their deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. ¹⁶ From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love.

Live in Holiness

¹⁷ So I say this, and insist in the Lord, that you no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their hearts. ¹⁹ Because they are callous, they have given themselves over to indecency for the practice

of every kind of impurity with greediness. ²⁰ But you did not learn about Christ like this, ²¹ if indeed you heard about him and were taught in him, just as the truth is in Jesus. ²² You were taught with reference to your former way of life to lay aside the old man who is being corrupted in accordance with deceitful desires, ²³ to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and to put on the new man who has been created in God's image – in righteousness and holiness that comes from truth.

²⁵ Therefore, having laid aside falsehood, *each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor*, for we are members of one another. ²⁶ *Be angry and do not sin*; do not let the sun go down on the cause of your anger. ²⁷ Do not give the devil an opportunity. ²⁸ The one who steals must steal no longer; rather he must labor, doing good with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with the one who has need. ²⁹ You must let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but only what is beneficial for the building up of the one in need, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ You must put away every kind of bitterness, anger, wrath, quarreling, and evil, slanderous talk. ³² Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.

5

¹ Therefore, be imitators of God as dearly loved children ² and live in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God. ³ But among you there must not be either sexual immorality, impurity of any kind, or greed, as these are not fitting for the saints. ⁴ Neither should there be vulgar speech, foolish talk, or coarse jesting – all of which are out of character – but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For you can be confident of this one thing: that no person who is immoral, impure, or greedy (such a person is an idolater) has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Live in the Light

⁶ Let nobody deceive you with empty words, for because of these things God's wrath comes on the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them, ⁸ for you were at one time darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light – ⁹ for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth – ¹⁰ trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² For the things

they do in secret are shameful even to mention. ¹³ But all things being exposed by the light are made evident. ¹⁴ For everything made evident is light, and for this reason it says: “Awake, O sleeper! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you!”

Live Wisely

¹⁵ Therefore be very careful how you live – not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ taking advantage of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ For this reason do not be foolish, but be wise by understanding what the Lord’s will is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for each other in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Exhortations to Households

²² Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord, ²³ because the husband is the head of the wife as also Christ is the head of the church – he himself being the savior of the body. ²⁴ But as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her ²⁶ to sanctify her by cleansing her with the washing of the water by the word, ²⁷ so that he may present the church to himself as glorious – not having a stain or wrinkle, or any such blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In the same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one has ever hated his own body but he feeds it and takes care of it, just as Christ also does the church, ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.* ³² This mystery is great – but I am actually speaking with reference to Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless, each one of you must also love his own wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

6

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. ² “*Honor your father and mother,*,”*” which is the first commandment accompanied by a promise, namely, ³ “*that it may go well with you and that you will live a long time on the earth.*”

⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but raise them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

⁵ Slaves, obey your human masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart as to Christ, ⁶ not like those who do their work only when someone is watching – as people-pleasers – but as slaves of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷ Obey with enthusiasm, as though serving the Lord and not people, ⁸ because you know that each person, whether slave or free, if he does something good, this will be rewarded by the Lord.

⁹ Masters, treat your slaves the same way, giving up the use of threats, because you know that both you and they have the same master in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

Exhortations for Spiritual Warfare

¹⁰ Finally, be strengthened in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹ Clothe yourselves with the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens. ¹³ For this reason, take up the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand your ground on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, by fastening the belt of truth around your waist, by putting on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ by fitting your feet with the preparation that comes from the good news of peace, ¹⁶ and in all of this, by taking up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take *the helmet of salvation* and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ With every prayer and petition, pray at all times in the Spirit, and to this end be alert, with all perseverance and requests for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray for me also, that I may be given the message when I begin to speak – that I may confidently make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may be able to speak boldly as I ought to speak.

Farewell Comments

²¹ Tychicus, my dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make everything known to you, so that you too may know about my circumstances, how I am doing. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts.

²³ Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace

be with all of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

Philippians

Salutation

¹ From Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the overseers and deacons. ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Prayer for the Church

³ I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ I always pray with joy in my every prayer for all of you ⁵ because of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ For I am sure of this very thing, that the one who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷ For it is right for me to think this about all of you, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel all of you became partners in God's grace together with me. ⁸ For God is my witness that I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And I pray this, that your love may abound even more and more in knowledge and every kind of insight ¹⁰ so that you can decide what is best, and thus be sincere and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

Ministry as a Prisoner

¹² I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that my situation has actually turned out to advance the gospel: ¹³ The whole imperial guard and everyone else knows that I am in prison for the sake of Christ, ¹⁴ and most of the brothers and sisters, having confidence in the Lord because of my imprisonment, now more than ever dare to speak the word fearlessly.

¹⁵ Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. ¹⁶ The latter do so from love because they know that I am placed here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, because they think they can cause trouble for me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What is the result? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and

the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰ My confident hope is that I will in no way be ashamed but that with complete boldness, even now as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether I live or die. ²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² Now if I am to go on living in the body, this will mean productive work for me, yet I don't know which I prefer: ²³ I feel torn between the two, because I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far, ²⁴ but it is more vital for your sake that I remain in the body. ²⁵ And since I am sure of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for the sake of your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that what you can be proud of may increase because of me in Christ Jesus, when I come back to you.

²⁷ Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ so that - whether I come and see you or whether I remain absent - I should hear that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, by contending side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and by not being intimidated in any way by your opponents. This is a sign of their destruction, but of your salvation - a sign which is from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you not only to believe in Christ but also to suffer for him, ³⁰ since you are encountering the same conflict that you saw me face and now hear that I am facing.

2

¹ Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort provided by love, any fellowship in the Spirit, any affection or mercy, ² complete my joy and be of the same mind, by having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose. ³ Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. ⁴ Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well. ⁵ You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. ⁸ He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross! ⁹ As a result God exalted him

and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus
every knee will bow
– in heaven and on earth and under the earth –
¹¹ and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord
to the glory of God the Father.

Lights in the World

¹² So then, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence but even more in my absence, continue working out your salvation with awe and reverence, ¹³ for the one bringing forth in you both the desire and the effort – for the sake of his good pleasure – is God. ¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God without blemish though you live in a crooked and perverse society, in which you shine as lights in the world ¹⁶ by holding on to the word of life so that on the day of Christ I will have a reason to boast that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice together with all of you. ¹⁸ And in the same way you also should be glad and rejoice together with me.

Models for Ministry

¹⁹ Now I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be encouraged by hearing news about you. ²⁰ For there is no one here like him who will readily demonstrate his deep concern for you. ²¹ Others are busy with their own concerns, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know his qualifications, that like a son working with his father, he served with me in advancing the gospel. ²³ So I hope to send him as soon as I know more about my situation, ²⁴ though I am confident in the Lord that I too will be coming to see you soon.

²⁵ But for now I have considered it necessary to send Epaphroditus to you. For he is my brother, coworker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to me in my need. ²⁶ Indeed, he greatly missed all of you and was distressed because you heard that he had been ill. ²⁷ In fact he became so ill that he nearly died. But God showed mercy to him – and not to him only, but also to me – so that I would not have grief on top of grief. ²⁸ Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you can rejoice and I can be free from anxiety. ²⁹ So welcome him in

the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, ³⁰ since it was because of the work of Christ that he almost died. He risked his life so that he could make up for your inability to serve me.

3

¹ Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! To write this again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

² Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh! ³ For we are the circumcision, the ones who worship by the Spirit of God, exult in Christ Jesus, and do not rely on human credentials ⁴ – though mine too are significant. If someone thinks he has good reasons to put confidence in human credentials, I have more: ⁵ I was circumcised on the eighth day, from the people of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. I lived according to the law as a Pharisee. ⁶ In my zeal for God I persecuted the church. According to the righteousness stipulated in the law I was blameless. ⁷ But these assets I have come to regard as liabilities because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I now regard all things as liabilities compared to the far greater value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things – indeed, I regard them as dung! – that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and be found in him, not because I have my own righteousness derived from the law, but because I have the righteousness that comes by way of Christ's faithfulness – a righteousness from God that is in fact based on Christ's faithfulness. ¹⁰ My aim is to know him, to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings, and to be like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Keep Going Forward

¹² Not that I have already attained this – that is, I have not already been perfected – but I strive to lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have attained this. Instead I am single-minded: Forgetting the things that are behind and reaching out for the things that are ahead, ¹⁴ with this goal in mind, I strive toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Therefore let those of us who are “perfect” embrace this point of view. If you think otherwise, God will reveal to you the error of your ways. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, let us live up to the standard that we have already attained.

¹⁷ Be imitators of me, brothers and sisters, and watch carefully those who are living this way, just as you have us as

an example. ¹⁸ For many live, about whom I have often told you, and now, with tears, I tell you that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, they exult in their shame, and they think about earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven – and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform these humble bodies of ours into the likeness of his glorious body by means of that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself.

4

¹ So then, my brothers and sisters, dear friends whom I long to see, my joy and crown, stand in the Lord in this way, my dear friends!

² I appeal to Euodia and to Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I say also to you, true companion, help them. They have struggled together in the gospel ministry along with me and Clement and my other coworkers, whose names are in the book of life. ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice! ⁵ Let everyone see your gentleness. The Lord is near! ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things. ⁹ And what you learned and received and heard and saw in me, do these things. And the God of peace will be with you.

Appreciation for Support

¹⁰ I have great joy in the Lord because now at last you have again expressed your concern for me. (Now I know you were concerned before but had no opportunity to do anything.) ¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content in any circumstance. ¹² I have experienced times of need and times of abundance. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment, whether I go satisfied or hungry, have plenty or nothing. ¹³ I am able to do all things through the one who strengthens me. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, you did well to share with me in my trouble.

¹⁵ And as you Philippians know, at the beginning of my gospel ministry, when I left Macedonia, no church shared

with me in this matter of giving and receiving except you alone. ¹⁶ For even in Thessalonica on more than one occasion you sent something for my need. ¹⁷ I do not say this because I am seeking a gift. Rather, I seek the credit that abounds to your account. ¹⁸ For I have received everything, and I have plenty. I have all I need because I received from Epaphroditus what you sent – a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, very pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply your every need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ May glory be given to God our Father forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

²¹ Give greetings to all the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers with me here send greetings. ²² All the saints greet you, especially those who belong to Caesar's household. ²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Colossians

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ² to the saints, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ, at Colossae. Grace and peace to you from God our Father!

Paul's Thanksgiving and Prayer for the Church

³ We always give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ since we heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints. ⁵ Your faith and love have arisen from the hope laid up for you in heaven, which you have heard about in the message of truth, the gospel ⁶ that has come to you. Just as in the entire world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, so it has also been bearing fruit and growing among you from the first day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth. ⁷ You learned the gospel from Epaphras, our dear fellow slave – a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf – ⁸ who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

Paul's Prayer for the Growth of the Church

⁹ For this reason we also, from the day we heard about you, have not ceased praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you may live worthily of the Lord and please him in all respects – bearing fruit in every good deed, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for the display of all patience and steadfastness, joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light. ¹³ He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Supremacy of Christ

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation,
¹⁶ for all things in heaven and on earth were created by him – all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, whether principalities or powers – all things were created through him and for him.
¹⁷ He himself is before all things and all things are held together in him.

¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church, as well as the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, so that he himself may become first in all things.

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son
²⁰ and through him to reconcile all things to himself by making peace through the blood of his cross – through him, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Paul's Goal in Ministry

²¹ And you were at one time strangers and enemies in your minds as expressed through your evil deeds, ²² but now he has reconciled you by his physical body through death to present you holy, without blemish, and blameless before him – ²³ if indeed you remain in the faith, established and firm, without shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard. This gospel has also been preached in all creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have become its servant.

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I fill up in my physical body – for the sake of his body, the church – what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. ²⁵ I became a servant of the church according to the stewardship from God – given to me for you – in order to complete the word of God, ²⁶ that is, the mystery that has been kept hidden from ages and generations, but has now been revealed to his saints. ²⁷ God wanted to make known to them the glorious riches of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ We proclaim him by instructing and teaching all people with all wisdom so that we may present every person mature in Christ. ²⁹ Toward this goal I also labor, struggling according to his power that powerfully works in me.

2

¹ For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for those who have not met me face to face. ² My goal is that their hearts, having been knit together in love, may be encouraged, and that they may have all the riches that assurance brings in their understanding of the knowledge of the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I say this so that no one will deceive you through arguments that sound reasonable. ⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your morale and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

Warnings Against the Adoption of False Philosophies

⁶ Therefore, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in

him and firm in your faith just as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸ Be careful not to allow anyone to captivate you through an empty, deceitful philosophy that is according to human traditions and the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in him all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority. ¹¹ In him you also were circumcised – not, however, with a circumcision performed by human hands, but by the removal of the fleshly body, that is, through the circumcision done by Christ. ¹² Having been buried with him in baptism, you also have been raised with him through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And even though you were dead in your transgressions and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he nevertheless made you alive with him, having forgiven all your transgressions. ¹⁴ He has destroyed what was against us, a certificate of indebtedness expressed in decrees opposed to us. He has taken it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ Disarming the rulers and authorities, he has made a public disgrace of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

¹⁶ Therefore do not let anyone judge you with respect to food or drink, or in the matter of a feast, new moon, or Sabbath days – ¹⁷ these are only the shadow of the things to come, but the reality is Christ! ¹⁸ Let no one who delights in humility and the worship of angels pass judgment on you. That person goes on at great lengths about what he has supposedly seen, but he is puffed up with empty notions by his fleshly mind. ¹⁹ He has not held fast to the head from whom the whole body, supported and knit together through its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.

²⁰ If you have died with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you submit to them as though you lived in the world? ²¹ “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!” ²² These are all destined to perish with use, founded as they are on human commands and teachings. ²³ Even though they have the appearance of wisdom with their self-imposed worship and false humility achieved by an unsparing treatment of the body – a wisdom with no true value – they in reality result in fleshly indulgence.

3

¹ Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Keep thinking about things above, not things

on the earth, ³ for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with him. ⁵ So put to death whatever in your nature belongs to the earth: sexual immorality, impurity, shameful passion, evil desire, and greed which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. ⁷ You also lived your lives in this way at one time, when you used to live among them. ⁸ But now, put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with its practices ¹⁰ and have been clothed with the new man that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it. ¹¹ Here there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and in all.

Exhortation to Unity and Love

¹² Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also forgive others. ¹⁴ And to all these virtues add love, which is the perfect bond. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ be in control in your heart (for you were in fact called as one body to this peace), and be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and exhorting one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, all with grace in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Exhortation to Households

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing in the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they will not become disheartened. ²² Slaves, obey your earthly masters in every respect, not only when they are watching – like those who are strictly people-pleasers – but with a sincere heart, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you are doing, work at it with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not for people, ²⁴ because you know that you will receive your inheritance from the Lord as the reward. Serve

the Lord Christ. ²⁵ For the one who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there are no exceptions.

4

¹ Masters, treat your slaves with justice and fairness, because you know that you also have a master in heaven.

Exhortation to Pray for the Success of Paul's Mission

² Be devoted to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time pray for us too, that God may open a door for the message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may make it known as I should. ⁵ Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunities. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer everyone.

Personal Greetings and Instructions

⁷ Tychicus, a dear brother, faithful minister, and fellow slave in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. ⁸ I sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are doing and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ I sent him with Onesimus, the faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

¹⁰ Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him). ¹¹ And Jesus who is called Justus also sends greetings. In terms of Jewish converts, these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. ¹² Epaphras, who is one of you and a slave of Christ, greets you. He is always struggling in prayer on your behalf, so that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³ For I can testify that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Our dear friend Luke the physician and Demas greet you. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters who are in Laodicea and to Nympha and the church that meets in her house. ¹⁶ And after you have read this letter, have it read to the church of Laodicea. In turn, read the letter from Laodicea as well. ¹⁷ And tell Archippus, "See to it that you complete the ministry you received in the Lord."

¹⁸ I, Paul, write this greeting by my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

1 Thessalonians

Salutation

¹ From Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace to you!

Thanksgiving for Response to the Gospel

² We thank God always for all of you as we mention you constantly in our prayers, ³ because we recall in the presence of our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ We know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ in that our gospel did not come to you merely in words, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction (surely you recall the character we displayed when we came among you to help you).

⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, when you received the message with joy that comes from the Holy Spirit, despite great affliction. ⁷ As a result you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For from you the message of the Lord has echoed forth not just in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place reports of your faith in God have spread, so that we do not need to say anything. ⁹ For people everywhere report how you welcomed us and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus our deliverer from the coming wrath.

2

¹ For you yourselves know, brothers and sisters, about our coming to you – it has not proven to be purposeless. ² But although we suffered earlier and were mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of much opposition. ³ For the appeal we make does not come from error or impurity or with deceit, ⁴ but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we declare it, not to please people but God, who examines our hearts. ⁵ For we never appeared with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed – God is our witness – ⁶ nor to seek glory from people, either from you or from others, ⁷ although we could have imposed our weight as apostles of Christ; instead

we became little children among you. Like a nursing mother caring for her own children, ⁸ with such affection for you we were happy to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. ⁹ For you recall, brothers and sisters, our toil and drudgery: By working night and day so as not to impose a burden on any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, as to how holy and righteous and blameless our conduct was toward you who believe. ¹¹ As you know, we treated each one of you as a father treats his own children, ¹² exhorting and encouraging you and insisting that you live in a way worthy of God who calls you to his own kingdom and his glory. ¹³ And so we too constantly thank God that when you received God's message that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human message, but as it truly is, God's message, which is at work among you who believe. ¹⁴ For you became imitators, brothers and sisters, of God's churches in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, because you too suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they in fact did from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and persecuted us severely. They are displeasing to God and are opposed to all people, ¹⁶ because they hinder us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. Thus they constantly fill up their measure of sins, but wrath has come upon them completely.

Forced Absence from Thessalonica

¹⁷ But when we were separated from you, brothers and sisters, for a short time (in presence, not in affection) we became all the more fervent in our great desire to see you in person. ¹⁸ For we wanted to come to you (I, Paul, in fact tried again and again) but Satan thwarted us. ¹⁹ For who is our hope or joy or crown to boast of before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not of course you? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy!

3

¹ So when we could bear it no longer, we decided to stay on in Athens alone. ² We sent Timothy, our brother and fellow worker for God in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen you and encourage you about your faith, ³ so that no one would be shaken by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. ⁴ For in fact when we were with you, we were telling you in advance that we would suffer affliction, and so it has happened, as you well know. ⁵ So when I could bear it no longer, I sent to find out about your

faith, for fear that the tempter somehow tempted you and our toil had proven useless.

⁶ But now Timothy has come to us from you and given us the good news of your faith and love and that you always think of us with affection and long to see us just as we also long to see you! ⁷ So in all our distress and affliction, we were reassured about you, brothers and sisters, through your faith. ⁸ For now we are alive again, if you stand firm in the Lord. ⁹ For how can we thank God enough for you, for all the joy we feel because of you before our God? ¹⁰ We pray earnestly night and day to see you in person and make up what may be lacking in your faith.

¹¹ Now may God our Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we do for you, ¹³ so that your hearts are strengthened in holiness to be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

4

¹ Finally then, brothers and sisters, we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received instruction from us about how you must live and please God (as you are in fact living) that you do so more and more. ² For you know what commands we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is God's will: that you become holy, that you keep away from sexual immorality, ⁴ that each of you know how to possess his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who do not know God. ⁶ In this matter no one should violate the rights of his brother or take advantage of him, because the Lord is the avenger in all these cases, as we also told you earlier and warned you solemnly. ⁷ For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness. ⁸ Consequently the one who rejects this is not rejecting human authority but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

⁹ Now on the topic of brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another. ¹⁰ And indeed you are practicing it toward all the brothers and sisters in all of Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, ¹¹ to aspire to lead a quiet life, to attend to your own business, and to work with your hands, as we commanded you. ¹² In this way you will live a decent life before outsiders and not be in need.

¹³ Now we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve like the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also we believe that God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep as Christians. ¹⁵ For we tell you this by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not go ahead of those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be suddenly caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

5

¹ Now on the topic of times and seasons, brothers and sisters, you have no need for anything to be written to you. ² For you know quite well that the day of the Lord will come in the same way as a thief in the night. ³ Now when they are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction comes on them, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will surely not escape. ⁴ But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the darkness for the day to overtake you like a thief would. ⁵ For you all are sons of the light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of the darkness. ⁶ So then we must not sleep as the rest, but must stay alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of the day, we must stay sober *by putting on the breastplate* of faith and love and as *a helmet* our hope *for salvation*. ⁹ For God did not destine us for wrath but for gaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ He died for us so that whether we are alert or asleep we will come to life together with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing.

Final Instructions

¹² Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who labor among you and preside over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them most highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers and sisters, admonish the undisciplined, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient toward all. ¹⁵ See that no one pays back evil for evil to

anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all. ¹⁶ Always rejoice, ¹⁷ constantly pray, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹ Do not extinguish the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹ But examine all things; hold fast to what is good. ²² Stay away from every form of evil.

Conclusion

²³ Now may the God of peace himself make you completely holy and may your spirit and soul and body be kept entirely blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is trustworthy, and he will in fact do this. ²⁵ Brothers and sisters, pray for us too. ²⁶ Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I call on you solemnly in the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters. ²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

2 Thessalonians

Salutation

¹ From Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ² Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanksgiving

³ We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith flourishes more and more and the love of each one of you all for one another is ever greater. ⁴ As a result we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions you are enduring.

Encouragement in Persecution

⁵ This is evidence of God's righteous judgment, to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which in fact you are suffering. ⁶ For it is right for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷ and to you who are being afflicted to give rest together with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. ⁸ *With flaming fire he will mete out punishment on those who do not know God* and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will undergo the penalty of eternal destruction, *away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his strength*, ¹⁰ when he comes to be glorified among his saints and admired on that day among all who have believed – and you did in fact believe our testimony. ¹¹ And in this regard we pray for you always, that our God will make you worthy of his calling and fulfill by his power your every desire for goodness and every work of faith, ¹² that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2

¹ Now regarding the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to be with him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be easily shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not arrive until the rebellion comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. ⁴ He opposes *and exalts*

himself above every so-called *god* or object of worship, and as a result *he takes his seat* in God's temple, displaying himself as God. ⁵ Surely you recall that I used to tell you these things while I was still with you. ⁶ And so you know what holds him back, so that he will be revealed in his own time. ⁷ For the hidden power of lawlessness is already at work. However, the one who holds him back will do so until he is taken out of the way, ⁸ and then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will destroy by the breath of his mouth and wipe out by the manifestation of his arrival. ⁹ The arrival of the lawless one will be by Satan's working with all kinds of miracles and signs and false wonders, ¹⁰ and with every kind of evil deception directed against those who are perishing, because they found no place in their hearts for the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ Consequently God sends on them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false. ¹² And so all of them who have not believed the truth but have delighted in evil will be condemned.

Call to Stand Firm

¹³ But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this salvation through our gospel, so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ Therefore, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold on to the traditions that we taught you, whether by speech or by letter. ¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good thing you do or say.

3

¹ Finally, pray for us, brothers and sisters, that the Lord's message may spread quickly and be honored as in fact it was among you, ² and that we may be delivered from perverse and evil people. For not all have faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. ⁴ And we are confident about you in the Lord that you are both doing - and will do - what we are commanding. ⁵ Now may the Lord direct your hearts toward the love of God and the endurance of Christ.

Response to the Undisciplined

⁶ But we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from any brother who lives an undisciplined life and not according to the

tradition they received from us. ⁷ For you know yourselves how you must imitate us, because we did not behave without discipline among you, ⁸ and we did not eat anyone's food without paying. Instead, in toil and drudgery we worked night and day in order not to burden any of you. ⁹ It was not because we do not have that right, but to give ourselves as an example for you to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we used to give you this command: "If anyone is not willing to work, neither should he eat." ¹¹ For we hear that some among you are living an undisciplined life, not doing their own work but meddling in the work of others. ¹² Now such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and so provide their own food to eat. ¹³ But you, brothers and sisters, do not grow weary in doing what is right. ¹⁴ But if anyone does not obey our message through this letter, take note of him and do not associate closely with him, so that he may be ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Conclusion

¹⁶ Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with you all. ¹⁷ I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, which is how I write in every letter. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

1 Timothy

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, ² to Timothy, my genuine child in the faith. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord!

Timothy's Task in Ephesus

³ As I urged you when I was leaving for Macedonia, stay on in Ephesus to instruct certain people not to spread false teachings, ⁴ nor to occupy themselves with myths and interminable genealogies. Such things promote useless speculations rather than God's redemptive plan that operates by faith. ⁵ But the aim of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. ⁶ Some have strayed from these and turned away to empty discussion. ⁷ They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying or the things they insist on so confidently.

⁸ But we know that the law is good if someone uses it legitimately, ⁹ realizing that law is not intended for a righteous person, but for lawless and rebellious people, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ sexually immoral people, practicing homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers – in fact, for any who live contrary to sound teaching. ¹¹ This accords with the glorious gospel of the blessed God that was entrusted to me.

¹² I am grateful to the one who has strengthened me, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he considered me faithful in putting me into ministry, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor, and an arrogant man. But I was treated with mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and our Lord's grace was abundant, bringing faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" – and I am the worst of them! ¹⁶ But here is why I was treated with mercy: so that in me as the worst, Christ Jesus could demonstrate his utmost patience, as an example for those who are going to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ Now to the eternal king, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever! Amen.

¹⁸ I put this charge before you, Timothy my child, in keeping with the prophecies once spoken about you, in order that with such encouragement you may fight the good fight. ¹⁹ To do this you must hold firmly to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck in regard to the faith. ²⁰ Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

2

¹ First of all, then, I urge that requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanks be offered on behalf of all people, ² even for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³ Such prayer for all is good and welcomed before God our Savior, ⁴ since he wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one intermediary between God and humanity, Christ Jesus, himself human, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, revealing God's purpose at his appointed time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle – I am telling the truth; I am not lying – and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. ⁸ So I want the men to pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger or dispute.

Conduct of Women

⁹ Likewise the women are to dress in suitable apparel, with modesty and self-control. Their adornment must not be with braided hair and gold or pearls or expensive clothing, ¹⁰ but with good deeds, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God. ¹¹ A woman must learn quietly with all submissiveness. ¹² But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man. She must remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was formed first and then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, because she was fully deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵ But she will be delivered through childbearing, if she continues in faith and love and holiness with self-control.

3

¹ This saying is trustworthy: "If someone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work." ² The overseer then must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, an able teacher, ³ not a drunkard, not violent, but gentle, not contentious, free from the love of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well and keep his children in control without losing his dignity. ⁵ But if someone does not know how to manage his own

household, how will he care for the church of God? ⁶ He must not be a recent convert or he may become arrogant and fall into the punishment that the devil will exact. ⁷ And he must be well thought of by those outside the faith, so that he may not fall into disgrace and be caught by the devil's trap.

⁸ Deacons likewise must be dignified, not two-faced, not given to excessive drinking, not greedy for gain, ⁹ holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ And these also must be tested first and then let them serve as deacons if they are found blameless. ¹¹ Likewise also their wives must be dignified, not slanderous, temperate, faithful in every respect. ¹² Deacons must be husbands of one wife and good managers of their children and their own households. ¹³ For those who have served well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Conduct in God's Church

¹⁴ I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you ¹⁵ in case I am delayed, to let you know how people ought to conduct themselves in the household of God, because it is the church of the living God, the support and bulwark of the truth. ¹⁶ And we all agree, our religion contains amazing revelation:

He was revealed in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among Gentiles,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.

4

¹ Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the later times some will desert the faith and occupy themselves with deceiving spirits and demonic teachings, ² influenced by the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared. ³ They will prohibit marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For every creation of God is good and no food is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving. ⁵ For it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer.

⁶ By pointing out such things to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, having nourished yourself on the words of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. ⁷ But reject those myths fit only for the godless and gullible, and train yourself for godliness. ⁸ For

“physical exercise has some value, but godliness is valuable in every way. It holds promise for the present life and for the life to come.” ⁹ This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. ¹⁰ In fact this is why we work hard and struggle, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of believers.

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in your speech, conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity. ¹³ Until I come, give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the spiritual gift you have, given to you and confirmed by prophetic words when the elders laid hands on you. ¹⁵ Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that everyone will see your progress. ¹⁶ Be conscientious about how you live and what you teach. Persevere in this, because by doing so you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.

5

¹ Do not address an older man harshly but appeal to him as a father. Speak to younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters – with complete purity.

³ Honor widows who are truly in need. ⁴ But if a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn to fulfill their duty toward their own household and so repay their parents what is owed them. For this is what pleases God. ⁵ But the widow who is truly in need, and completely on her own, has set her hope on God and continues in her pleas and prayers night and day. ⁶ But the one who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. ⁷ Reinforce these commands, so that they will be beyond reproach. ⁸ But if someone does not provide for his own, especially his own family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹ No widow should be put on the list unless she is at least sixty years old, was the wife of one husband, ¹⁰ and has a reputation for good works: as one who has raised children, practiced hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, helped those in distress – as one who has exhibited all kinds of good works. ¹¹ But do not accept younger widows on the list, because their passions may lead them away from Christ and they will desire to marry, ¹² and so incur judgment for breaking their former pledge. ¹³ And besides that, going around from house to house they learn to be lazy, and they are not only lazy, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things they should not. ¹⁴ So I want younger women

to marry, raise children, and manage a household, in order to give the adversary no opportunity to vilify us. ¹⁵ For some have already wandered away to follow Satan. ¹⁶ If a believing woman has widows in her family, let her help them. The church should not be burdened, so that it may help the widows who are truly in need.

¹⁷ Elders who provide effective leadership must be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching. ¹⁸ For the scripture says, “*Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,*” and, “The worker deserves his pay.” ¹⁹ Do not accept an accusation against an elder unless it can be confirmed *by two or three witnesses.* ²⁰ Those guilty of sin must be rebuked before all, as a warning to the rest. ²¹ Before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, I solemnly charge you to carry out these commands without prejudice or favoritism of any kind. ²² Do not lay hands on anyone hastily and so identify with the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. ²³ (Stop drinking just water, but use a little wine for your digestion and your frequent illnesses.) ²⁴ The sins of some people are obvious, going before them into judgment, but for others, they show up later. ²⁵ Similarly good works are also obvious, and the ones that are not cannot remain hidden.

6

¹ Those who are under the yoke as slaves must regard their own masters as deserving of full respect. This will prevent the name of God and Christian teaching from being discredited. ² But those who have believing masters must not show them less respect because they are brothers. Instead they are to serve all the more, because those who benefit from their service are believers and dearly loved.

Summary of Timothy's Duties

Teach them and exhort them about these things. ³ If someone spreads false teachings and does not agree with sound words (that is, those of our Lord Jesus Christ) and with the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴ he is conceited and understands nothing, but has an unhealthy interest in controversies and verbal disputes. This gives rise to envy, dissension, slanders, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant bickering by people corrupted in their minds and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a way of making a profit. ⁶ Now godliness combined with contentment brings great profit. ⁷ For we have brought nothing into this world and so we cannot take a single thing out either. ⁸ But if we have food

and shelter, we will be satisfied with that. ⁹ Those who long to be rich, however, stumble into temptation and a trap and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all evils. Some people in reaching for it have strayed from the faith and stabbed themselves with many pains.

¹¹ But you, as a person dedicated to God, keep away from all that. Instead pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness. ¹² Compete well for the faith and lay hold of that eternal life you were called for and made your good confession for in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you before God who gives life to all things and Christ Jesus who made his good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ to obey this command without fault or failure until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ ¹⁵ – whose appearing the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will reveal at the right time. ¹⁶ He alone possesses immortality and lives in unapproachable light, whom no human has ever seen or is able to see. To him be honor and eternal power! Amen.

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this world's goods not to be haughty or to set their hope on riches, which are uncertain, but on God who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Tell them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous givers, sharing with others. ¹⁹ In this way they will save up a treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the future and so lay hold of what is truly life.

Conclusion

²⁰ O Timothy, protect what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and absurdities of so-called “knowledge.” ²¹ By professing it, some have strayed from the faith. Grace be with you all.

2 Timothy

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to further the promise of life in Christ Jesus, ² to Timothy, my dear child. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord!

Thanksgiving and Charge to Timothy

³ I am thankful to God, whom I have served with a clear conscience as my ancestors did, when I remember you in my prayers as I do constantly night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I recall your sincere faith that was alive first in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice, and I am sure is in you.

⁶ Because of this I remind you to rekindle God's gift that you possess through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For God did not give us a Spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control. ⁸ So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me, a prisoner for his sake, but by God's power accept your share of suffering for the gospel. ⁹ He is the one who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not based on our works but on his own purpose and grace, granted to us in Christ Jesus before time began, ¹⁰ but now made visible through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus. He has broken the power of death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel! ¹¹ For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher. ¹² Because of this, in fact, I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, because I know the one in whom my faith is set and I am convinced that he is able to protect what has been entrusted to me until that day. ¹³ Hold to the standard of sound words that you heard from me and do so with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Protect that good thing entrusted to you, through the Holy Spirit who lives within us.

¹⁵ You know that everyone in the province of Asia deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the family of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my imprisonment. ¹⁷ But when he arrived in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me. ¹⁸ May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day! And you know very well all the ways he served me in Ephesus.

2

¹ So you, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And entrust what you heard me say in the presence of many others as witnesses to faithful people who will be competent to teach others as well. ³ Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No one in military service gets entangled in matters of everyday life; otherwise he will not please the one who recruited him. ⁵ Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he will not be crowned as the winner unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ The farmer who works hard ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think about what I am saying and the Lord will give you understanding of all this.

⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David; such is my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer hardship to the point of imprisonment as a criminal, but God's message is not imprisoned! ¹⁰ So I endure all things for the sake of those chosen by God, that they too may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus and its eternal glory. ¹¹ This saying is trustworthy:

If we died with him, we will also live with him.

¹² If we endure, we will also reign with him.

If we deny him, he will also deny us.

¹³ If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, since he cannot deny himself.

Dealing with False Teachers

¹⁴ Remind people of these things and solemnly charge them before the Lord not to wrangle over words. This is of no benefit; it just brings ruin on those who listen. ¹⁵ Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker who does not need to be ashamed, teaching the message of truth accurately. ¹⁶ But avoid profane chatter, because those occupied with it will stray further and further into ungodliness, ¹⁷ and their message will spread its infection like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus are in this group. ¹⁸ They have strayed from the truth by saying that the resurrection has already occurred, and they are undermining some people's faith. ¹⁹ However, God's solid foundation remains standing, bearing this seal: "***The Lord knows those who are his,***"

and "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from evil."

²⁰ Now in a wealthy home there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also ones made of wood and of clay, and some are for honorable use, but others for ignoble use. ²¹ So if someone cleanses himself of such behavior, he will be a vessel for

honorable use, set apart, useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. ²² But keep away from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace, in company with others who call on the Lord from a pure heart. ²³ But reject foolish and ignorant controversies, because you know they breed infighting. ²⁴ And the Lord's slave must not engage in heated disputes but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient, ²⁵ correcting opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance and then knowledge of the truth ²⁶ and they will come to their senses and escape the devil's trap where they are held captive to do his will.

3

¹ But understand this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ² For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, opposed to what is good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, loving pleasure rather than loving God. ⁵ They will maintain the outward appearance of religion but will have repudiated its power. So avoid people like these. ⁶ For some of these insinuate themselves into households and captivate weak women who are overwhelmed with sins and led along by various passions. ⁷ Such women are always seeking instruction, yet never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. ⁸ And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these people – who have warped minds and are disqualified in the faith – also oppose the truth. ⁹ But they will not go much further, for their foolishness will be obvious to everyone, just like it was with Jannes and Jambres.

Continue in What You Have Learned

¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance, ¹¹ as well as the persecutions and sufferings that happened to me in Antioch, I endured these persecutions and the Lord delivered me from them all. ¹² Now in fact all who want to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But evil people and charlatans will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves. ¹⁴ You, however, must continue in the things you have learned and are confident about. You know who taught you ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ Every

scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work.

4

¹ I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² Preach the message, be ready whether it is convenient or not, reprove, rebuke, exhort with complete patience and instruction. ³ For there will be a time when people will not tolerate sound teaching. Instead, following their own desires, they will accumulate teachers for themselves, because they have an insatiable curiosity to hear new things. ⁴ And they will turn away from hearing the truth, but on the other hand they will turn aside to myths. ⁵ You, however, be self-controlled in all things, endure hardship, do an evangelist's work, fulfill your ministry. ⁶ For I am already being poured out as an offering, and the time for me to depart is at hand. ⁷ I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith! ⁸ Finally the crown of righteousness is reserved for me. The Lord, the righteous Judge, will award it to me in that day – and not to me only, but also to all who have set their affection on his appearing.

Travel Plans and Concluding Greetings

⁹ Make every effort to come to me soon. ¹⁰ For Demas deserted me, since he loved the present age, and he went to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is a great help to me in ministry. ¹² Now I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring with you the cloak I left in Troas with Carpas and the scrolls, especially the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me a great deal of harm. *The Lord will repay him in keeping with his deeds.* ¹⁵ You be on guard against him too, because he vehemently opposed our words. ¹⁶ At my first defense no one appeared in my support; instead they all deserted me – may they not be held accountable for it. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message would be fully proclaimed for all the Gentiles to hear. And so I was delivered from the lion's mouth! ¹⁸ The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed and will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

¹⁹ Greetings to Prisca and Aquila and the family of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus stayed in Corinth. Trophimus I left ill in Miletus. ²¹ Make every effort to come before winter. Greetings to you from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters. ²² The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Titus

Salutation

¹ From Paul, a slave of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, to further the faith of God's chosen ones and the knowledge of the truth that is in keeping with godliness, ² in hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the ages began. ³ But now in his own time he has made his message evident through the preaching I was entrusted with according to the command of God our Savior. ⁴ To Titus, my genuine son in a common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior!

Titus' Task on Crete

⁵ The reason I left you in Crete was to set in order the remaining matters and to appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. ⁶ An elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, with faithful children who cannot be charged with dissipation or rebellion. ⁷ For the overseer must be blameless as one entrusted with God's work, not arrogant, not prone to anger, not a drunkard, not violent, not greedy for gain. ⁸ Instead he must be hospitable, devoted to what is good, sensible, upright, devout, and self-controlled. ⁹ He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught, so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching and correct those who speak against it.

¹⁰ For there are many rebellious people, idle talkers, and deceivers, especially those with Jewish connections, ¹¹ who must be silenced because they mislead whole families by teaching for dishonest gain what ought not to be taught. ¹² A certain one of them, in fact, one of their own prophets, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³ Such testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply that they may be healthy in the faith ¹⁴ and not pay attention to Jewish myths and commands of people who reject the truth. ¹⁵ All is pure to those who are pure. But to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their minds and consciences are corrupted. ¹⁶ They profess to know God but with their deeds they deny him, since they are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good deed.

2

¹ But as for you, communicate the behavior that goes with sound teaching. ² Older men are to be temperate, dignified,

self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. ³ Older women likewise are to exhibit behavior fitting for those who are holy, not slandering, not slaves to excessive drinking, but teaching what is good. ⁴ In this way they will train the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be self-controlled, pure, fulfilling their duties at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the message of God may not be discredited. ⁶ Encourage younger men likewise to be self-controlled, ⁷ showing yourself to be an example of good works in every way. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, ⁸ and a sound message that cannot be criticized, so that any opponent will be at a loss, because he has nothing evil to say about us. ⁹ Slaves are to be subject to their own masters in everything, to do what is wanted and not talk back, ¹⁰ not pilfering, but showing all good faith, in order to bring credit to the teaching of God our Savior in everything.

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. ¹² It trains us to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ as we wait for the happy fulfillment of our hope in the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He gave himself for us to set us free from every kind of lawlessness and to purify for himself a people who are truly his, who are eager to do good. ¹⁵ So communicate these things with the sort of exhortation or rebuke that carries full authority. Don't let anyone look down on you.

3

¹ Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work. ² They must not slander anyone, but be peaceable, gentle, showing complete courtesy to all people. ³ For we too were once foolish, disobedient, misled, enslaved to various passions and desires, spending our lives in evil and envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴ But "when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, ⁵ he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us in full measure through Jesus Christ our Savior. ⁷ And so, since we have been justified by his grace, we become heirs with the confident expectation of eternal life."

⁸ This saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on such truths, so that those who have placed their faith in God may be intent on engaging in good works. These things are good and beneficial for all people. ⁹ But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, quarrels, and fights about the law, because they are useless and empty. ¹⁰ Reject a divisive person after one or two warnings. ¹¹ You know that such a person is twisted by sin and is conscious of it himself.

Final Instructions and Greeting

¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³ Make every effort to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; make sure they have what they need. ¹⁴ Here is another way that our people can learn to engage in good works to meet pressing needs and so not be unfruitful. ¹⁵ Everyone with me greets you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

Philemon

Salutation

¹ From Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon, our dear friend and colaborer, ² to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your house. ³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanks for Philemon's Love and Faith

⁴ I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. ⁶ I pray that the faith you share with us may deepen your understanding of every blessing that belongs to you in Christ. ⁷ I have had great joy and encouragement because of your love, for the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Paul's Request for Onesimus

⁸ So, although I have quite a lot of confidence in Christ and could command you to do what is proper, ⁹ I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love – I, Paul, an old man and even now a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus – ¹⁰ I am appealing to you concerning my child, whose spiritual father I have become during my imprisonment, that is, Onesimus, ¹¹ who was formerly useless to you, but is now useful to you and me. ¹² I have sent him (who is my very heart) back to you. ¹³ I wanted to keep him so that he could serve me in your place during my imprisonment for the sake of the gospel. ¹⁴ However, without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your good deed would not be out of compulsion, but from your own willingness. ¹⁵ For perhaps it was for this reason that he was separated from you for a little while, so that you would have him back eternally, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, as a dear brother. He is especially so to me, and even more so to you now, both humanly speaking and in the Lord. ¹⁷ Therefore if you regard me as a partner, accept him as you would me. ¹⁸ Now if he has defrauded you of anything or owes you anything, charge what he owes to me. ¹⁹ I, Paul, have written this letter with my own hand: I will repay it. I could also mention that you owe me your very self. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ Since I was confident that you would obey, I wrote to you, because

I knew that you would do even more than what I am asking you to do. ²² At the same time also, prepare a place for me to stay, for I hope that through your prayers I will be given back to you.

Concluding Greetings

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you. ²⁴ Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my colaborers, greet you too. ²⁵ May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Hebrews

Introduction: God Has Spoken Fully and Finally in His Son

¹ After God spoke long ago in various portions and in various ways to our ancestors through the prophets, ² in these last days he has spoken to us in a son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he created the world. ³ The Son is the radiance of his glory and the representation of his essence, and he sustains all things by his powerful word, and so when he had accomplished cleansing for sins, *he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.* ⁴ Thus he became so far better than the angels as he has inherited a name superior to theirs.

The Son Is Superior to Angels

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, “*You are my son! Today I have fathered you*”? And in another place he says, “*I will be his father and he will be my son.*” ⁶ But when he again brings his firstborn into the world, he says, “*Let all the angels of God worship him!*” ⁷ And he says of the angels, “*He makes his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire,*” ⁸ but of the Son he says,

*“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
and a righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom.*

⁹ *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.
So God, your God, has anointed you over your companions with
the oil of rejoicing.”*

¹⁰ And,
*“You founded the earth in the beginning, Lord,
and the heavens are the works of your hands.*

¹¹ *They will perish, but you continue.
And they will all grow old like a garment,*

¹² *and like a robe you will fold them up
and like a garment they will be changed,
but you are the same and your years will never run out.”*

¹³ But to which of the angels has he ever said, “*Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet*”?

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to serve those who will inherit salvation?

2

¹ Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. ² For if the message

spoken through angels proved to be so firm that every violation or disobedience received its just penalty,³ how will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was first communicated through the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard him,⁴ while God confirmed their witness with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

Exposition of Psalm 8: Jesus and the Destiny of Humanity

⁵ For he did not put the world to come, about which we are speaking, under the control of angels. ⁶ Instead someone testified somewhere:

“What is man that you think of him or the son of man that you care for him?”

⁷ *You made him lower than the angels for a little while. You crowned him with glory and honor.*

⁸ *You put all things under his control.”*

For when he *put all things under his control*, he left nothing outside of his control. At present we do not yet see *all things under his control*,⁹ but we see Jesus, who was made *lower than the angels for a little while*, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by God's grace he would experience death on behalf of everyone.¹⁰ For it was fitting for him, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.¹¹ For indeed he who makes holy and those being made holy all have the same origin, and so he is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,¹² saying, *“I will proclaim your name to my brothers; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you*.”*¹³ Again he says, *“I will be confident in him,”* and again, *“Here I am, with the children God has given me*.”*¹⁴ Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he likewise shared in their humanity, so that through death he could destroy the one who holds the power of death (that is, the devil),¹⁵ and set free those who were held in slavery all their lives by their fear of death.¹⁶ For surely his concern is not for angels, but he is concerned for Abraham's descendants.¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he could become a merciful and faithful high priest in things relating to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people.¹⁸ For since he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

3

¹ Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, partners in a heavenly calling, take note of Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess, ² who is faithful to the one who appointed him, as Moses was also in God's house. ³ For he has come to deserve greater glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house deserves greater honor than the house itself! ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. ⁵ Now Moses was *faithful in all God's house* as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken. ⁶ But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. We are of his house, if in fact we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope we take pride in.

Exposition of Psalm 95: Hearing God's Word in Faith

⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,
"Oh, that today you would listen as he speaks!
⁸ *"Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of testing in the wilderness.*
⁹ *"There your fathers tested me and tried me, and they saw my works for forty years.*
¹⁰ *"Therefore, I became provoked at that generation and said, 'Their hearts are always wandering and they have not known my ways.'*
¹¹ *"As I swore in my anger, 'They will never enter my rest!'"*
¹² See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has an evil, unbelieving heart that forsakes the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called "Today," that none of you may become hardened by sin's deception. ¹⁴ For we have become partners with Christ, if in fact we hold our initial confidence firm until the end. ¹⁵ As it says, *"O, that today you would listen as he speaks! Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."* ¹⁶ For which ones heard and rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Egypt under Moses' leadership? ¹⁷ And against whom was God provoked for forty years? Was it not those who sinned, *whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?* ¹⁸ And to whom did he swear they would never enter into his rest, except those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter because of unbelief.

4

¹ Therefore we must be wary that, while the promise of entering his rest remains open, none of you may seem to have come short of it. ² For we had good news proclaimed to us just as they did. But the message they heard did them no good, since they did not join in with those who heard it in faith.

³ For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “*As I swore in my anger; ‘They will never enter my rest!’*” And yet God’s works were accomplished from the foundation of the world. ⁴ For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this way: “*And God rested on the seventh day from all his works,*” ⁵ but to repeat the text cited earlier: “*They will never enter my rest!*” ⁶ Therefore it remains for some to enter it, yet those to whom it was previously proclaimed did not enter because of disobedience. ⁷ So God again ordains a certain day, “Today,” speaking through David after so long a time, as in the words quoted before, “*O, that today you would listen as he speaks! Do not harden your hearts.*” ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken afterward about another day. ⁹ Consequently a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God. ¹⁰ For the one who enters God’s rest has also rested from his works, just as God did from his own works. ¹¹ Thus we must make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by following the same pattern of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing even to the point of dividing soul from spirit, and joints from marrow; it is able to judge the desires and thoughts of the heart. ¹³ And no creature is hidden from God, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.

Jesus Our Compassionate High Priest

¹⁴ Therefore since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.

5

¹ For every high priest is taken from among the people and appointed to represent them before God, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He is able to deal compassionately with those who are ignorant and erring, since he also is subject to weakness, ³ and for this reason he is obligated to make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. ⁴ And no one assumes this honor on his own initiative, but only when called to it by God, as in fact Aaron was. ⁵ So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming high priest, but the one who glorified him was God, who said to him, “*You are my*

*Son! Today I have fathered you,"*⁶ as also in another place God says, "*You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.*"⁷ During his earthly life Christ offered both requests and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death and he was heard because of his devotion.⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience through the things he suffered.⁹ And by being perfected in this way, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,¹⁰ and he was designated by God as high priest *in the order of Melchizedek.*

The Need to Move on to Maturity

¹¹ On this topic we have much to say and it is difficult to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing.¹² For though you should in fact be teachers by this time, you need someone to teach you the beginning elements of God's utterances. You have gone back to needing milk, not solid food.¹³ For everyone who lives on milk is inexperienced in the message of righteousness, because he is an infant.¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, whose perceptions are trained by practice to discern both good and evil.

6

¹ Therefore we must progress beyond the elementary instructions about Christ and move on to maturity, not laying this foundation again: repentance from dead works and faith in God,² teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.³ And this is what we intend to do, if God permits.⁴ For it is impossible in the case of those who have once been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, become partakers of the Holy Spirit,⁵ tasted the good word of God and the miracles of the coming age,⁶ and then have committed apostasy, to renew them again to repentance, since they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves all over again and holding him up to contempt.⁷ For the ground that has soaked up the rain that frequently falls on it and yields useful vegetation for those who tend it receives a blessing from God.⁸ But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is useless and about to be cursed; its fate is to be burned.⁹ But in your case, dear friends, even though we speak like this, we are convinced of better things relating to salvation.¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love you have demonstrated for his name, in having served and continuing to serve the saints.¹¹ But we passionately want each of you to demonstrate the same eagerness for the fulfillment of your hope until the end,¹² so

that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and perseverance inherit the promises.

¹³ Now when God made his promise to Abraham, since he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, “*Surely I will bless you greatly and multiply your descendants abundantly.*” ¹⁵ And so by persevering, Abraham inherited the promise. ¹⁶ For people swear by something greater than themselves, and the oath serves as a confirmation to end all dispute. ¹⁷ In the same way God wanted to demonstrate more clearly to the heirs of the promise that his purpose was unchangeable, and so he intervened with an oath, ¹⁸ so that we who have found refuge in him may find strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us through two unchangeable things, since it is impossible for God to lie. ¹⁹ We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, sure and steadfast, which reaches inside behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus our forerunner entered on our behalf, since he became **a priest | strong="G0749" forever in the order of Melchizedek forever in the order of Melchizedek.**

7

¹ Now this *Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him.* ² To him also

t Abraham | strong="G0011" apportioned a tithe apportioned a tithe

of | strong="G0575" everything. His name first means king of righteousness, then

king | strong="G0935" of Salem of Salem, that is, king of peace. ³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, he has neither beginning of days nor end of life but is like the son of God, and he remains a priest for all time. ⁴ But see how great he must be, if Abraham the patriarch gave him a tithe of his plunder. ⁵ And those of the sons of Levi who receive the priestly office have authorization according to the law to collect a tithe from the people, that is, from their fellow countrymen, although they too are descendants of Abraham. ⁶ But Melchizedek who does not share their ancestry collected a tithe from Abraham and blessed the one who possessed the promise. ⁷ Now without dispute the inferior is blessed by the superior, ⁸ and in one case tithes are received by mortal men, while in the other by him who is affirmed to be alive. ⁹ And it could be said that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid a tithe through Abraham. ¹⁰ For he was still in his ancestor Abraham's loins when Melchizedek met him.

Jesus and the Priesthood of Melchizedek

¹¹ So if perfection had in fact been possible through the Levitical priesthood – for on that basis the people received the law – what further need would there have been for another priest to arise, said to be in the order of Melchizedek and not in Aaron’s order? ¹² For when the priesthood changes, a change in the law must come as well. ¹³ Yet the one these things are spoken about belongs to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever officiated at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is clear that our Lord is descended from Judah, yet Moses said nothing about priests in connection with that tribe. ¹⁵ And this is even clearer if another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become a priest not by a legal regulation about physical descent but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For here is the testimony about him: “*You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.*” ¹⁸ On the one hand a former command is set aside because it is weak and useless, ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect. On the other hand a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. ²⁰ And since this was not done without a sworn affirmation – for the others have become priests without a sworn affirmation, ²¹ but Jesus did so with a sworn affirmation by the one who said to him, “*The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever’*” – ²² accordingly Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. ²³ And the others who became priests were numerous, because death prevented them from continuing in office, ²⁴ but he holds his priesthood permanently since he lives forever. ²⁵ So he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ For it is indeed fitting for us to have such a high priest: holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need to do every day what those priests do, to offer sacrifices first for their own sins and then for the sins of the people, since he did this in offering himself once for all. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men subject to weakness, but the word of solemn affirmation that came after the law appoints a son made perfect forever.

8

¹ Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We have such a high priest, one who *sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven*, ² a minister in the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that the Lord, not man, set up. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts

and sacrifices. So this one too had to have something to offer. ⁴ Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. ⁵ The place where they serve is a sketch and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary, just as Moses was warned by God as he was about to complete the tabernacle. For he says, “*See that you make everything according to the design shown to you on the mountain.*” ⁶ But now Jesus has obtained a superior ministry, since the covenant that he mediates is also better and is enacted on better promises.

⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, no one would have looked for a second one. ⁸ But showing its fault, God says to them,

“Look, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will complete a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

⁹ *“It will not be like the covenant that I made with their fathers, on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not continue in my covenant and I had no regard for them, says the Lord*.*

¹⁰ *“For this is the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and I will inscribe them on their hearts. And I will be their God and they will be my people.*

¹¹ *“And there will be no need at all for each one to teach his countryman or each one to teach his brother saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ since they will all know me, from the least to the greatest.*

¹² *“For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds, and their sins I will remember no longer.”*

¹³ When he speaks of a new covenant, he makes the first obsolete. Now what is growing obsolete and aging is about to disappear.

9

¹ Now the first covenant, in fact, had regulations for worship and its earthly sanctuary. ² For a tent was prepared, the outer one, which contained the lampstand, the table, and the presentation of the loaves; this is called the holy place. ³ And after the second curtain there was a tent called the holy of holies. ⁴ It contained the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered entirely with gold. In this ark were the golden urn containing the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. ⁵ And above the ark were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Now is not the time to speak of these things in detail.

⁶ So with these things prepared like this, the priests enter continually into the outer tent as they perform their duties. ⁷ But only the high priest enters once a year into the inner tent, and not without blood that he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. ⁸ The Holy Spirit is making clear that the way into the holy place had not yet appeared as long as the old tabernacle was standing. ⁹ This was a symbol for the time then present, when gifts and sacrifices were offered that could not perfect the conscience of the worshiper. ¹⁰ They served only for matters of food and drink and various washings; they are external regulations imposed until the new order came.

Christ's Service in the Heavenly Sanctuary

¹¹ But now Christ has come as the high priest of the good things to come. He passed through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, ¹² and he entered once for all into the most holy place not by the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood, and so he himself secured eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow sprinkled on those who are defiled consecrated them and provided ritual purity, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our consciences from dead works to worship the living God.

¹⁵ And so he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the eternal inheritance he has promised, since he died to set them free from the violations committed under the first covenant. ¹⁶ For where there is a will, the death of the one who made it must be proven. ¹⁷ For a will takes effect only at death, since it carries no force while the one who made it is alive. ¹⁸ So even the first covenant was inaugurated with blood. ¹⁹ For when Moses had spoken every command to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ and said, "*This is the blood of the covenant that God has commanded you to keep.*" ²¹ And both the tabernacle and all the utensils of worship he likewise sprinkled with blood. ²² Indeed according to the law almost everything was purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. ²³ So it was necessary for the sketches of the things in heaven to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves required better sacrifices than these. ²⁴ For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with hands

– the representation of the true sanctuary – but into heaven itself, and he appears now in God’s presence for us. ²⁵ And he did not enter to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the sanctuary year after year with blood that is not his own, ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the consummation of the ages to put away sin by his sacrifice. ²⁷ And just as people are appointed to die once, and then to face judgment, ²⁸ so also, after Christ was offered once to *bear the sins of many*, to those who eagerly await him he will appear a second time, not to bear sin but to bring salvation.

10

¹ For the law possesses a shadow of the good things to come but not the reality itself, and is therefore completely unable, by the same sacrifices offered continually, year after year, to perfect those who come to worship. ² For otherwise would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers would have been purified once for all and so have no further consciousness of sin? ³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year. ⁴ For the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins. ⁵ So when he came into the world, he said,

“ *Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.* ”

⁶ “ **Whole burnt offerings** and sin-offerings you took no delight in.

⁷ “ *Then I said, ‘Here I am: I have come - it is written of me in the scroll of the book - to do your will, O God*.’ ”*

⁸ When he says above, “ *Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sin-offerings you did not desire nor did you take delight in them* ” (which are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he says, “ *Here I am: I have come to do your will.* ” He does away with the first to establish the second. ¹⁰ By his will we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ And every priest stands day after day serving and offering the same sacrifices again and again – sacrifices that can never take away sins. ¹² But when this priest had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, *he sat down at the right hand of God*, ¹³ where he is now waiting *until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.* ¹⁴ For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy. ¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us, for after saying, ¹⁶ “ *This is the covenant that I will establish with them*

after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws on their hearts and I will inscribe them on their minds,"¹⁷ then he says, "*Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no longer.*"¹⁸ Now where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Drawing Near to God in Enduring Faith

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by the fresh and living way that he inaugurated for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near with a sincere heart in the assurance that faith brings, because we have had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.²³ And let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy.²⁴ And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works,²⁵ not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.

²⁶ For if we deliberately keep on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins is left for us,²⁷ but only a certain fearful expectation of judgment and *a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies.*²⁸ Someone who rejected the law of Moses was put to death without mercy *on the testimony of two or three witnesses.*²⁹ How much greater punishment do you think that person deserves who has contempt for the Son of God, and profanes the blood of the covenant that made him holy, and insults the Spirit of grace?³⁰ For we know the one who said, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay,*" and again, "*The Lord will judge his people.*"³¹ It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

³² But remember the former days when you endured a harsh conflict of suffering after you were enlightened.³³ At times you were publicly exposed to abuse and afflictions, and at other times you came to share with others who were treated in that way.³⁴ For in fact you shared the sufferings of those in prison, and you accepted the confiscation of your belongings with joy, because you knew that you certainly had a better and lasting possession.³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence, because it has great reward.³⁶ For you need endurance in order to do God's will and so receive what is promised.³⁷ For *just a little longer* and *he who is coming will arrive and not delay.*³⁸ *But my righteous one will live by faith, and if he shrinks back, I take no pleasure in him.*³⁹ But we are

not among those who shrink back and thus perish, but are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.

11

¹ Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see. ² For by it the people of old received God's commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were set in order at God's command, so that the visible has its origin in the invisible. ⁴ By faith Abel offered God a greater sacrifice than Cain, and through his faith he was commended as righteous, because God commended him for his offerings. And through his faith he still speaks, though he is dead. ⁵ By faith Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death, and he was not to be found because God took him up. For before his removal he had been commended as having pleased God. ⁶ Now without faith it is impossible to please him, for the one who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. ⁷ By faith Noah, when he was warned about things not yet seen, with reverent regard constructed an ark for the deliverance of his family. Through faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place he would later receive as an inheritance, and he went out without understanding where he was going. ⁹ By faith he lived as a foreigner in the promised land as though it were a foreign country, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who were fellow heirs of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with firm foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith, even though Sarah herself was barren and he was too old, he received the ability to procreate, because he regarded the one who had given the promise to be trustworthy. ¹² So in fact children were fathered by one man - and this one as good as dead - *like the number of stars in the sky and like the innumerable grains of sand on the seashore.* ¹³ These all died in faith without receiving the things promised, but they saw them in the distance and welcomed them and acknowledged that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who speak in such a way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ In fact, if they had been thinking of the land that they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they aspire to a better land, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. ¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he

was tested, offered up Isaac. He had received the promises, yet he was ready to offer up his only son. ¹⁸ God had told him, “*Through Isaac descendants will carry on your name,*” ¹⁹ and he reasoned that God could even raise him from the dead, and in a sense he received him back from there. ²⁰ By faith also Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the future. ²¹ By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph and

worshiped | strong="G4352" as he leaned on his staff as he leaned on his staff. ²² By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, mentioned the exodus of the sons of Israel and gave instructions about his burial.

²³ By faith, when Moses was born, his parents hid him for three months, because they saw the child was beautiful and they were not afraid of the king's edict. ²⁴ By faith, when he grew up, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to enjoy sin's fleeting pleasure. ²⁶ He regarded abuse suffered for Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for his eyes were fixed on the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt without fearing the king's anger, for he persevered as though he could see the one who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the one who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. ²⁹ By faith they crossed the Red Sea as if on dry ground, but when the Egyptians tried it, they were swallowed up. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after the people marched around them for seven days. ³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute escaped the destruction of the disobedient, because she welcomed the spies in peace.

³² And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets. ³³ Through faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice, gained what was promised, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, gained strength in weakness, became mighty in battle, put foreign armies to flight, ³⁵ and women received back their dead raised to life. But others were tortured, not accepting release, to obtain resurrection to a better life. ³⁶ And others experienced mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, sawed apart, murdered with the sword; they went about in sheepskins and goatskins; they were destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ³⁸ (the world was not worthy of them); they wandered in deserts and mountains and caves and openings in the earth. ³⁹ And these

all were commended for their faith, yet they did not receive what was promised. ⁴⁰ For God had provided something better for us, so that they would be made perfect together with us.

12

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, we must get rid of every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and run with endurance the race set out for us, ² keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy set out for him he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and *has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne* of God. ³ Think of him who endured such opposition against himself by sinners, so that you may not grow weary in your souls and give up. ⁴ You have not yet resisted to the point of bloodshed in your struggle against sin. ⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as sons?

“My son, do not scorn the Lord's discipline or give up when he corrects you.”*

⁶ **“For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son he accepts.”**

⁷ Endure your suffering as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is there that a father does not discipline? ⁸ But if you do not experience discipline, something all sons have shared in, then you are illegitimate and are not sons. ⁹ Besides, we have experienced discipline from our earthly fathers and we respected them; shall we not submit ourselves all the more to the Father of spirits and receive life? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a little while as seemed good to them, but he does so for our benefit, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ Now all discipline seems painful at the time, not joyful. But later it produces the fruit of peace and righteousness for those trained by it. ¹² Therefore,

strengthen | strong="G0461"

your listless | strong="G3935" hands and your weak knees,

¹³ and

make | strong="G4160" straight paths for your feet straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but be healed.

Do Not Reject God's Warning

¹⁴ Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God, that no one be like *a bitter root springing up* and causing trouble, and through him many become defiled.

¹⁶ And see to it that no one becomes an immoral or godless

person like Esau, who *sold his own birthright for a single meal*.¹⁷ For you know that later when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no opportunity for repentance, although he sought the blessing with tears.¹⁸ For you have not come to something that can be touched, to a burning fire and darkness and gloom and a whirlwind¹⁹ and the blast of a trumpet and a voice uttering words such that those who heard begged to hear no more.²⁰ For they could not bear what was commanded: “*If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.*”²¹ In fact, the scene was so terrifying that Moses said, “*I shudder with fear.*”²² But you have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the assembly²³ and congregation of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous, who have been made perfect,²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks of something better than Abel’s does.

²⁵ Take care not to refuse the one who is speaking! For if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less shall we, if we reject the one who warns from heaven?²⁶ Then his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “*I will once more shake not only the earth but heaven too.*”²⁷ Now this phrase “*once more*” indicates the removal of what is shaken, that is, of created things, so that what is unshaken may remain.²⁸ So since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us give thanks, and through this let us offer worship pleasing to God in devotion and awe.²⁹ For our *God is indeed a devouring fire.*

13

¹ Brotherly love must continue.² Do not neglect hospitality, because through it some have entertained angels without knowing it.³ Remember those in prison as though you were in prison with them, and those ill-treated as though you too felt their torment.⁴ Marriage must be honored among all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers.⁵ Your conduct must be free from the love of money and you must be content with what you have, for he has said, “*I will never leave you and I will never abandon you.*”⁶ So we can say with confidence, “*The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?**”⁷ Remember your leaders, who spoke God’s message to you; reflect on the outcome of their lives and imitate their faith.⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and

forever! ⁹ Do not be carried away by all sorts of strange teachings. For it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not ritual meals, which have never benefited those who participated in them. ¹⁰ We have an altar that those who serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat from. ¹¹ For the bodies of those animals whose blood the high priest brings into the sanctuary as an offering for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹² Therefore, to sanctify the people by his own blood, Jesus also suffered outside the camp. ¹³ We must go out to him, then, outside the camp, bearing the abuse he experienced. ¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. ¹⁵ Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, acknowledging his name. ¹⁶ And do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for God is pleased with such sacrifices.

¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls and will give an account for their work. Let them do this with joy and not with complaints, for this would be no advantage for you. ¹⁸ Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to conduct ourselves rightly in every respect. ¹⁹ I especially ask you to pray that I may be restored to you very soon.

Benediction and Conclusion

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who by the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ equip you with every good thing to do his will, working in us what is pleasing before him through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

²² Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, bear with my message of exhortation, for in fact I have written to you briefly. ²³ You should know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he comes soon, he will be with me when I see you. ²⁴ Greetings to all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send you greetings. ²⁵ Grace be with you all.

James

Salutation

¹ From James, a slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes dispersed abroad. Greetings!

Joy in Trials

² My brothers and sisters, consider it nothing but joy when you fall into all sorts of trials, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect effect, so that you will be perfect and complete, not deficient in anything. ⁵ But if anyone is deficient in wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without reprimand, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But he must ask in faith without doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed around by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ since he is a double-minded individual, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ Now the believer of humble means should take pride in his high position. ¹⁰ But the rich person's pride should be in his humiliation, because he will pass away like a wildflower in the meadow. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its heat and dries up the meadow; the petal of the flower falls off and its beauty is lost forever. So also the rich person in the midst of his pursuits will wither away. ¹² Happy is the one who endures testing, because when he has proven to be genuine, he will receive the crown of life that God promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desires. ¹⁵ Then when desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is full grown, it gives birth to death. ¹⁶ Do not be led astray, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ All generous giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or the slightest hint of change. ¹⁸ By his sovereign plan he gave us birth through the message of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Living Out the Message

¹⁹ Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters! Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger. ²⁰ For human anger does not accomplish God's righteousness.

²¹ So put away all filth and evil excess and humbly welcome the message implanted within you, which is able to save your souls. ²² But be sure you live out the message and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves. ²³ For if someone merely listens to the message and does not live it out, he is like someone who gazes at his own face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he gazes at himself and then goes out and immediately forgets what sort of person he was. ²⁵ But the one who peers into the perfect law of liberty and fixes his attention there, and does not become a forgetful listener but one who lives it out – he will be blessed in what he does. ²⁶ If someone thinks he is religious yet does not bridle his tongue, and so deceives his heart, his religion is futile. ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their misfortune and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

2

¹ My brothers and sisters, do not show prejudice if you possess faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. ² For if someone comes into your assembly wearing a gold ring and fine clothing, and a poor person enters in filthy clothes, ³ do you pay attention to the one who is finely dressed and say, “You sit here in a good place,” and to the poor person, “You stand over there,” or “Sit on the floor”? ⁴ If so, have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil motives? ⁵ Listen, my dear brothers and sisters! Did not God choose the poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor! Are not the rich oppressing you and dragging you into the courts? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme the good name of the one you belong to? ⁸ But if you fulfill the royal law as expressed in this scripture, “

You shall love | strong="G0025" your neighbor as yourself your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show prejudice, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as violators. ¹⁰ For the one who obeys the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do | strong="G3431" not commit adultery,” also said, “Do | strong="G5407" not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a violator of the law. ¹² Speak and act as those who will be judged by a law that gives freedom. ¹³ For judgment is merciless for the one who has shown no mercy. But mercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith and Works Together

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can this kind of faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacks daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm and eat well,” but you do not give them what the body needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ So also faith, if it does not have works, is dead being by itself. ¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith without works and I will show you faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that God is one; well and good. Even the demons believe that – and tremble with fear.

²⁰ But would you like evidence, you empty fellow, that faith without works is useless? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that his faith was working together with his works and his faith was perfected by works. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “*Now* | strong="G1161" Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness,” and *he was called God's friend*. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ And similarly, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

3

¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, because you know that we will be judged more strictly. ² For we all stumble in many ways. If someone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect individual, able to control the entire body as well. ³ And if we put bits into the mouths of horses to get them to obey us, then we guide their entire bodies. ⁴ Look at ships too: Though they are so large and driven by harsh winds, they are steered by a tiny rudder wherever the pilot's inclination directs. ⁵ So too the tongue is a small part of the body, yet it has great pretensions. Think how small a flame sets a huge forest ablaze. ⁶ And the tongue is a fire! The tongue represents the world of wrongdoing among the parts of our bodies. It pollutes the entire body and sets fire to the course of human existence – and is set on fire by hell.

⁷ For every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is subdued and has been subdued by humankind. ⁸ But no human being can subdue the tongue; it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless the Lord and Father, and

with it we curse people made in God's image. ¹⁰ From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. These things should not be so, my brothers and sisters. ¹¹ A spring does not pour out fresh water and bitter water from the same opening, does it? ¹² Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers and sisters, or a vine produce figs? Neither can a salt water spring produce fresh water.

True Wisdom

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct he should show his works done in the gentleness that wisdom brings. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfishness in your hearts, do not boast and tell lies against the truth. ¹⁵ Such wisdom does not come from above but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶ For where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is disorder and every evil practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial, and not hypocritical. ¹⁸ And the fruit that consists of righteousness is planted in peace among those who make peace.

4

¹ Where do the conflicts and where do the quarrels among you come from? Is it not from this, from your passions that battle inside you? ² You desire and you do not have; you murder and envy and you cannot obtain; you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask; ³ you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, so you can spend it on your passions.

⁴ Adulterers, do you not know that friendship with the world means hostility toward God? So whoever decides to be the world's friend makes himself God's enemy. ⁵ Or do you think the scripture means nothing when it says, "The spirit that God caused to live within us has an envious yearning"? ⁶ But he gives greater grace. Therefore it says, "*God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.*" ⁷ So submit to God. But resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and make your hearts pure, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn, and weep. Turn your laughter into mourning and your joy into despair. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.

¹¹ Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. He who speaks against a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but its judge. ¹² But

there is only one who is lawgiver and judge – the one who is able to save and destroy. On the other hand, who are you to judge your neighbor?

¹³ Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into this or that town and spend a year there and do business and make a profit.” ¹⁴ You do not know about tomorrow. What is your life like? For you are a puff of smoke that appears for a short time and then vanishes. ¹⁵ You ought to say instead, “If the Lord is willing, then we will live and do this or that.” ¹⁶ But as it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ So whoever knows what is good to do and does not do it is guilty of sin.

5

¹ Come now, you rich! Weep and cry aloud over the miseries that are coming on you. ² Your riches have rotted and your clothing has become moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver have rusted and their rust will be a witness against you. It will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have hoarded treasure! ⁴ Look, the pay you have held back from the workers who mowed your fields cries out against you, and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. ⁵ You have lived indulgently and luxuriously on the earth. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous person, although he does not resist you.

Patience in Suffering

⁷ So be patient, brothers and sisters, until the Lord’s return. Think of how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the ground and is patient for it until it receives the early and late rains. ⁸ You also be patient and strengthen your hearts, for the Lord’s return is near. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged. See, the judge stands before the gates! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the Lord’s name. ¹¹ Think of how we regard as blessed those who have endured. You have heard of Job’s endurance and you have seen the Lord’s purpose, that *the Lord is full of compassion and mercy*. ¹² And above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath. But let your “Yes” be yes and your “No” be no, so that you may not fall into judgment.

Prayer for the Sick

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone in good spirits? He should sing praises. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you ill? He should summon the elders of the church, and they should pray for him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick and the Lord will raise him up – and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ So confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great effectiveness. ¹⁷ Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain and there was no rain on the land for three years and six months! ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the land sprouted with a harvest.

¹⁹ My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone turns him back, ²⁰ he should know that the one who turns a sinner back from his wandering path will save that person's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

1 Peter

Salutation

¹ From Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those temporarily residing abroad (in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the province of Asia, and Bithynia) who are chosen ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by being set apart by the Spirit for obedience and for sprinkling with Jesus Christ's blood. May grace and peace be yours in full measure!

New Birth to Joy and Holiness

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he gave us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ that is, into an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. It is reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are protected through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ This brings you great joy, although you may have to suffer for a short time in various trials. ⁷ Such trials show the proven character of your faith, which is much more valuable than gold – gold that is tested by fire, even though it is passing away – and will bring praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ You have not seen him, but you love him. You do not see him now but you believe in him, and so you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, ⁹ because you are attaining the goal of your faith – the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who predicted the grace that would come to you searched and investigated carefully. ¹¹ They probed into what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when he testified beforehand about the sufferings appointed for Christ and his subsequent glory. ¹² They were shown that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things now announced to you through those who proclaimed the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven – things angels long to catch a glimpse of.

¹³ Therefore, get your minds ready for action by being fully sober, and set your hope completely on the grace that will be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed. ¹⁴ Like obedient children, do not comply with the evil urges you used to follow in your ignorance, ¹⁵ but, like the Holy One who called you, become holy yourselves in all of your conduct, ¹⁶ for it is written, “ **You shall be holy, because I am holy.**”

¹⁷ And if you address as Father the one who impartially judges according to each one's work, live out the time of your temporary residence here in reverence. ¹⁸ You know that from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors you were ransomed – not by perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹ but by precious blood like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, namely Christ. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was manifested in these last times for your sake. ²¹ Through him you now trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

²² You have purified your souls by obeying the truth in order to show sincere mutual love. So love one another earnestly from a pure heart. ²³ You have been born anew, not from perishable but from imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For

all flesh is like grass

and all its glory like the flower of the grass;

the grass withers and the flower falls off,

²⁵ ***but the word of the Lord endures forever.***

And this is the word that was proclaimed to you.

2

¹ So get rid of all evil and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ² And yearn like newborn infants for pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up to salvation, ³ if you have experienced the Lord's kindness.

A Living Stone, a Chosen People

⁴ So as you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but chosen and priceless in God's sight, ⁵ you yourselves, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood and to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it says in scripture, "*Look, I lay in Zion a stone, a chosen and priceless cornerstone, and whoever believes in him will never be put to shame**." ⁷ So you who believe see his value, but for those who do not believe, *the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,* ⁸ and *a stumbling-stone and a rock to trip over**. They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹ But you are *a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own*, so that you may *proclaim the virtues* of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ You once were *not a people*, but now you are God's people. You were *shown no mercy*, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you as foreigners and exiles to keep away from fleshly desires that do battle against the soul, ¹² and maintain good conduct among the non-Christians, so that though they now malign you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God when he appears.

Submission to Authorities

¹³ Be subject to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether to a king as supreme ¹⁴ or to governors as those he commissions to punish wrongdoers and praise those who do good. ¹⁵ For God wants you to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good. ¹⁶ Live as free people, not using your freedom as a pretext for evil, but as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Honor all people, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the king.

¹⁸ Slaves, be subject to your masters with all reverence, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are perverse. ¹⁹ For this finds God's favor, if because of conscience toward God someone endures hardships in suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is it if you sin and are mistreated and endure it? But if you do good and suffer and so endure, this finds favor with God. ²¹ For to this you were called, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in his steps. ²² He *committed no sin nor was deceit found in his mouth.* ²³ When he was maligned, he did not answer back; when he suffered, he threatened no retaliation, but committed himself to God who judges justly. ²⁴ He *himself bore our sins* in his body on the tree, that we may cease from sinning and live for righteousness. *By his wounds you were healed.* ²⁵ For you were *going astray like sheep* but now you have turned back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

3

¹ In the same way, wives, be subject to your own husbands. Then, even if some are disobedient to the word, they will be won over without a word by the way you live, ² when they see your pure and reverent conduct. ³ Let your beauty not be external – the braiding of hair and wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes – ⁴ but the inner person of the heart, the lasting beauty of a gentle and tranquil spirit, which is precious in God's sight. ⁵ For in the same way the holy women who hoped in God long ago adorned themselves by being subject to their husbands, ⁶ like Sarah who obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. You become her children when you do what is good and have no fear in doing so. ⁷ Husbands, in the same way, treat your wives with consideration as the weaker partners and

show them honor as fellow heirs of the grace of life. In this way nothing will hinder your prayers.

Suffering for Doing Good

⁸ Finally, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, affectionate, compassionate, and humble. ⁹ Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult, but instead bless others because you were called to inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For

the one who wants to love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from uttering deceit.

¹¹ ***And he must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.***

¹² ***For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open to their prayer.***

But the Lord's face is against those who do evil.

¹³ For who is going to harm you if you are devoted to what is good? ¹⁴ But in fact, if you happen to suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. ***But do not be terrified of them or be shaken.*** ¹⁵ But set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope you possess. ¹⁶ Yet do it with courtesy and respect, keeping a good conscience, so that those who slander your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame when they accuse you. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it, than for doing evil. ¹⁸

Because Christ also suffered once for sins,
the just for the unjust,

to bring you to God,

by being put to death in the flesh

but by being made alive in the spirit.

¹⁹ In it he went and preached to the spirits in prison,

²⁰ after they were disobedient long ago when God patiently waited in the days of Noah as an ark was being constructed. In the ark a few, that is eight souls, were delivered through water. ²¹ And this prefigured baptism, which now saves you – not the washing off of physical dirt but the pledge of a good conscience to God – through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who went into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels and authorities and powers subject to him.

4

¹ So, since Christ suffered in the flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same attitude, because the one who has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin, ² in that he spends the rest of his time on earth concerned about the will of

God and not human desires. ³ For the time that has passed was sufficient for you to do what the non-Christians desire. You lived then in debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, carousing, drinking bouts, and wanton idolatries. ⁴ So they are astonished when you do not rush with them into the same flood of wickedness, and they vilify you. ⁵ They will face a reckoning before Jesus Christ who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ Now it was for this very purpose that the gospel was preached to those who are now dead, so that though they were judged in the flesh by human standards they may live spiritually by God's standards.

Service, Suffering, and Judgment

⁷ For the culmination of all things is near. So be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of prayer. ⁸ Above all keep your love for one another fervent, because **love covers a multitude of sins**. ⁹ Show hospitality to one another without complaining. ¹⁰ Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God. ¹¹ Whoever speaks, let it be with God's words. Whoever serves, do so with the strength that God supplies, so that in everything God will be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

¹² Dear friends, do not be astonished that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice in the degree that you have shared in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice and be glad. ¹⁴ If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory, who is **the Spirit of God, rests** on you. ¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer or thief or criminal or as a troublemaker. ¹⁶ But if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but glorify God that you bear such a name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin, starting with the house of God. And if it starts with us, what will be the fate of those who are disobedient to the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And **if the righteous are barely saved, what will become of the ungodly and sinners?** ¹⁹ So then let those who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator as they do good.

5

¹ So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you: ² Give a shepherd's care to God's flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty

but willingly under God's direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly. ³ And do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but be examples to the flock. ⁴ Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away.

⁵ In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God *opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble*. ⁶ And God will exalt you in due time, if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand ⁷ by casting all your cares on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, *like a roaring lion*, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering. ¹⁰ And, after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him belongs the power forever. Amen.

Final Greetings

¹² Through Silvanus, whom I know to be a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, in order to encourage you and testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. ¹³ The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, and so does Mark, my son. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a loving kiss. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

2 Peter

Salutation

¹ From Simeon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, have been granted a faith just as precious as ours. ² May grace and peace be lavished on you as you grow in the rich knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord!

Believers' Salvation and the Work of God

³ I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. ⁴ Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith excellence, to excellence, knowledge; ⁶ to knowledge, self-control; to self-control, perseverance; to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ to godliness, brotherly affection; to brotherly affection, unselfish love. ⁸ For if these things are really yours and are continually increasing, they will keep you from becoming ineffective and unproductive in your pursuit of knowing our Lord Jesus Christ more intimately. ⁹ But concerning the one who lacks such things – he is blind. That is to say, he is nearsighted, since he has forgotten about the cleansing of his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers and sisters, make every effort to be sure of your calling and election. For by doing this you will never stumble into sin. ¹¹ For thus an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be richly provided for you.

Salvation Based on the Word of God

¹² Therefore, I intend to remind you constantly of these things even though you know them and are well established in the truth that you now have. ¹³ Indeed, as long as I am in this tabernacle, I consider it right to stir you up by way of a reminder, ¹⁴ since I know that my tabernacle will soon be removed, because our Lord Jesus Christ revealed this to me. ¹⁵ Indeed, I will also make every effort that, after my departure, you have a testimony of these things.

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly concocted fables when we made known to you the power and return of our Lord Jesus

Christ; no, we were eyewitnesses of his grandeur. ¹⁷ For he received honor and glory from God the Father, when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory: "This is my dear Son, in whom I am delighted." ¹⁸ When this voice was conveyed from heaven, we ourselves heard it, for we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ Moreover, we possess the prophetic word as an altogether reliable thing. You do well if you pay attention to this as you would to a light shining in a murky place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you do well if you recognize this: No prophecy of scripture ever comes about by the prophet's own imagination, ²¹ for no prophecy was ever borne of human impulse; rather, men carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

2

¹ But false prophets arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. These false teachers will infiltrate your midst with destructive heresies, even to the point of denying the Master who bought them. As a result, they will bring swift destruction on themselves. ² And many will follow their debauched lifestyles. Because of these false teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. ³ And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation pronounced long ago is not sitting idly by; their destruction is not asleep.

⁴ For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into hell and locked them up in chains in utter darkness, to be kept until the judgment, ⁵ and if he did not spare the ancient world, but did protect Noah, a herald of righteousness, along with seven others, when God brought a flood on an ungodly world, ⁶ and if he turned to ashes the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when he condemned them to destruction, having appointed them to serve as an example to future generations of the ungodly, ⁷ and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man in anguish over the debauched lifestyle of lawless men, ⁸ (for while he lived among them day after day, that righteous man was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) ⁹ - if so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from their trials, and to reserve the unrighteous for punishment at the day of judgment, ¹⁰ especially those who indulge their fleshly desires and who despise authority.

Brazen and insolent, they are not afraid to insult the glorious ones, ¹¹ yet even angels, who are much more powerful, do not bring a slanderous judgment against them before the

Lord. ¹² But these men, like irrational animals – creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed – do not understand whom they are insulting, and consequently in their destruction they will be destroyed, ¹³ suffering harm as the wages for their harmful ways. By considering it a pleasure to carouse in broad daylight, they are stains and blemishes, indulging in their deceitful pleasures when they feast together with you. ¹⁴ Their eyes, full of adultery, never stop sinning; they entice unstable people. They have trained their hearts for greed, these cursed children! ¹⁵ By forsaking the right path they have gone astray, because they followed the way of Balaam son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, ¹⁶ yet was rebuked for his own transgression (a dumb donkey, speaking with a human voice, restrained the prophet’s madness).

¹⁷ These men are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm, for whom the utter depths of darkness have been reserved. ¹⁸ For by speaking high-sounding but empty words they are able to entice, with fleshly desires and with debauchery, people who have just escaped from those who reside in error. ¹⁹ Although these false teachers promise such people freedom, they themselves are enslaved to immorality. For whatever a person succumbs to, to that he is enslaved. ²⁰ For if after they have escaped the filthy things of the world through the rich knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again get entangled in them and succumb to them, their last state has become worse for them than their first. ²¹ For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, having known it, to turn back from the holy commandment that had been delivered to them. ²² They are illustrations of this true proverb: “*A dog returns to its own vomit,*” and “*A sow, after washing herself, wallows in the mire.*”

3

¹ Dear friends, this is already the second letter I have written you, in which I am trying to stir up your pure mind by way of reminder: ² I want you to recall both the predictions foretold by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles. ³ Above all, understand this: In the last days blatant scoffers will come, being propelled by their own evil urges ⁴ and saying, “Where is his promised return? For ever since our ancestors died, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation.” ⁵ For they deliberately suppress this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was

formed out of water and by means of water. ⁶ Through these things the world existing at that time was destroyed when it was deluged with water. ⁷ But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, by being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸ Now, dear friends, do not let this one thing escape your notice, that a single day is like a thousand years with the Lord and a thousand years are like a single day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some regard slowness, but is being patient toward you, because he does not wish for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; when it comes, the heavens will disappear with a horrific noise, and the celestial bodies will melt away in a blaze, and the earth and every deed done on it will be laid bare. ¹¹ Since all these things are to melt away in this manner, what sort of people must we be, conducting our lives in holiness and godliness, ¹² while waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God? Because of this day, the heavens will be burned up and dissolve, and the celestial bodies will melt away in a blaze! ¹³ But, according to his promise, we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness truly resides.

Exhortation to the Faithful

¹⁴ Therefore, dear friends, since you are waiting for these things, strive to be found at peace, without spot or blemish, when you come into his presence. ¹⁵ And regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as also our dear brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him, ¹⁶ speaking of these things in all his letters. Some things in these letters are hard to understand, things the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they also do to the rest of the scriptures. ¹⁷ Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard that you do not get led astray by the error of these unprincipled men and fall from your firm grasp on the truth. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the honor both now and on that eternal day.

1 John

The Prologue to the Letter

¹ This is what we proclaim to you: what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and our hands have touched (concerning the word of life – ² and the life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and announce to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us). ³ What we have seen and heard we announce to you too, so that you may have fellowship with us (and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ). ⁴ Thus we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

God Is Light, So We Must Walk in the Light

⁵ Now this is the gospel message we have heard from him and announce to you: God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say we have fellowship with him and yet keep on walking in the darkness, we are lying and not practicing the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say we do not bear the guilt of sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

2

¹ (My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.) But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous One, ² and he himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the whole world.

Keeping God's Commandments

³ Now by this we know that we have come to know God: if we keep his commandments. ⁴ The one who says "I have come to know God" and yet does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in such a person. ⁵ But whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him. ⁶ The one who says he resides in God ought himself to walk just as Jesus walked.

⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have already heard. ⁸ On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. ⁹ The one who says he is in the light but still hates his fellow Christian is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ The one who loves his fellow Christian resides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹ But the one who hates his fellow Christian is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Words of Reassurance

¹² I am writing to you, little children, that your sins have been forgiven because of his name. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, that you have known him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young people, that you have conquered the evil one. ¹⁴ I have written to you, children, that you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, that you have known him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young people, that you are strong, and the word of God resides in you, and you have conquered the evil one.

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, ¹⁶ because all that is in the world (the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the arrogance produced by material possessions) is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away with all its desires, but the person who does the will of God remains forever.

Warning About False Teachers

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have appeared. We know from this that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us, because if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But they went out from us to demonstrate that all of them do not belong to us.

²⁰ Nevertheless you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. ²¹ I have not written to you that you do not know the truth, but that you do know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is the liar but the person who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This one is the antichrist: the person who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Everyone who denies

the Son does not have the Father either. The person who confesses the Son has the Father also.

²⁴ As for you, what you have heard from the beginning must remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ Now this is the promise that he himself made to us: eternal life. ²⁶ These things I have written to you about those who are trying to deceive you.

²⁷ Now as for you, the anointing that you received from him resides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, it is true and is not a lie. Just as it has taught you, you reside in him.

Children of God

²⁸ And now, little children, remain in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from him in shame when he comes back. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you also know that everyone who practices righteousness has been fathered by him.

3

¹ (See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called God's children – and indeed we are! For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know him. ² Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever it is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. ³ And everyone who has this hope focused on him purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure).

⁴ Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; indeed, sin is lawlessness. ⁵ And you know that Jesus was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶ Everyone who resides in him does not sin; everyone who sins has neither seen him nor known him. ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you: The one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as Jesus is righteous. ⁸ The one who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was revealed: to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Everyone who has been fathered by God does not practice sin, because God's seed resides in him, and thus he is not able to sin, because he has been fathered by God. ¹⁰ By this the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: Everyone who does not practice righteousness – the one who does not love his fellow Christian – is not of God.

God Is Love, So We Must Love One Another

¹¹ For this is the gospel message that you have heard from the beginning: that we should love one another, ¹² not like Cain who was of the evil one and brutally murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, but his brother's were righteous.

¹³ Therefore do not be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have crossed over from death to life because we love our fellow Christians. The one who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his fellow Christian is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. ¹⁶ We have come to know love by this: that Jesus laid down his life for us; thus we ought to lay down our lives for our fellow Christians. ¹⁷ But whoever has the world's possessions and sees his fellow Christian in need and shuts off his compassion against him, how can the love of God reside in such a person?

¹⁸ Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue but in deed and truth. ¹⁹ And by this we will know that we are of the truth and will convince our conscience in his presence, ²⁰ that if our conscience condemns us, that God is greater than our conscience and knows all things. ²¹ Dear friends, if our conscience does not condemn us, we have confidence in the presence of God, ²² and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing to him. ²³ Now this is his commandment: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he gave us the commandment. ²⁴ And the person who keeps his commandments resides in God, and God in him. Now by this we know that God resides in us: by the Spirit he has given us.

4

¹ Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses Jesus as the Christ who has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God, and this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world.

⁴ You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world's perspective and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God; the person who knows God listens

to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.

God is Love

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been fathered by God and knows God. ⁸ The person who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ By this the love of God is revealed in us: that God has sent his one and only Son into the world so that we may live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

¹¹ Dear friends, if God so loved us, then we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God resides in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we reside in God and he in us: in that he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

¹⁵ If anyone confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God resides in him and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has in us. God is love, and the one who resides in love resides in God, and God resides in him. ¹⁷ By this love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because just as Jesus is, so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears punishment has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love because he loved us first.

²⁰ If anyone says "I love God" and yet hates his fellow Christian, he is a liar, because the one who does not love his fellow Christian whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And the commandment we have from him is this: that the one who loves God should love his fellow Christian too.

5

¹ Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been fathered by God, and everyone who loves the father loves the child fathered by him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God: whenever we love God and obey his commandments. ³ For this is the love of God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments do not weigh us down, ⁴ because everyone who has been fathered by God conquers the world.

Testimony About the Son

This is the conquering power that has conquered the world: our faith. ⁵ Now who is the person who has conquered

the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ⁶ Jesus Christ is the one who came by water and blood – not by the water only, but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify, ⁸ the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three are in agreement.

⁹ If we accept the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, because this is the testimony of God that he has testified concerning his Son. ¹⁰ (The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has testified concerning his Son.) ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² The one who has the Son has this eternal life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have this eternal life.

Assurance of Eternal Life

¹³ I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have before him: that whenever we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, then we know that we have the requests that we have asked from him. ¹⁶ If anyone sees his fellow Christian committing a sin not resulting in death, he should ask, and God will grant life to the person who commits a sin not resulting in death. There is a sin resulting in death. I do not say that he should ask about that. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin not resulting in death.

¹⁸ We know that everyone fathered by God does not sin, but God protects the one he has fathered, and the evil one cannot touch him. ¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us insight to know him who is true, and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life. ²¹ Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

2 John

Introduction and Thanksgiving

¹ From the elder, to an elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth (and not I alone, but also all those who know the truth), ² because of the truth that resides in us and will be with us forever. ³ Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

⁴ I rejoiced greatly because I have found some of your children living according to the truth, just as the Father commanded us.

Warning Against False Teachers

⁵ But now I ask you, lady (not as if I were writing a new commandment to you, but the one we have had from the beginning), that we love one another. ⁶ (Now this is love: that we walk according to his commandments.) This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning; thus you should walk in it. ⁷ For many deceivers have gone out into the world, people who do not confess Jesus as Christ coming in the flesh. This person is the deceiver and the antichrist! ⁸ Watch out, so that you do not lose the things we have worked for, but receive a full reward.

⁹ Everyone who goes on ahead and does not remain in the teaching of Christ does not have God. The one who remains in this teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not give him any greeting, ¹¹ because the person who gives him a greeting shares in his evil deeds.

Conclusion

¹² Though I have many other things to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink, but I hope to come visit you and speak face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

¹³ The children of your elect sister greet you.

3 John

Introduction and Thanksgiving

¹ From the elder, to Gaius my dear brother, whom I love in truth. ² Dear friend, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul. ³ For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, just as you are living according to the truth.

⁴ I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are living according to the truth.

The Charge to Gaius

⁵ Dear friend, you demonstrate faithfulness by whatever you do for the brothers (even though they are strangers). ⁶ They have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. ⁷ For they have gone forth on behalf of "The Name," accepting nothing from the pagans. ⁸ Therefore we ought to support such people, so that we become coworkers in cooperation with the truth.

Diotrephes the Troublemaker

⁹ I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not acknowledge us. ¹⁰ Therefore, if I come, I will call attention to the deeds he is doing - the bringing of unjustified charges against us with evil words! And not being content with that, he not only refuses to welcome the brothers himself, but hinders the people who want to do so and throws them out of the church! ¹¹ Dear friend, do not imitate what is bad but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does what is bad has not seen God.

Worthy Demetrius

¹² Demetrius has been testified to by all, even by the truth itself. We also testify to him, and you know that our testimony is true.

Conclusion

¹³ I have many things to write to you, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink. ¹⁴ But I hope to see you right away, and we will speak face to face. Peace be with you. The friends here greet you. Greet the friends there by name.

Jude

Salutation

¹ From Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, wrapped in the love of God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ. ² May mercy, peace, and love be lavished on you!

Condemnation of the False Teachers

³ Dear friends, although I have been eager to write to you about our common salvation, I now feel compelled instead to write to encourage you to contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. ⁴ For certain men have secretly slipped in among you – men who long ago were marked out for the condemnation I am about to describe – ungodly men who have turned the grace of our God into a license for evil and who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

⁵ Now I desire to remind you (even though you have been fully informed of these facts once for all) that Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, later destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ You also know that the angels who did not keep within their proper domain but abandoned their own place of residence, he has kept in eternal chains in utter darkness, locked up for the judgment of the great Day. ⁷ So also Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring towns, since they indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire in a way similar to these angels, are now displayed as an example by suffering the punishment of eternal fire.

⁸ Yet these men, as a result of their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and insult the glorious ones. ⁹ But even when Michael the archangel was arguing with the devil and debating with him concerning Moses' body, he did not dare to bring a slanderous judgment, but said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰ But these men do not understand the things they slander, and they are being destroyed by the very things that, like irrational animals, they instinctively comprehend. ¹¹ Woe to them! For they have traveled down Cain's path, and because of greed have abandoned themselves to Balaam's error; hence, they will certainly perish in Korah's rebellion. ¹² These men are dangerous reefs at your love feasts, feasting without reverence, feeding only themselves. They are waterless clouds, carried along by the winds; autumn trees without

fruit – twice dead, uprooted; ¹³ wild sea waves, spewing out the foam of their shame; wayward stars for whom the utter depths of eternal darkness have been reserved.

¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh in descent beginning with Adam, even prophesied of them, saying, “Look! The Lord is coming with thousands and thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, and to convict every person of all their thoroughly ungodly deeds that they have committed, and of all the harsh words that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶ These people are grumblers and fault-finders who go wherever their desires lead them, and they give bombastic speeches, enchanting folks for their own gain.

Exhortation to the Faithful

¹⁷ But you, dear friends – recall the predictions foretold by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ For they said to you, “In the end time there will come scoffers, propelled by their own ungodly desires.” ¹⁹ These people are divisive, worldly, devoid of the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith, by praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ maintain yourselves in the love of God, while anticipating the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that brings eternal life. ²² And have mercy on those who waver; ²³ save others by snatching them out of the fire; have mercy on others, coupled with a fear of God, hating even the clothes stained by the flesh.

Final Blessing

²⁴ Now to the one who is able to keep you from falling, and to cause you to stand, rejoicing, without blemish before his glorious presence, ²⁵ to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time, and now, and for all eternity. Amen.

Revelation

The Prologue

¹ The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it clear by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who then testified to everything that he saw concerning the word of God and the testimony about Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy aloud, and blessed are those who hear and obey the things written in it, because the time is near!

⁴ From John, to the seven churches that are in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from “he who is,” and who was, and who is still to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ – the faithful witness, the firstborn from among the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has set us free from our sins at the cost of his own blood ⁶ and has appointed us as a kingdom, as priests serving his God and Father – to him be the glory and the power for ever and ever! Amen.

⁷ (Look! *He is returning with the clouds,*
and *every eye will see him,*
even *those who pierced him,*

and all the tribes on the earth will mourn because of him.
This will certainly come to pass! Amen.)

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God – the one who is, and who was, and who is still to come – the All-Powerful!

⁹ I, John, your brother and the one who shares with you in the persecution, kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day when I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, ¹¹ saying: “Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches – to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

¹² I turned to see whose voice was speaking to me, and when I did so, I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands was one *like a son of man*. He was dressed in a robe extending down to his feet and he wore a wide golden belt around his chest. ¹⁴ His head and hair were as white as wool, even as white as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame. ¹⁵ His feet were like polished bronze refined

in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp double-edged sword extended out of his mouth. His face shone like the sun shining at full strength. ¹⁷ When I saw him I fell down at his feet as though I were dead, but he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, ¹⁸ and the one who lives! I was dead, but look, now I am alive – forever and ever – and I hold the keys of death and of Hades! ¹⁹ Therefore write what you saw, what is, and what will be after these things. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

2

¹ "To the angel of the church in Ephesus, write the following:

"This is the solemn pronouncement of the one who has a firm grasp on the seven stars in his right hand – the one who walks among the seven golden lampstands: ² 'I know your works as well as your labor and steadfast endurance, and that you cannot tolerate evil. You have even put to the test those who refer to themselves as apostles (but are not), and have discovered that they are false. ³ I am also aware that you have persisted steadfastly, endured much for the sake of my name, and have not grown weary. ⁴ But I have this against you: You have departed from your first love! ⁵ Therefore, remember from what high state you have fallen and repent! Do the deeds you did at the first; if not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place – that is, if you do not repent. ⁶ But you do have this going for you: You hate what the Nicolaitans practice – practices I also hate. ⁷ The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will permit him to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.'

To the Church in Smyrna

⁸ "To the angel of the church in Smyrna write the following:

"This is the solemn pronouncement of the one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead, but came to life: ⁹ 'I know the distress you are suffering and your poverty (but you are rich). I also know the slander against you by those who call themselves Jews and really are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer. The devil is about to have some of you thrown into prison so you may be tested, and you will experience

suffering for ten days. Remain faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown that is life itself. ¹¹ The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will in no way be harmed by the second death.'

To the Church in Pergamum

¹² "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write the following:

"This is the solemn pronouncement of the one who has the sharp double-edged sword: ¹³ 'I know where you live – where Satan's throne is. Yet you continue to cling to my name and you have not denied your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was killed in your city where Satan lives. ¹⁴ But I have a few things against you: You have some people there who follow the teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ In the same way, there are also some among you who follow the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶ Therefore, repent! If not, I will come against you quickly and make war against those people with the sword of my mouth. ¹⁷ The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give him some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on that stone will be written a new name that no one can understand except the one who receives it.'

To the Church in Thyatira

¹⁸ "To the angel of the church in Thyatira write the following:

" This is the solemn pronouncement of the Son of God, the one who has eyes like a fiery flame and whose feet are like polished bronze: ¹⁹ 'I know your deeds: your love, faith, service, and steadfast endurance. In fact, your more recent deeds are greater than your earlier ones. ²⁰ But I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and by her teaching deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I have given her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her sexual immorality. ²² Look! I am throwing her onto a bed of violent illness, and those who commit adultery with her into terrible suffering, unless they repent of her deeds. ²³ Furthermore, I will strike her followers with a deadly disease, and then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts. I will repay each one of you what your deeds deserve. ²⁴ But to the rest of you in

Thyatira, all who do not hold to this teaching (who have not learned the so-called “deep secrets of Satan”), to you I say: I do not put any additional burden on you. ²⁵ However, hold on to what you have until I come. ²⁶ And to the one who conquers and who continues in my deeds until the end, I will give him authority over the nations –

²⁷ *he will rule them with an iron rod**

and like clay jars he will break them to pieces,

²⁸ just as I have received the right to rule from my Father – and I will give him the morning star. ²⁹ The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

3

¹ “To the angel of the church in Sardis write the following:

“This is the solemn pronouncement of the one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a reputation that you are alive, but in reality you are dead. ² Wake up then, and strengthen what remains that was about to die, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. ³ Therefore, remember what you received and heard, and obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will never know at what hour I will come against you. ⁴ But you have a few individuals in Sardis who have not stained their clothes, and they will walk with me dressed in white, because they are worthy. ⁵ The one who conquers will be dressed like them in white clothing, and I will never erase his name from the book of life, but will declare his name before my Father and before his angels. ⁶ The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

To the Church in Philadelphia

⁷ “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write the following:

“This is the solemn pronouncement of the Holy One, the True One, who holds the key of David, who opens doors no one can shut, and shuts doors no one can open: ⁸ ‘I know your deeds. (Look! I have put in front of you an open door that no one can shut.) I know that you have little strength, but you have obeyed my word and have not denied my name. ⁹ Listen! I am going to make those people from the synagogue of Satan – who say they are Jews yet are not, but are lying – Look, I will make them come and bow down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept my admonition to endure steadfastly, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is about to come on the whole

world to test those who live on the earth. ¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have so that no one can take away your crown. ¹² The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never depart from it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God (the new Jerusalem that comes down out of heaven from my God), and my new name as well. ¹³ The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

To the Church in Laodicea

¹⁴ "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write the following:

"This is the solemn pronouncement of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God's creation: ¹⁵ 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶ So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth! ¹⁷ Because you say, "I am rich and have acquired great wealth, and need nothing," but do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked, ¹⁸ take my advice and buy gold from me refined by fire so you can become rich! Buy from me white clothing so you can be clothed and your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and buy eye salve to put on your eyes so you can see! ¹⁹ All those I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent! ²⁰ Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me. ²¹ I will grant the one who conquers permission to sit with me on my throne, just as I too conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' "

4

¹ After these things I looked, and there was a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet said: "Come up here so that I can show you what must happen after these things." ² Immediately I was in the Spirit, and a throne was standing in heaven with someone seated on it! ³ And the one seated on it was like jasper and carnelian in appearance, and a rainbow looking like it was made of emerald encircled the throne. ⁴ In a circle around the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on those thrones were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white clothing and had golden crowns on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came out flashes of lightning and roaring and crashes of thunder. Seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits

of God, were burning in front of the throne ⁶ and in front of the throne was something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

In the middle of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature was like a lion, the second creature like an ox, the third creature had a face like a man's, and the fourth creature looked like an eagle flying. ⁸ Each one of the four living creatures had six wings and was full of eyes all around and inside. They never rest day or night, saying: "*Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God, the All-Powerful, Who was and who is, and who is still to come!*"

⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the one who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders throw themselves to the ground before the one who sits on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever, and they offer their crowns before his throne, saying:

¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, since you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created!"

5

¹ Then I saw in the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne a scroll written on the front and back and sealed with seven seals. ² And I saw a powerful angel proclaiming in a loud voice: "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seals?" ³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or look into it. ⁴ So I began weeping bitterly because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered; thus he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

⁶ Then I saw standing in the middle of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb that appeared to have been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then he came and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne, ⁸ and when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders threw themselves to the ground before the Lamb. Each of them had a harp and golden bowls full of incense (which are the prayers of the saints). ⁹ They were singing a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals

because you were killed,
and at the cost of your own blood you have purchased for God
persons from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

¹⁰ You have appointed them as a kingdom and priests to serve
our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

¹¹ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels in
a circle around the throne, as well as the living creatures
and the elders. Their number was ten thousand times ten
thousand – thousands times thousands – ¹² all of whom were
singing in a loud voice:

“Worthy is the lamb who was killed
to receive power and wealth
and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and praise!”

¹³ Then I heard every creature – in heaven, on earth, under
the earth, in the sea, and all that is in them – singing:

“To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise, honor, glory, and ruling power forever and ever!”

¹⁴ And the four living creatures were saying “Amen,” and
the elders threw themselves to the ground and worshiped.

6

¹ I looked on when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals,
and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a
thunderous voice, “Come!” ² So I looked, and here came a
white horse! The one who rode it had a bow, and he was given
a crown, and as a conqueror he rode out to conquer.

³ Then when the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the
second living creature saying, “Come!” ⁴ And another horse,
fiery red, came out, and the one who rode it was granted
permission to take peace from the earth, so that people would
butcher one another, and he was given a huge sword.

⁵ Then when the Lamb opened the third seal I heard the
third living creature saying, “Come!” So I looked, and here
came a black horse! The one who rode it had a balance scale
in his hand. ⁶ Then I heard something like a voice from among
the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat will cost a
day’s pay and three quarts of barley will cost a day’s pay. But
do not damage the olive oil and the wine!”

⁷ Then when the Lamb opened the fourth seal I heard the
voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come!” ⁸ So I
looked and here came a pale green horse! The name of the
one who rode it was Death, and Hades followed right behind.
They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill its
population with the sword, famine, and disease, and by the
wild animals of the earth.

⁹ Now when the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been violently killed because of the word of God and because of the testimony they had given. ¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Master, holy and true, before you judge those who live on the earth and avenge our blood?" ¹¹ Each of them was given a long white robe and they were told to rest for a little longer, until the full number was reached of both their fellow servants and their brothers who were going to be killed just as they had been.

¹² Then I looked when the Lamb opened the sixth seal, and a huge earthquake took place; the sun became as black as sackcloth made of hair, and the full moon became blood red; ¹³ and the stars in the sky fell to the earth like a fig tree dropping its unripe figs when shaken by a fierce wind. ¹⁴ The sky was split apart like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth, the very important people, the generals, the rich, the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶ They said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to withstand it?"

7

¹ After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so no wind could blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ² Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, who had the seal of the living God. He shouted out with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given permission to damage the earth and the sea: ³ "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." ⁴ Now I heard the number of those who were marked with the seal, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from all the tribes of the people of Israel:

⁵ From the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed,
from the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand,

⁶ from the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand,

⁷ from the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand,

⁸ from the tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

⁹ After these things I looked, and here was an enormous crowd that no one could count, made up of persons from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb dressed in long white robes, and with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ They were shouting out in a loud voice,

“Salvation belongs to our God, to the one seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

¹¹ And all the angels stood there in a circle around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they threw themselves down with their faces to the ground before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying,

“Amen! Praise and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, “These dressed in long white robes – who are they and where have they come from?”

¹⁴ So I said to him, “My lord, you know the answer.” Then he said to me, “These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! ¹⁵ For this reason they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple, and the one seated on the throne will shelter them. ¹⁶ *They will never go hungry or be thirsty again, and the sun will not beat down on them, nor any burning heat,* ¹⁷ because the Lamb in the middle of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of living water, *and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.*”

8

¹ Now when the Lamb opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. ³ Another angel holding a golden censer came and was stationed at the altar. A large amount of incense was given to him to offer up, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar that is before the throne. ⁴ The smoke coming from the incense, along with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. ⁵ Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it on the earth, and there were crashes of thunder, roaring, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

⁶ Now the seven angels holding the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

⁷ The first angel blew his trumpet, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was thrown at the earth so that a third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

⁸ Then the second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain of burning fire was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea became blood, ⁹ and a third of the creatures living in the sea died, and a third of the ships were completely destroyed.

¹⁰ Then the third angel blew his trumpet, and a huge star burning like a torch fell from the sky; it landed on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. ¹¹ (Now the name of the star is Wormwood.) So a third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from these waters because they were poisoned.

¹² Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. And there was no light for a third of the day and for a third of the night likewise. ¹³ Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying directly overhead, proclaiming with a loud voice, "Woe! Woe! Woe to those who live on the earth because of the remaining sounds of the trumpets of the three angels who are about to blow them!"

9

¹ Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the abyss. ² He opened the shaft of the abyss and smoke rose out of it like smoke from a giant furnace. The sun and the air were darkened with smoke from the shaft. ³ Then out of the smoke came locusts onto the earth, and they were given power like that of the scorpions of the earth. ⁴ They were told not to damage the grass of the earth, or any green plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their forehead. ⁵ The locusts were not given permission to kill them, but only to torture them for five months, and their torture was like that of a scorpion when it stings a person. ⁶ In those days people will seek death, but will not be able to find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them.

⁷ Now the locusts looked like horses equipped for battle. On their heads were something like crowns similar to gold, and their faces looked like men's faces. ⁸ They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. ⁹ They

had breastplates like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings was like the noise of many horse-drawn chariots charging into battle. ¹⁰ They have tails and stingers like scorpions, and their ability to injure people for five months is in their tails. ¹¹ They have as king over them the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is *Abaddon*, and in Greek, *Apollyon*.

¹² The first woe has passed, but two woes are still coming after these things!

¹³ Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a single voice coming from the horns on the golden altar that is before God, ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel, the one holding the trumpet, "Set free the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates!" ¹⁵ Then the four angels who had been prepared for this hour, day, month, and year were set free to kill a third of humanity. ¹⁶ The number of soldiers on horseback was two hundred million; I heard their number. ¹⁷ Now this is what the horses and their riders looked like in my vision: The riders had breastplates that were fiery red, dark blue, and sulfurous yellow in color. The heads of the horses looked like lions' heads, and fire, smoke, and sulfur came out of their mouths. ¹⁸ A third of humanity was killed by these three plagues, that is, by the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur that came out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For the power of the horses resides in their mouths and in their tails, because their tails are like snakes, having heads that inflict injuries. ²⁰ The rest of humanity, who had not been killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so that they did not stop worshiping demons and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood – idols that cannot see or hear or walk about. ²¹ Furthermore, they did not repent of their murders, of their magic spells, of their sexual immorality, or of their stealing.

10

¹ Then I saw another powerful angel descending from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun and his legs were like pillars of fire. ² He held in his hand a little scroll that was open, and he put his right foot on the sea and his left on the land. ³ Then he shouted in a loud voice like a lion roaring, and when he shouted, the seven thunders sounded their voices. ⁴ When the seven thunders spoke, I was preparing to write, but just then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders spoke and do not write it down." ⁵ Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand

to heaven ⁶ and swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, and the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, “There will be no more delay! ⁷ But in the days when the seventh angel is about to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God is completed, just as he has proclaimed to his servants the prophets.” ⁸ Then the voice I had heard from heaven began to speak to me again, “Go and take the open scroll in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.” ⁹ So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, “Take the scroll and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.” ¹⁰ So I took the little scroll from the angel’s hand and ate it, and it did taste as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. ¹¹ Then they told me: “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings.”

11

¹ Then a measuring rod like a staff was given to me, and I was told, “Get up and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and the ones who worship there. ² But do not measure the outer courtyard of the temple; leave it out, because it has been given to the Gentiles, and they will trample on the holy city for forty-two months. ³ And I will grant my two witnesses authority to prophesy for 1,260 days, dressed in sackcloth. ⁴ (These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.) ⁵ If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and completely consumes their enemies. If anyone wants to harm them, they must be killed this way. ⁶ These two have the power to close up the sky so that it does not rain during the time they are prophesying. They have power to turn the waters to blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague whenever they want. ⁷ When they have completed their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will make war on them and conquer them and kill them. ⁸ Their corpses will lie in the street of the great city that is symbolically called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also crucified. ⁹ For three and a half days those from every people, tribe, nation, and language will look at their corpses, because they will not permit them to be placed in a tomb. ¹⁰ And those who live on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate, even sending gifts to each other, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth. ¹¹ But after three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and tremendous fear seized those who

were watching them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them: "Come up here!" So the two prophets went up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies stared at them. ¹³ Just then a major earthquake took place and a tenth of the city collapsed; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴ The second woe has come and gone; the third is coming quickly.

The Seventh Trumpet

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven saying:

"The kingdom of the world
has become the kingdom of our Lord
and of his Christ,
and he will reign for ever and ever."

¹⁶ Then the twenty-four elders who are seated on their thrones before God threw themselves down with their faces to the ground and worshiped God ¹⁷ with these words:

"We give you thanks, Lord God, the All-Powerful,
the one who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and begun to reign.

¹⁸ The nations were enraged,
but your wrath has come,
and the time has come for the dead to be judged,
and the time has come to give to your servants,
the prophets, their reward,
as well as to the saints
and to those who revere your name, both small and great,
and the time has come to destroy those who destroy the
earth."

¹⁹ Then the temple of God in heaven was opened and the ark of his covenant was visible within his temple. And there were flashes of lightning, roaring, crashes of thunder, an earthquake, and a great hailstorm.

12

¹ Then a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet, and on her head was a crown of twelve stars. ² She was pregnant and was screaming in labor pains, struggling to give birth. ³ Then another sign appeared in heaven: a huge red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven diadem crowns. ⁴ Now the dragon's tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them to the earth. Then the

dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. ⁵ So the woman gave birth to a son, a male child, who is going *to rule over all the nations with an iron rod*. Her child was suddenly caught up to God and to his throne, ⁶ and she fled into the wilderness where a place had been prepared for her by God, so she could be taken care of for 1,260 days.

War in Heaven

⁷ Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸ But the dragon was not strong enough to prevail, so there was no longer any place left in heaven for him and his angels. ⁹ So that huge dragon – the ancient serpent, the one called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world – was thrown down to the earth, and his angels along with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,

“The salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the ruling authority of his Christ, have now come,
because the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
the one who accuses them day and night before our God,
has been thrown down.

¹¹ But they overcame him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
and they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid
to die.

¹² Therefore you heavens rejoice, and all who reside in them!

But woe to the earth and the sea
because the devil has come down to you!

He is filled with terrible anger,
for he knows that he only has a little time!”

¹³ Now when the dragon realized that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given the two wings of a giant eagle so that she could fly out into the wilderness, to the place God prepared for her, where she is taken care of – away from the presence of the serpent – for a time, times, and half a time. ¹⁵ Then the serpent spouted water like a river out of his mouth after the woman in an attempt to sweep her away by a flood, ¹⁶ but the earth came to her rescue; the ground opened up and swallowed the river that the dragon had spewed from his mouth. ¹⁷ So the dragon became enraged at the woman and went away to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep God’s

commandments and hold to the testimony about Jesus. And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.

13

¹ Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns were ten diadem crowns, and on its heads a blasphemous name. ² Now the beast that I saw was like a leopard, but its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave the beast his power, his throne, and great authority to rule. ³ One of the beast's heads appeared to have been killed, but the lethal wound had been healed. And the whole world followed the beast in amazement; ⁴ they worshiped the dragon because he had given ruling authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast too, saying: "Who is like the beast?" and "Who is able to make war against him?" ⁵ The beast was given a mouth speaking proud words and blasphemies, and he was permitted to exercise ruling authority for forty-two months. ⁶ So the beast opened his mouth to blaspheme against God – to blaspheme both his name and his dwelling place, that is, those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ The beast was permitted to go to war against the saints and conquer them. He was given ruling authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation, ⁸ and all those who live on the earth will worship the beast, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the book of life belonging to the Lamb who was killed. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, he had better listen!

¹⁰ If anyone is meant for captivity,
into captivity he will go.
If anyone is to be killed by the sword,
then by the sword he must be killed.

This requires steadfast endurance and faith from the saints.

¹¹ Then I saw another beast coming up from the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but was speaking like a dragon. ¹² He exercised all the ruling authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and those who inhabit it worship the first beast, the one whose lethal wound had been healed. ¹³ He performed momentous signs, even making fire come down from heaven in front of people ¹⁴ and, by the signs he was permitted to perform on behalf of the beast, he deceived those who live on the earth. He told those who live on the earth to make an image to the beast who had been wounded by the sword, but still lived. ¹⁵ The second beast was empowered to give life to the image of the first beast so that

it could speak, and could cause all those who did not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He also caused everyone (small and great, rich and poor, free and slave) to obtain a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. ¹⁷ Thus no one was allowed to buy or sell things unless he bore the mark of the beast – that is, his name or his number. ¹⁸ This calls for wisdom: Let the one who has insight calculate the beast's number, for it is man's number, and his number is 666.

14

¹ Then I looked, and here was the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him were one hundred and forty-four thousand, who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ² I also heard a sound coming out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. Now the sound I heard was like that made by harpists playing their harps, ³ and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one was able to learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth.

⁴ These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from humanity as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb, ⁵ and no lie was found on their lips; they are blameless.

Three Angels and Three Messages

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, and he had an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth – to every nation, tribe, language, and people. ⁷ He declared in a loud voice: “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has arrived, and worship the one who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water!”

⁸ A second angel followed the first, declaring: “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great city! She made all the nations drink of the wine of her immoral passion.”

⁹ A third angel followed the first two, declaring in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and takes the mark on his forehead or his hand, ¹⁰ that person will also drink of the wine of God's anger that has been mixed undiluted in the cup of his wrath, and he will be tortured with fire and sulfur in front of the holy angels and in front of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke from their torture will go up forever and ever, and those who worship the beast and his image will have no rest day or night, along with anyone who receives the

mark of his name.” ¹² This requires the steadfast endurance of the saints – those who obey God’s commandments and hold to their faith in Jesus.

¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this: ‘Blessed are the dead, those who die in the Lord from this moment on!’ ”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “so they can rest from their hard work, because their deeds will follow them.”

¹⁴ Then I looked, and a white cloud appeared, and seated *on the cloud was one like a son of man!* He had a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. ¹⁵ Then another angel came out of the temple, shouting in a loud voice to the one seated on the cloud, “Use your sickle and start to reap, because the time to reap has come, since the earth’s harvest is ripe!” ¹⁶ So the one seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ Another angel, who was in charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to the angel who had the sharp sickle, “Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes off the vine of the earth, because its grapes are now ripe.” ¹⁹ So the angel swung his sickle over the earth and gathered the grapes from the vineyard of the earth and tossed them into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ Then the winepress was stomped outside the city, and blood poured out of the winepress up to the height of horses’ bridles for a distance of almost two hundred miles.

15

¹ Then I saw another great and astounding sign in heaven: seven angels who have seven final plagues (they are final because in them God’s anger is completed).

² Then I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and his image and the number of his name. They were standing by the sea of glass, holding harps given to them by God. ³ They sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: “Great and astounding are your deeds,
Lord God, the All-Powerful!
Just and true are your ways,
King over the nations!

⁴ Who will not fear you, O Lord,
and glorify your name, because you alone are holy?
All nations will come and worship before you
for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

⁵ After these things I looked, and the temple (the tent of the testimony) was opened in heaven, ⁶ and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, dressed in clean bright linen, wearing wide golden belts around their chests. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God who lives forever and ever, ⁸ and the temple was filled with smoke from God's glory and from his power. Thus no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues from the seven angels were completed.

16

¹ Then I heard a loud voice from the temple declaring to the seven angels: "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls containing God's wrath." ² So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth. Then ugly and painful sores appeared on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

³ Next, the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea and it turned into blood, like that of a corpse, and every living creature that was in the sea died.

⁴ Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and the springs of water, and they turned into blood. ⁵ Now I heard the angel of the waters saying:

"You are just - the one who is and who was, the Holy One - because you have passed these judgments, ⁶ because they poured out the blood of your saints and prophets, so you have given them blood to drink. They got what they deserved!"

⁷ Then I heard the altar reply, "Yes, Lord God, the All-Powerful, your judgments are true and just!"

⁸ Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was permitted to scorch people with fire. ⁹ Thus people were scorched by the terrible heat, yet they blasphemed the name of God, who has ruling authority over these plagues, and they would not repent and give him glory.

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast so that darkness covered his kingdom, and people began to bite their tongues because of their pain. ¹¹ They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their sufferings and because of their sores, but nevertheless they still refused to repent of their deeds.

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates and dried up its water to prepare the way for the kings from the east. ¹³ Then I saw three unclean

spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are the spirits of the demons performing signs who go out to the kings of the earth to bring them together for the battle that will take place on the great day of God, the All-Powerful.

¹⁵ (Look! I will come like a thief!

Blessed is the one who stays alert and does not lose his clothes so that he will not have to walk around naked and his shameful condition be seen.)

¹⁶ Now the spirits gathered the kings and their armies to the place that is called Armageddon in Hebrew.

¹⁷ Finally the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying: "It is done!" ¹⁸ Then there were flashes of lightning, roaring, and crashes of thunder, and there was a tremendous earthquake – an earthquake unequaled since humanity has been on the earth, so tremendous was that earthquake. ¹⁹ The great city was split into three parts and the cities of the nations collapsed. So Babylon the great was remembered before God, and was given the cup filled with the wine made of God's furious wrath. ²⁰ Every island fled away and no mountains could be found. ²¹ And gigantic hailstones, weighing about a hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people, but they blasphemed God because of the plague of hail, since it was so horrendous.

17

¹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. "Come," he said, "I will show you the condemnation and punishment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters, ² with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality and the earth's inhabitants got drunk with the wine of her immorality." ³ So he carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness, and there I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ Now the woman was dressed in purple and scarlet clothing, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She held in her hand a golden cup filled with detestable things and unclean things from her sexual immorality. ⁵ On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the Great, the Mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth." ⁶ I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of those who testified to Jesus. I was greatly astounded when I saw her. ⁷ But the angel said to me, "Why

are you astounded? I will interpret for you the mystery of the woman and of the beast with the seven heads and ten horns that carries her. ⁸ The beast you saw was, and is not, but is about to come up from the abyss and then go to destruction. The inhabitants of the earth – all those whose names have not been written in the book of life since the foundation of the world – will be astounded when they see that the beast was, and is not, but is to come. ⁹ (This requires a mind that has wisdom.) The seven heads are seven mountains the woman sits on. They are also seven kings: ¹⁰ five have fallen; one is, and the other has not yet come, but whenever he does come, he must remain for only a brief time. ¹¹ The beast that was, and is not, is himself an eighth king and yet is one of the seven, and is going to destruction. ¹² The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but will receive ruling authority as kings with the beast for one hour. ¹³ These kings have a single intent, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ They will make war with the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those accompanying the Lamb are the called, chosen, and faithful.”

¹⁵ Then the angel said to me, “The waters you saw (where the prostitute is seated) are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. ¹⁶ The ten horns that you saw, and the beast – these will hate the prostitute and make her desolate and naked. They will consume her flesh and burn her up with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put into their minds to carry out his purpose by making a decision to give their royal power to the beast until the words of God are fulfilled. ¹⁸ As for the woman you saw, she is the great city that has sovereignty over the kings of the earth.”

18

¹ After these things I saw another angel, who possessed great authority, coming down out of heaven, and the earth was lit up by his radiance. ² He shouted with a powerful voice: “Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great! She has become a lair for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detested beast. ³ For all the nations have fallen from the wine of her immoral passion, and the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have gotten rich from the power of her sensual behavior.”

⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, so you will not take part in her sins and so you will not receive her plagues, ⁵ because her sins have piled up all the way to heaven and God has remembered her crimes. ⁶ Repay her the same way she repaid others; pay her back double corresponding to her deeds. In the cup she mixed, mix double the amount for her. ⁷ As much as she exalted herself and lived in sensual luxury, to this extent give her torment and grief because she said to herself, 'I rule as queen and am no widow; I will never experience grief!' ⁸ For this reason, she will experience her plagues in a single day: disease, mourning, and famine, and she will be burned down with fire, because the Lord God who judges her is powerful!"

⁹ Then the kings of the earth who committed immoral acts with her and lived in sensual luxury with her will weep and wail for her when they see the smoke from the fire that burns her up. ¹⁰ They will stand a long way off because they are afraid of her torment, and will say,

"Woe, woe, O great city,

Babylon the powerful city!

For in a single hour your doom has come!"

¹¹ Then the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn for her because no one buys their cargo any longer - ¹² cargo such as gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all sorts of things made of citron wood, all sorts of objects made of ivory, all sorts of things made of expensive wood, bronze, iron and marble, ¹³ cinnamon, spice, incense, perfumed ointment, frankincense, wine, olive oil and costly flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and four-wheeled carriages, slaves and human lives.

¹⁴ (The ripe fruit you greatly desired

has gone from you,

and all your luxury and splendor

have gone from you -

they will never ever be found again!)

¹⁵ The merchants who sold these things, who got rich from her, will stand a long way off because they are afraid of her torment. They will weep and mourn, ¹⁶ saying,

"Woe, woe, O great city -

dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet clothing,

and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls -

¹⁷ because in a single hour such great wealth has been destroyed!"

And every ship's captain, and all who sail along the coast - seamen, and all who make their living from the sea, stood a

long way off ¹⁸ and began to shout when they saw the smoke from the fire that burned her up, "Who is like the great city?" ¹⁹ And they threw dust on their heads and were shouting with weeping and mourning,

"Woe, Woe, O great city -

in which all those who had ships on the sea got rich from her wealth -

because in a single hour she has been destroyed!"

²⁰ (Rejoice over her, O heaven,

and you saints and apostles and prophets,

for God has pronounced judgment against her on your behalf!)

²¹ Then one powerful angel picked up a stone like a huge millstone, threw it into the sea, and said,

"With this kind of sudden violent force Babylon the great city will be thrown down and it will never be found again!

²² And the sound of the harpists, musicians, flute players, and trumpeters will never be heard in you again.

No craftsman who practices any trade

will ever be found in you again;

the noise of a mill will never be heard in you again.

²³ Even the light from a lamp will never shine in you again!

The voices of the bridegroom and his bride will never be heard in you again.

For your merchants were the tycoons of the world, because all the nations were deceived by your magic spells!

²⁴ The blood of the saints and prophets was found in her, along with the blood of all those who had been killed on the earth."

19

¹ After these things I heard what sounded like the loud voice of a vast throng in heaven, saying,

"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

² because his judgments are true and just.

For he has judged the great prostitute

who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality,

and has avenged the blood of his servants poured out by her own hands!"

³ Then a second time the crowd shouted, "Hallelujah!" The smoke rises from her forever and ever. ⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures threw themselves to the

ground and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne, saying: "Amen! Hallelujah!"

⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying:

"Praise our God
all you his servants,
and all you who fear Him,
both the small and the great!"

The Wedding Celebration of the Lamb

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a vast throng, like the roar of many waters and like loud crashes of thunder. They were shouting:

"Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God, the All-Powerful, reigns!

⁷ Let us rejoice and exult

and give him glory,

because the wedding celebration of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready.

⁸ She was permitted to be dressed in bright, clean, fine linen" (for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints).

⁹ Then the angel said to me, "Write the following: Blessed are those who are invited to the banquet at the wedding celebration of the Lamb!" He also said to me, "These are the true words of God."

¹⁰ So I threw myself down at his feet to worship him, but he said, "Do not do this! I am only a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony about Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The Son of God Goes to War

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened and here came a white horse! The one riding it was called "Faithful" and "True," and with justice he judges and goes to war. ¹² His eyes are like a fiery flame and there are many diadem crowns on his head. He has a name written that no one knows except himself. ¹³ He is dressed in clothing dipped in blood, and he is called the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies that are in heaven, dressed in white, clean, fine linen, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth extends a sharp sword, so that with it he can strike the nations. ***He will rule them with an iron rod,*** and he stomps the winepress of the furious wrath of God, the All-Powerful. ¹⁶ He has a name written on his clothing and on his thigh: "King of kings and Lord of lords."

¹⁷ Then I saw one angel standing in the sun, and he shouted in a loud voice to all the birds flying high in the sky:

"Come, gather around for the great banquet of God,

¹⁸ to eat your fill of the flesh of kings,

the flesh of generals,
 the flesh of powerful people,
 the flesh of horses and those who ride them,
 and the flesh of all people, both free and slave,
 and small and great!"

¹⁹ Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to do battle with the one who rode the horse and with his army. ²⁰ Now the beast was seized, and along with him the false prophet who had performed the signs on his behalf – signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire burning with sulfur. ²¹ The others were killed by the sword that extended from the mouth of the one who rode the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh.

20

¹ Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a huge chain. ² He seized the dragon – the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan – and tied him up for a thousand years. ³ The angel then threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it so that he could not deceive the nations until the one thousand years were finished. (After these things he must be released for a brief period of time.)

⁴ Then I saw thrones and seated on them were those who had been given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. These had not worshiped the beast or his image and had refused to receive his mark on their forehead or hand. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were finished.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who takes part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Satan's Final Defeat

⁷ Now when the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to bring them together for the battle. They are as numerous as the grains of sand in the sea. ⁹ They went up on the broad plain of the earth and encircled the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and devoured

them completely. ¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are too, and they will be tormented there day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne

¹¹ Then I saw a large white throne and the one who was seated on it; the earth and the heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. Then books were opened, and another book was opened – the book of life. So the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to their deeds. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each one was judged according to his deeds. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death – the lake of fire. ¹⁵ If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, that person was thrown into the lake of fire.

21

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. ² And I saw the holy city – the new Jerusalem – descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: “Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist any more – or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the former things have ceased to exist.”

⁵ And the one seated on the throne said: “Look! I am making all things new!” Then he said to me, “Write it down, because these words are reliable and true.” ⁶ He also said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who is thirsty I will give water free of charge from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸ But to the cowards, unbelievers, detestable persons, murderers, the sexually immoral, and those who practice magic spells, idol worshipers, and all those who lie, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur. That is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem Descends

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven final plagues came and spoke to me, saying,

“Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb!” ¹⁰ So he took me away in the Spirit to a huge, majestic mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. ¹¹ The city possesses the glory of God; its brilliance is like a precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper. ¹² It has a massive, high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels at the gates, and the names of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel are written on the gates. ¹³ There are three gates on the east side, three gates on the north side, three gates on the south side and three gates on the west side. ¹⁴ The wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵ The angel who spoke to me had a golden measuring rod with which to measure the city and its foundation stones and wall. ¹⁶ Now the city is laid out as a square, its length and width the same. He measured the city with the measuring rod at fourteen hundred miles (its length and width and height are equal). ¹⁷ He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits according to human measurement, which is also the angel’s. ¹⁸ The city’s wall is made of jasper and the city is pure gold, like transparent glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city’s wall are decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates are twelve pearls – each one of the gates is made from just one pearl! The main street of the city is pure gold, like transparent glass.

²² Now I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God – the All-Powerful – and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God lights it up, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light and the kings of the earth will bring their grandeur into it. ²⁵ Its gates will never be closed during the day (and there will be no night there). ²⁶ They will bring the grandeur and the wealth of the nations into it, ²⁷ but nothing ritually unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or practices falsehood, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

22

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life – water as clear as crystal – pouring out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² flowing down the middle of the city’s main

street. On each side of the river is the tree of life producing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month of the year. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. ³ And there will no longer be any curse, and the throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city. His servants will worship him, ⁴ and they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ Night will be no more, and they will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will shine on them, and they will reign forever and ever.

A Final Reminder

⁶ Then the angel said to me, "These words are reliable and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must happen soon."

⁷ (Look! I am coming soon!

Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy expressed in this book.)

⁸ I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things, and when I heard and saw them, I threw myself down to worship at the feet of the angel who was showing them to me. ⁹ But he said to me, "Do not do this! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets, and with those who obey the words of this book. Worship God!" ¹⁰ Then he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy contained in this book, because the time is near. ¹¹ The evildoer must continue to do evil, and the one who is morally filthy must continue to be filthy. The one who is righteous must continue to act righteously, and the one who is holy must continue to be holy."

¹² (Look! I am coming soon,

and my reward is with me to pay each one according to what he has done!

¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the first and the last,
the beginning and the end!)

¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes so they can have access to the tree of life and can enter into the city by the gates.

¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral, and the murderers, and the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood!

¹⁶ "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star!" ¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say: "Come!" And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wants it take the water of life free of charge.

¹⁸ I testify to the one who hears the words of the prophecy contained in this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are described in this book.

²⁰ The one who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! ²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.