



THE WAY OF LIFE



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**OF
LIFE**

**By Grace Alone,
Through Faith Alone,
In Christ Alone.**

PREFACE

Of course, it is your choice entirely whether or not to accept the Holy Bible as being what it claims – that is the revealed and eternal ‘Word of God’. If you do accept that ‘all Scripture is given by inspiration of God’ – that is through the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit (**II Timothy 3: 16**), then you might reasonably ask for explanations of the following:

Who is The Lord revealed in the pages of Scripture, and why is it of ultimate importance to every man, woman & child who will ever be born to believe in him? We know that, as human beings, we are born, live in the world, then die – but why? And if there is a Creator God, what are we to him? Does his plan and ‘evaluation’ of us have any eternal significance?

Scripture’s claim is that God himself in the person of the Son, the one who created and sustains everything, became a real man (**Emmanuel – God with Us – promised in the Old Testament**) who was born of a woman some 2000 years ago so as to live in this world as one of us! But why would God choose to do such an extraordinary thing, and what did the ‘world’ make of him, its incarnate Creator?

This volume is the second of two that attempts to throw some meaningful light on the above, under the headings: **God So Loved the World, But it Hated Him. And then, I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life** (the only Way to inherit eternal life that Scripture recognises and God’s holiness requires)!



There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the [Holy] Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God [this answered the question in Nicodemus's heart]. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

Most assuredly, I say to you, we speak what we know and testify what we have seen, and you do not receive our witness. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but he who came down from heaven, **that is**, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him [by faith] should not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

He who believes in him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil [John 3]."

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood he entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh [under the Mosaic Law and the Jewish sacrificial system], how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God [as an atonement for our sins], cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason he is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant [God's Law], that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these [animal sacrifices], but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—he [Christ] then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgement, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for him he will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation [Hebrews 9].



GOD

SO LOVED

THE WORLD

- BUT IT

HATED HIM

Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard your voice in the garden [of Eden], and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." And he [God] said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat [and warned you that if you did you would die]?" Then the man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent [Satan] deceived me, and I ate."

So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed [the Messiah, Christ]; he shall bruise your head [destroy you], and you shall bruise his heel [Genesis 3]."

When and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch [King] David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he poured out this which you now see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.'" Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ [Acts 2]."

Behold, my Servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. Just as many were astonished at you, so his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; so shall he sprinkle many nations.

He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, **our** faces from him; he was despised, and we did not esteem him. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he **was** wounded for our transgressions, **he was** bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace **was** upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgement, and who will declare his generation? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of my people he was stricken.

And they made his grave with the wicked—but with the rich **at** his death, because he had done no violence, nor **was any** deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he has put **him** to grief. When you make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see **his** seed, he shall prolong **his** days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the labour of his soul, **and** be satisfied. By his knowledge my righteous Servant shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because he poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors [Isaiah 52 & 53].

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house [and kingly line] of David. The virgin's name was Mary [also in the blood line of king David through his son Nathan]. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name JESUS [Saviour]. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his [royal] father [king] David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know [sexually] a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. For with God nothing will be impossible." Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted [her relative] Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfilment of those things which were told her from the Lord [Luke 1]."

Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas [the high priest] to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover [even though they wanted their Messiah killed].

Pilate [the Roman governor] then went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered and said to him, "If he were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered him up to you." Then Pilate said to them, "You take him and judge him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death," that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spoke, signifying by what death he would die.

Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to him, "Are you the [promised Messiah and] King of the Jews?" Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My [spiritual] kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from here."

Pilate therefore said to him, "Are you a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say **rightly** that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in him at all. But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" Then they all cried again, saying, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber [John 18]."

So it was, that while they were there [in Bethlehem for the Roman census], the days were completed for her [Mary] to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this **will be** the sign to you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men [Luke 2]!"

The next day John [the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who is preferred before me, for he was before me.' I did not know him; but that he should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and he remained upon him. I did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water [God] said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as he walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God [John 1]!"

Then, as he [Jesus] was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!" Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees called to him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples [because this was a Messianic prophecy]." But he answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

Now as he drew near, he saw the city [Jerusalem] and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation [this happened in 70AD]." Then he went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves [Luke 19].'"

Then he [Jesus] said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me." Likewise he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you. But behold, the hand of my betrayer [Judas Iscariot] is with me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed [Luke 22]!"

He went to the Mount of Olives, as he was accustomed, and his disciples also followed him. When he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and he knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is your will, take this cup [dying a sacrificial death for the sins of humanity] away from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours, be done." And [because he was without sin] being in agony, he prayed more earnestly. Then his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground [Luke 22].

For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that **sheep** than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish [Matthew 18]."

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake, because they do not know him who sent me. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper [the Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify you, as you have given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent [John 15 - 17]."

And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And an inscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then he [one of the criminals] said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Now it was about the sixth hour [noon], and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple [a very thick curtain] was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out ("It is finished!") with a loud voice, he said, "Father, 'into your hands I commit my spirit.'" Having said this, he breathed his last.

Now behold, **there was** a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. **He was** from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb **that was** hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. That day [Friday] was the Preparation, and the Sabbath [Saturday] drew near. Now on the first **day** of the week [Sunday], very early in the morning, they, and certain **other women** with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then, as they were afraid and bowed **their** faces to the earth, they [two angels] said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'" And they remembered his words [Luke 23 & 24].



“I AM
THE WAY,
THE TRUTH,
AND
THE LIFE.”

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many dwellings; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; and from now on you know him and have seen him. Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does the works. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these [in number] he will do, because I go to my Father [John 14]."

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord [Romans 6].

And you he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast [Ephesians 2].

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by his blood, through faith, to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law [Romans 3].

Enter by the narrow gate [faith alone]; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction [works 'righteousness'], and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate [Christ alone] and difficult is the way [living for him as Lord and Saviour] which leads to life, and there are few who find it. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing [false shepherds], but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practise lawlessness [Matthew 7]!'"

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

When the King will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me.'

When the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and take you in, or naked and clothe you? Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me [Matthew 25].'"

Now after the Sabbath [Saturday], as the first day of the week [Sunday] began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and indeed he is going before you into Galilee; there you will see him. Behold, I have told you."

So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held him by the feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go **and** tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me [Matthew 28]."

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, **even** to the end of the age." Amen [Matthew 28].

The former account I [Luke] made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom he had chosen, to whom he also presented himself alive after his suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with **them**, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," **he said**, "you have heard from me; for John [the Baptist] truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." And he said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth [Acts 1]."

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; make his paths straight.'"

John [the Baptist] came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "There comes one after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

It came to pass in those days **that** Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, he saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Immediately the Spirit drove him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him.

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel [Mark 1]."

When he had called all the multitude to **himself**, he said to them, "Hear me, everyone, and understand: There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"

When he had entered a house away from the crowd, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. So he said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, **thus** purifying all foods?"

And he said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man [Mark 7]."

Now John [the apostle] answered him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in my name can soon afterward speak evil of me. For he who is not against us is on our side.

For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea [Mark 9]."

And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to him [Jesus] from every city, he spoke by a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When he had said these things he cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

When his disciples asked him, saying, "What does this parable mean?" And he said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest **it is given** in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock **are those** who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation [testing] fall away. Now the ones **that** fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones **that** fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep **it** and bear fruit with patience.

No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets **it** on a lamp-stand, that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor **anything** hidden that will not be known and come to light. Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him **more** will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him [Luke 8]."

Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to him [the risen Christ], "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have you not known the things which happened there in these days?" And he said to them, "What things?" So they said to him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him."

But we were hoping that it was he who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find his body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. And certain of those **who were** with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but him they did not see."

When he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things [died as the Just One for the sins of unjust humanity] and to enter into his glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

When they drew near to the village [of Emmaus] where they were going, and he indicated that he would have gone farther. But they constrained him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And he went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as he sat at the table with them, that he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew him; and he vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us on the road, and while he opened the Scriptures to us [Luke 24]?"



Therefore, when he [Jesus Christ] came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me. In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin [the Jewish sacrificial system] you had no pleasure [because it could not take away human sin or its ultimate penalty]. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of me—to do your will, O God.'"

Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin you did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the [Mosaic] law), then he said, "Behold, I have come to do your will, O God." He takes away the first that he may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever [himself], sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till his enemies are made his footstool. For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after he had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," *then he adds*, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, his flesh, and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water [Hebrews 10].

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*, for he who comes to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy.

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls [Hebrews



He was in the world [Messiah, the Christ], and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own did not receive him. But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. For the law was given through Moses, **but** grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared **him** [John 1].

No one has ascended to heaven but he who came down from heaven, **that is**, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up [crucified for the sins of humanity], that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

He who believes in him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practising evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God [John 3]."

Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set his seal on him." Then they said to him [Jesus], "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he sent."

Therefore they said to him, "What sign will you perform then, that we may see it and believe you? What work will you do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat [the typical human response ~ feed us and we'll follow you!].'" Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

When they said to him, "Lord, give us this bread always." And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe."

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. This is the will of the Father who sent me, that of all he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of him who sent me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day [John 6]."

And he [Jesus] said to them [the Pharisees], "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am **he**, you will die in your sins." Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man [crucify me = as they did], then you will know that I am **je**, and **that** I do nothing of myself; but as my Father taught me, I speak these things.

When Jesus said to those Jews who believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. I speak what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

They answered and said to him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father."

When they said to him, "We were not born of fornication; [alluding to Mary's pregnancy] we have one Father—God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of myself, but he sent me. Why do you not understand my speech? Because you are not able to listen to my word.

You are of **your** father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own **resources**, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me [John 8]."

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But a hireling, **he who is** not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. I am the good shepherd; and I know my **sheep**, and am known by my own. As the Father knows me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have which are not of this fold [Israel]; them also I must bring, and they [Gentile believers] will hear my voice; and there will be one flock **and** one shepherd. Therefore my Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from my Father [John 10]."

Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother [Lazarus] would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been **dead** four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Now when he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go [John 11]."



“I AM
THE WAY,
THE TRUTH,
AND
THE LIFE.”

Now there were certain Greeks [Gentiles] among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified [die for the sins of humanity]. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, let him follow me; and where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, him **my** Father will honour.

Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, **saying**, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of me, but for your sake. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if [when] I am lifted up from the earth [crucified], will draw all **peoples** to myself." This he said, signifying by what death he would die.

The people answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how **can** you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them [John 12].

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many dwellings; if **it were not so**, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, **there** you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; and from now on you know him and have seen him.

If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Helper, that he may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; but you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

A little while longer and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that **I am** in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you **are** the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw **them** into the fire, and they are burned [John 14 & 15]."

Nevertheless I [Jesus] tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper [the Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him to you. And when he has come, he will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: of sin, because they do not believe in me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father and you see me no more; of judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged.

However, when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak; and he will tell you things to come. He will glorify me, for he will take of what is mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are mine. Therefore I said that he will take of mine and declare it to you.

A little while, and you will not see me; and again a little while, and you will see me, because I go to the Father. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."

His disciples said to him, "See, now you are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! Now we are sure that you know all things, and have no need that anyone should question you. By this we believe that you came forth from God."

Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace [with God]. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world [John 16]."

I have given them your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word; that they all may be one, as you, Father, **are** in me, and I in you; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

Father, I desire that they also whom you gave me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which you have given me; for you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known you, but I have known you; and these have known that you sent me. And I have declared to them your name, and will declare it, that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them." When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with his disciples [John 17 & 18].

Then he said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at my hands; and reach your hand **here**, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed **are** those who have not seen and **yet** have believed." And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name [John 20].

Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.

When the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation his justice was taken away, and who will declare his generation? For his life is taken from the earth." So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"

When Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, **here is** water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing [Acts 8].

Then Peter [the Apostle] went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" And they said, "Cornelius **the** centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you." Then Peter opened **his** mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears him and works righteousness is accepted by him.

The word which **God** sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace [with God] through Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all—that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John [the Baptist] preached: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

Him God raised up on the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, **even** to us who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was ordained by God **to be** Judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets witness that, through his name, whoever believes in him will receive remission of sins."

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision [Jews] who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also [Acts 10].

Then Paul [the Apostle] stood up, and motioning with **his** hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm he brought them out of it. Now for a time of about forty years he put up with their ways in the wilderness. And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up for them David as king, to whom also he gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the **son** of Jesse, a man after my **own** heart, who will do all my will.' From this man's seed, according to **the** promise, God raised up for Israel a Saviour—Jesus—after John [the Baptist] had first preached, before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not **he**. But behold, there comes one after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.' Men **and** brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled **them** in condemning **him**. And though they found no cause for death **in him**, they asked Pilate that he should be put to death.

Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning **him**, they took **him** down from the tree and laid **him** in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that he has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you.'

And that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken thus: 'I will give you the sure mercies of David.' Therefore he also says in another **Psalm**: 'You will not allow your Holy One to see corruption.' For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; but he whom God raised up saw no corruption. Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by him everyone who believes is justified [by grace] from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: 'Behold, you despisers, marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, a work which you will by no means believe, though one were to declare it to you.'

Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God.

But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'" Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed [Acts 13].

And when there had been much dispute, Peter [the Apostle] rose up **and** said to them [Jewish believers]: "Men **and** brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as **he did** to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."

When all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas **and** Paul [the Apostle] declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles. And after they had become silent, James [leader of the Jerusalem church] answered, saying, "Men **and** brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name."

And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the LORD who does all these things.'

Known to God from eternity are all his works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, **from** sexual immorality, **from** things strangled, and **from** blood." For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell [Acts 15].

Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the **Gentile** worshippers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there.

When Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus [Mar's Hill] and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD [even the pagan Greeks knew they didn't know the true God]. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is he worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, since he gives to all life, breath, and all things.

And he has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.' Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has appointed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising him [Jesus Christ] from the dead [Acts 17]."

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called **to be** an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which he promised before through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, **and declared to be** the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown **it** to them. For since the creation of the world his invisible **attributes** are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, **even** his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify **him** as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen [[Romans 1](#)].

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one. There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Now we know that whatever the [Mosaic] law says, it says to those who are under the law [every human being], that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by his blood, through faith, to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Or is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law [Romans 3].

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, having now been justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies [of God] we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only **that**, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned — therefore, as through one man's offence **judgement came** to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man's [Christ's] righteous act **the free gift came** to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it [Romans 5 & 6]?

For I [Paul the Apostle] know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but **how** to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will **to do**, I do not do; but the evil I will not **to do**, that I practise. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Owretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. Because the carnal mind **is** enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his. But if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to **his** purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also predestined **to be** conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he predestined, these he also called; whom he called, these he also justified; and whom he justified, these he also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God **is** for us, who **can be** [successfully] against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things [Romans 7 & 8]?

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."

But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down **from above**) or, "'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek [Gentile], for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon him. For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved [Romans 10]."

Ibeseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, **which is** your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what **is** that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, **being** many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another [Romans 12].

Moreover, brethren, I [the apostle Paul] declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures [his rescue mission accomplished and approved by God], and that he was seen by Cephas [Peter], then by the twelve. After that he was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep [died]. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all he was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

Now if Christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! But now Christ is risen from the dead, **and** has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man [Adam] **came** death, by man [the incarnate Christ] also **came** the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy **that** will be destroyed is death.

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. But God gives it a body as he pleases, and to each seed its own body. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal **must** put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory [I Corinthians 15]."



For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

Now he who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to him.

For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have *an answer* for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. For if we are beside ourselves, *it is for God*; or if we are of sound mind, *it is for you*.

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if one died for all, then all died; and he died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and rose again. Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *him thus* no longer.

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For he made him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him ¶¶
Corinthians 4 & 5].





Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

What purpose then does the [Mosaic] law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek [Gentile], there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons [Galatians 3 & 4].

Waul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed **be** the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly **places** in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he has made us accepted in the Beloved.

In him we [believers] have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in him.

In him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory. And he put all **things** under his feet, and gave him **to be** head over all **things** to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised **us** up together, and made **us** sit together in the heavenly **places** in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in **his** kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; **it is** the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast [Ephesians 1 & 2].

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now **you are** light in the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose **them**. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore he says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual **hosts** of wickedness in the heavenly **places**. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand [Ephesians 4 - 6].

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, **and** coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to **the point of death**, even the death of the cross [to pay the penalty for our sins not his own – since he had none].

Therefore God also has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name, that at the name [Lord] of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and **that** every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ **is** Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but **one thing I do**, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, **that they are** the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end **is** destruction, whose god **is their** belly, and **whose** glory **is** in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to his glorious body, according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things to himself [Philippians 2 & 3].

He [God the Father] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he may have the pre-eminence. For it pleased **the Father that** in him all the fullness should dwell, and by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of his cross.

And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in his sight—if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died [to the world], and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ **who is** our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them [Colossians 1 & 3].

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep [died], lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if [since] we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive **and** remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive **and** remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day.

We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others **do**, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and **as** a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him [I Thessalonians 4 & 5].

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and to **give** you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he comes, in that Day, to be glorified in his saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for **that Day will not come** unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin [the Antichrist] is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains **will do so** until he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming.

The coming of the **lawless one** is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness [II Thessalonians 1 & 2].

And I [the Apostle Paul] thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because he counted me faithful, putting **me** into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did **it** ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on him for everlasting life.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, **be** honour and glory forever and ever.

amen

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and **before** Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep **this** commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, which he will manifest in his own time, **he who is** the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom **be** honour and everlasting power [I Timothy 1 & 6].

amen

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me [Paul] his prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called **us** with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, **who** has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, **even** to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

This is a faithful saying: For if we died with **him**, we shall also live with **him**. If we endure, we shall also reign with **him**. If we deny **him**, he also will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful; he cannot deny himself.

Remind **them** of these things, charging **them** before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane **and** idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness [II Timothy 1 & 2].

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for him, for whom **are** all things and by whom **are** all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified **are** all of one, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to you." And again: "I will put my trust in him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared in the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed he does not give aid to angels, but he does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

Therefore, in all things he [Christ] had to be made like **his** brethren [us], that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things **pertaining** to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself has suffered, being tempted, he is able to aid those who are tempted.

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him [God the Father] who appointed him, as Moses also **was faithful** in all his house. For this one has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who built the house has more honour than the house [Hebrews 2 & 3].

Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But he [the risen Jesus Christ], because he continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, **who is** holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this he did once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, **appoints** the Son who has been perfected forever.

Now **this is** the main point of the things we are saying: we have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as he is also Mediator of a better covenant [salvation by grace], which was established on better promises. For if that first **covenant** [based on keeping the Mosaic Law] had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Because finding fault with them, he says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in my covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. In that he says, "A new **covenant**," he has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away [Hebrews 7 & 8].

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [all those who died in faith, believing God's promise to them], let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood [as the Lamb of God, the atoning sacrifice for the sins of all who believe], suffered outside the gate.

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do his will, working in you what is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever [Hebrews 12 & 13].

AMEN

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on him [Messiah, Christ] will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, **he is** precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you **are** a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; who once **were** not a people but **are** now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Beloved, I beg **you** as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honourable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by **your** good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of **his** time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we **have spent** enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with **them** in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of **you**. They will give an account to him [Jesus Christ] who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit [I Peter 2 & 4].

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him, for he cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

But may the God of all grace, who called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle **you**. To him **be** the glory and the dominion forever and ever [I Peter 5].

AMEN

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as his divine power has given to us all things that **pertain** to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption **that is** in the world through lust.

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, **you** will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ [II Peter 1].

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself his own special people, zealous for good works.

For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that having been justified by his grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned [Titus 2 & 3].

But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever [Jude 1].

amen

This is the message which we have heard from him and declare to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practise the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Now by this we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. And this is his commandment: that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as he gave us commandment. Now he who keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him [I John 1 - 4].

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves him who begot also loves him who is begotten of him. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which he has testified of his Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of his Son.

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies **under the sway of** the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ.

This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols [I John 5].

amen



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Which God [the Father] gave him to show his servants—
things which must shortly take place. And he sent and
signified it by his angel to his servant John [the Apostle], who
bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus
Christ, to all things that he saw.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this
prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for
the time is near [on God's agenda!].

John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you
and peace from him who is and who was and who is to
come, and from the seven Spirits who are before his throne,
and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from
the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own
blood, and has made us kings and priests to his God and
Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

AMEN

Behold, he is coming with clouds, and every eye will see him,
even they who pierced [crucified] him. And all the tribes of
the earth will mourn because of him. Even so, [Revelation 1]

AMEN

And I [the Apostle John] saw in the right **hand** of him who sat on the throne [God] a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals [the title deed of the world?]. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the **Lion** of the tribe of Judah, the **Root** of David [Jesus Christ], has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then he came and took the scroll out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

When I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands [billions!], saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!"

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honour and glory and power **be** to him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever [Revelation 5]!"

After these things I [the Apostle John] looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb [Jesus, the Lamb of God], clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation **belongs** to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour and power and might, **be** to our God forever and ever. Amen."

When one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. And he who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes [Revelation 7]."

When I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren [Satan], who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time [Revelation 12]."

Then I [the Apostle John] stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast [the Antichrist] rising up out of the sea [the nations?], having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. So they [the nations] worshipped the dragon [Satan] who gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

When he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear [Revelation 13].

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And he who sat on him **was** called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes **were** like a flame of fire, and on his head **were** many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except himself. He **was** clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed him on white horses. Now out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should strike the nations. And he himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is **the Book** of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books [Revelation 19 & 20].

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them **and be** their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

When he who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And he said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

But I saw no temple in it [the New Jerusalem], for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life [Revelation 21].

And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it [the New Jerusalem], and his servants shall serve him. They shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: they need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show his servants the things which must shortly take place. "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."

amen



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