



GLOBAL NETWORK  
OF EVANGELISTS



# GOING FORWARD

Daily Devotionals  
The Gospel of John



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

LUIS PALAU



WASHINGTON

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# RESPONSE CARD

(Please circle one)



Accepted Christ



Rededicated



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# GOING **FORWARD**



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# Receiving Jesus Christ as **SAVIOR & LORD**



**You just prayed to receive Jesus Christ.  
You asked Him to come into your life.**

## **Jesus Christ comes in**

**Revelation 3:20**

Here is what the Bible says just happened. Jesus Christ says, "Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if any hear my voice and open the door, I will come into their house and eat with them, and they will eat with me." What did Jesus Christ say He would do if you asked Him in?  
"I will \_\_\_\_\_ ."

"Coming into" means that Jesus is there with you—offering personal fellowship and friendship for the rest of your days. Jesus does not force fellowship on us, but is always there, ready and available to be present in every aspect of our lives. It is up to us to open the door to our lives and invite Him in, and fellowship with Him on a continual basis.

The Bible says, "Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children."

What did Jesus Christ say you would become if you accept him?

Being God's child means you now belong to God and you are a part of His family. You are no longer alone, no longer apart from God, and no longer apart from other people who love and follow Jesus.

## **Therefore, you are a child of God**

**John 1:12-13**

## **And you are saved**

**Romans 10:9**

The Bible also says "If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved." What does this verse promise to those who confess and believe in Jesus Christ?

"You will \_\_\_\_\_ ."

You have been saved from a life separated from God, both now in the present and for eternity. Jesus promised that Father God would send the Holy Spirit to be our counselor, to be present with us, and to live inside of us.



**Additional Bible verses: Acts 16:31; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:13; Romans 6:23**

# > REDEDICATION & RESTORATION



**You have already received Christ and know Him personally, but you are rededicating your life to Him today. Your sin has kept you from God, but now you are returning to Him and seeking His forgiveness.**

## How to be forgiven

1 John 1:9

The Bible says, "But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing."

What must we do to be forgiven? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does God say He will do if we confess? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

It is by God's grace alone that we are saved and forgiven. We have done nothing to earn it—nothing to deserve it—but it comes from God's love for us alone.

Psalm 32:5 provides a picture of this process taking place in the life of King David. It says, "Then I confessed my sins to you; I did not conceal my wrongdoings. I decided to confess them to you, and you forgave all my sins." Right now take time to be specific with God about any unconfessed sins.

## Moving forward

Proverbs 28:13

The Bible says, "You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you." Giving up our sin means turning to God, acknowledging our sin, and asking for His strength through His Spirit (Galatians 5:16, Philippians 4:13) to help overcome and turn away from sin. We have received the Spirit of God who lives inside of us to help us overcome our sinful desires and struggles. It is the Spirit of God as we follow Him, and the prompting through conviction as we live in relationship with Him, that leads us to a place of confession of sin. When moving forward following confession, it is key to:

1. Be in daily fellowship with Jesus. (Have a daily quiet time, pray, worship, read the Scriptures.)
2. Be in daily fellowship with other believers. (Develop trusting true friendships with other Christians to share life with.)



**Additional Bible verses: Acts 16:31; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:13; Romans 6:23**



# How to Know JESUS CHRIST



1. God's Plan—Peace and Life. God loves you and wants you to fully experience the peace and life that only He can give.

- The Bible says, "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

2. Humanity's Problem—Separation. Being at peace with God is not automatic because human beings by nature are separated from God.



- The Bible says, "everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence." (Romans 3:23). Romans 6:23 adds: "For sin pays its wage—death; but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord." Humanity has tried to bridge this separation in many ways...without success.

3. God's Remedy—the Cross. God's love bridges the gap of separation between God and humanity. When Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the grave, He paid the penalty for our sins.



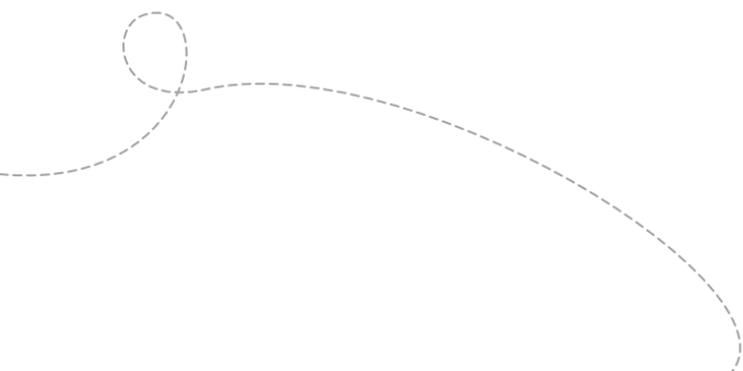
- In the Bible, Jesus Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me." (John 14:6).

4. Our Response—Receive Jesus Christ. God invites us to respond to His love by crossing the bridge through trusting Jesus Christ. This means accepting Christ's death on the cross as payment for our personal sins and receiving Him as our Savior and Lord.

- The Bible says, "Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children" (John 1:12).

The invitation is to: Repent (turn from your sins), by faith receive Jesus Christ into your heart and life, and follow Him in obedience as the Lord of your life.

What to pray: God, I know I am a sinner. Right now I repent and turn from my sins. I believe Jesus Christ died for my sins, rose from the grave, and is alive forever. I open the door of my heart and life, receiving Jesus Christ as my Savior. I want to follow Him as Lord of my life. Thank you for saving me. Amen.



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# MY DAILY BIBLE STUDY

*We've prepared 14 days of Bible studies to help you get started in your walk with God. We encourage you to take a few minutes to pray before each Bible study. Ask the Lord Jesus Christ to speak to your heart through what you're going to read.*

*Read the Bible passage and the short reflection that follows. If you like, you can continue with a deeper study of the same passage, which we've included, so you can learn more about the Holy Scripture. Close your Bible study time with a personal prayer. You can use the guide we have suggested.*

*We hope that at the end of these 14 days of study you will be participating in a local church and continuing to learn more about Jesus every day.*

*Continue making progress in your new life in Christ!*



## DAY 1 :

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**So that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. This life that I live now, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me. (Galatians 2:20)**

Perhaps today is your first day as a true Christian, an authentic follower of Jesus. You have received Him in your heart and today is the beginning of a new life. Little by little, you will notice you have growing enthusiasm for living a life devoted to God.

When we have been renewed by the Lord Jesus Christ, enthusiasm is always present. And we don't get discouraged! What happens is that it becomes increasingly evident that Jesus' life is flowing through us, and our spirit is renewed and

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strengthened again and again. We are joyful and victorious because the Lord Jesus lives in our heart and works in our inner being.

That is authentic Christianity. It isn't a religion – it's the life of Christ that fills us, that makes us a new person and renews us daily.

And if today isn't your first day as a Christian, remember that it really is the first day of the rest of your life and therefore deserves to be lived with the life that Christ offers you.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

We are called to serve the Lord every day. But how? What is it that makes a Christian genuine and triumphant?

Many Christians believe that if they work hard and pray enough, then they will be victorious. That, however, is the essence of legalism (trying to please God through your own power). However sincere a legalistic person may be, if his faith is based on what he himself can do and not on the living Christ, he is invariably on the path to failure.

That was the case of Moses when he killed the Egyptian who had beaten a Hebrew slave (Exodus 2:11-13). His intentions were sincere, but he was trusting in his own strength.

And that was my personal situation in 1961 when I was studying theology. I had great dreams that I wanted to see materialize, but my impatience led me to trust in my own power instead of the power of the Lord.

A few days before Christmas, the speaker at the seminary's weekly meeting based his teaching on Exodus 3 where God appears to Moses in a burning bush. The point he drove home was, "Any bush will do as long as God is in it."

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The speaker pointed out that God was trying to communicate with Moses and say, “I don’t need a pretty, educated or eloquent bush. Any simple bush will serve My purpose as long as I am in it. It won’t be you doing something for Me. I will be doing something through you.”

Then I understood that I was like that bush. I couldn’t do anything for God. Everything I could read and study, all the questions I could ask and all the efforts I could make to be like others were in vain without Him. No wonder I was feeling frustrated. Only God could make my ministry effective.

The speaker concluded his sermon by quoting Galatians 2:20: “...it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me, etc.”

Then I understood that the secret of being a victorious Christian didn’t depend on me but on my complete dependence on the all-powerful resurrected Lord Jesus who was in my heart. In the end, God was in control (Colossians 2:9-15). When we understand this truth, God gives us a new, greater perspective of ourselves.

I experienced an immense sense of peace when I realized that I could stop struggling to live a Christian life by my own efforts. But, the pity was that I had lost eight years of my life trying to do everything in my own strength.

Just as we can’t earn salvation through our own efforts, victory can’t be achieved this way either. Although our days on earth are few, they can be wonderful days. They will have value for eternity if we only renounce our own way and sincerely say to God, “Not me, but Christ in me.”



**VERSES TO READ:**

*2 Corinthians 3:1-18; 4:7-16; Romans 12:1-2*

*CONTINUED...*





## DAY 2 :

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**Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion, as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray always for all God's people. (Ephesians 6:18)**

Praying is communicating with God in the plain, simple way a child talks to his or her parent.

When Jesus was here on earth, He always spent time alone talking to God. If the Son of God felt an absolute need to pray, how much more should we? If we don't know what to say or how to pray about a specific situation, the Bible explains that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us (Romans 8:26-27) with the words we don't know how to express. It's not important what we feel – we need to pray!

A very wise person once told me that praying is talking to God, telling Him everything that's happening to me and asking Him for everything I need. Reading His Word, the Bible, is listening to what He has to say to me. That kind of talking and listening is a dialog. Don't ever leave home trying to face the day with its many problems and the decisions you have to make unless you first DIALOG with God.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

#### **PRAYER**

The main reason some Christians leave the Lord Jesus Christ's path or live frustrated lives is not indifference or lack of good Christian communication. Its not even temptation. It's the lack of prayer.

Someone can show you Bible promises about prayer or can tell you about their experiences and the experiences of other people, but they can't do your praying for you. It's rather like learning to swim or ride a bicycle – you learn by doing.

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The great preacher Martin Luther said, “Just like a tailor’s task is to make clothes and a shoemaker’s task is to make shoes, a Christian’s task is to pray.” The secret of the victorious life Luther experienced was his commitment to spending time alone with God in prayer every day.

If we think about the lives of the most outstanding servants of God, whether it be those of the Bible or throughout history, we’ll discover that they were men and women of prayer. Like them, we must depend on prayer.

It is essential to set aside time every day to talk to God. Don’t give Him just a quick thirty seconds while you’re getting ready to leave home in the morning. It’s of vital importance to spend a specific time in personal prayer every day. Try to be faithful and organized, but don’t be legalistic. Maybe sometimes you’ll have to pray at some other time. There’s nothing wrong with that, but whenever possible try to have regular habits.

Early morning hours may be the best for praying. That has been the experience of great men of God such as Martin Luther, John Wesley, Hudson Taylor, and the Lord Jesus Himself during His life here on earth.

Once I read that the evangelist Dwight Moody said, “We need to see the face of God every morning before we see the faces of other people. If you have so many things you need to be doing that you don’t have time to pray, then believe me, you have more things to do than God wants you to do.”

Take time to start every day alone with God in prayer.

Prayer is also something we should practice throughout the day. The Bible commands us to, “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). At all times and in any situation, we are at liberty to talk to our Father. Every Christian can enjoy **“constant and continuous communion with God.”** And it’s through prayer that we can enjoy that communion.

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If Jesus prayed, then shouldn't we do the same? It's surprising to see how much time Jesus spent in prayer. He was never too busy to pray. When His obligations increased and He had to face serious decisions, He went off alone to pray.

I encourage you to do the same in order to discover the victorious life that will begin when you shut your eyes and seek God in Jesus' name.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Deuteronomy 4:7; Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4;  
Romans 8:26-27*



**PRAYER:**

*Heavenly Father, in Jesus' name I thank You for the path that Christ opened so I can enter Your presence in prayer. I want to live every day in this freedom, to draw near to You, to praise You, to thank You for what You give me, and to ask You for what I need.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*







## DAY 3 :

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**The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)**

Napoleon said, “The Bible is not just any book. It’s a living creation that has the power to conquer everything it comes up against.”

The Bible is the Word of God. It’s food for the soul. It’s the manual that God Himself wrote about His creation. In its pages we find the specific formula for life. Reading it will make you wise. Believing it will make you eternal.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

**THE BIBLE:** observation, interpretation and application

We can’t grow and mature spiritually unless we eat the Bread of Life (the Bible) regularly. Sometimes Christians don’t study the Bible because they don’t have a simple or practical method that makes the study become alive and dynamic.

Bible study begins with **observation**. Our observations of all things, even the Bible, are made according to the nature of the object we want to study. We observe the stars by looking at them through a telescope night after night. We observe the behavior of animals by watching them over a long period in their natural habitat. We observe the Bible the same way we observe any other great book, by reading it carefully and frequently.

A Bible student once said, “There’s only one rule for studying the Bible, and that rule is to read the Book. And once you’ve read it, read it again and then sit down and read it again and again, and that way you will soon begin to understand it.”

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Read a book in the Bible at one sitting in order to get a clear impression of what it's really about. Then read it again and ask yourself who, what, when, where, why and how.

After observing the text comes **interpretation**. We shouldn't allow our presuppositions to influence our interpretation. Pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten you. Without His light, we won't have the proper understanding (1 John 2:20-27).

Examine the context of the passage you are interpreting. Also compare the passage with parallel stories or other Biblical references. The great preacher, Charles Spurgeon said, "We hear that people take a Bible verse out of context and shout 'Eureka, Eureka!' as if they have discovered a new truth when in reality they haven't found a genuine diamond but only a piece of broken glass."

The best Bible commentary is the Bible itself. However manuals, Bible dictionaries and a good atlas can help us better understand the lands, customs and history of the Bible. Consult these resources when you need to, but be careful not to spend too much time reading about the Bible instead of going directly to the Bible to investigate it.

Finally, try to **apply** the Word of God to your life. If the Bible doesn't change your behavior, you haven't applied it. Find relationships between the Bible and the different areas of your life: your strong and weak points, your attitudes and actions. What does the Bible tell you about being a son or daughter, a mother or father, an employer or an employee?

The Apostle James gives us a warning: "Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it" (James 1:22). Obey the Word by prayerfully meditating on it, and try to understand it better and apply it in a more practical way.

**Observation. Interpretation. Application.** These three simple steps are the keys that will open the door to dynamic and exciting Bible study.



**VERSES TO READ:**

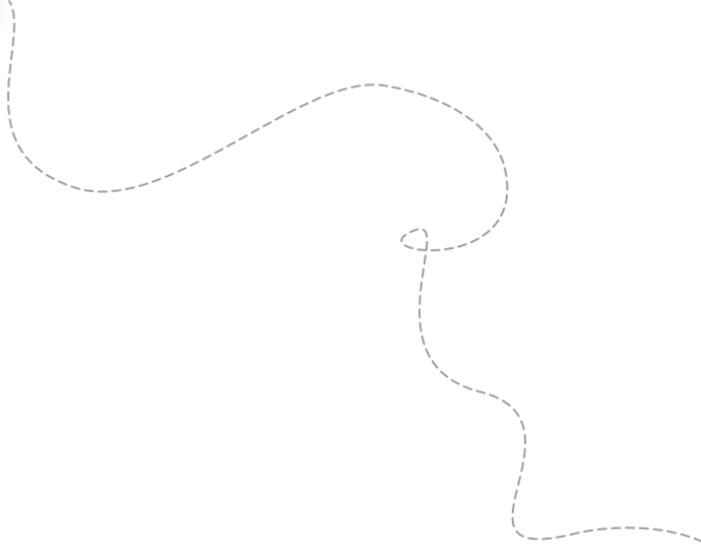
*John 17:17; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17*



**PRAYER:**

*Lord, most of all, I thank You for Your Word, the Bible. I worship You because of Your love reflected on every page and I ask Your Spirit to open my mind and heart so I can understand Your will for my life in every verse.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*







## DAY 4 :

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**Happy are those whose sins are forgiven, whose wrongs are pardoned. (Psalm 32:1)**

The Apostle John assures us: “But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing” (1 John 1:9). What a beautiful Biblical promise! If you fall and sin against the Lord after you have received Christ, you can confess your sin to the Lord and He will forgive you and cleanse you through the blood that Christ shed on the cross.

Many years ago, a Sunday school teacher in the church I attended with my parents said to me, “Now that we’ve received Jesus in our heart, God has given us a white T-shirt to wear but has sent us to work in a coal mine!”

Yes, dear friend reading this devotional, you have white clothes, but your life is still being lived out in a world much like a charcoal factory. It’s very hard to walk through the passageways of that factory or sit on a chair there and not get dirty. My teacher continued, “What’s good is that God is ready to clean your clothes every day so they look like new.”

Continue making progress in your new Christian life! The Lord is with you.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

Can God forgive all sins? Of course He can! One of the main reasons that Jesus came to earth was to forgive sins. Jesus Himself affirms this when He says, “I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.’ So he said to the paralyzed man, ‘Get up, pick up your bed, and go home!’” (Matthew 9:6).

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God's love compelled Him to send His Son to die in our place so we could enjoy the forgiveness of our sins: "But God has shown us how much he loves us—it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us!" (Romans 5:8). No one has expressed it better than the Apostle Paul, "You were at one time spiritually dead because of your sins and because you were Gentiles without the Law. But God has now brought you to life with Christ. God forgave us all our sins" (Colossians 2:13). The Psalmist adds: "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our sins from us" (Psalm 103:12). That's why the Gospel is called the "Good News."

Take the case of King David. His sins are quite contemporary: lust, adultery, murder and lying, all described quite graphically in 2 Samuel 11-12. In spite of how terrible these sins were, the Bible relates King David's repentance and God's forgiveness in Psalms 32 and 51.

The Bible never minimizes the seriousness of sin, but it magnifies the grace of God who pardons it. Notice the contrast in Paul's words as he begins with bad news: "Surely you know that the wicked will not possess God's Kingdom. Do not fool yourselves; people who are immoral or who worship idols or are adulterers or homosexual perverts or who steal or are greedy or are drunkards or who slander others or are thieves—none of these will possess God's Kingdom" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Then comes the good news: "Some of you were like that. But you have been purified from sin; you have been dedicated to God; you have been put right with God by the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

A very good question to ask is, "Are there sins that God does not pardon, and if so, what are they?"

Jesus warns, "But whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, because he has committed an eternal sin" (Mark 3:29). This is the sin of calling the Holy Spirit "evil" and attributing the Holy Spirit's work to Beelzebul, who

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is the Devil. It is rebellion against God when a person hardens his or her heart and upon observing a work of the Holy Spirit, says it was done through the power of Satan. People who commit this unpardonable sin end up with such a hardened heart that their conscience no longer bothers them when they sin. Unfortunately, there are believers who live under a cloud of “false guilt” because they imagine they have committed the “unpardonable sin.” However, their heart is still sensitive to the Holy Spirit and the very fact that they look for help is a sign that they haven’t committed that sin. These verses in Matthew 12 offer hope when they say: “I tell you: people can be forgiven any sin and any evil thing they say; but whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven” (Matthew 12:31).



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Chapters 32, 51 and 103 of Psalms; Proverbs 28:13; Ephesians 1:7; Acts 13:38; Colossians 1:14; 2:13*



**PRAYER:**

*Heavenly Father, in Jesus’ name I praise You today and recognize my sins that burden me with guilt and separate me from Your presence. I repent and confess them, and I separate myself from them and seek Your will. Now I ask You to forgive me and restore me with a victorious life.*

*In Jesus’ name, Amen.*





## DAY 5 :

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**We have courage in God’s presence, because we are sure that he hears us if we ask him for anything that is according to his will. (1 John 5:14)**

Whenever I’m faced with a serious problem, I remember King David’s experience when he said, “The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The Lord protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid” (Psalm 27:1). And throughout the entire Psalm he continues, remembering the times when God had listened to him and rescued him from tremendous problems.

If you have a problem today, take it to the Lord in prayer, wait on Him, and when it’s resolved, write it down so you will remember His power when you’re worried. It will encourage you to know that if God is your light and your salvation, then you need not be afraid.

The Bible assures us that God not only hears the prayers of His children but also answers them. Prayer is the resource God has given us to allow us to enjoy communion with our Creator. I encourage you to take your requests to God in prayer every day and never forget His blessings.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

When we pray, we want to be sure that God hears us and will respond, so let me briefly describe the kind of prayer that God likes to answer. If you follow these principles, God will anoint your prayers with heavenly fire.

1. The first thing to keep in mind is the purpose and reason for your prayer. Christ Himself makes this purpose clear in John 14:13-14: “And I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father’s glory will be shown through the Son. If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.”

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When we pray, we should ask ourselves if the answer to our prayer will bring glory to God. The phrase “in My name” refers to the authority and will of Jesus, something to which every Christian must submit.

2. The second condition is that we have to ask according to the Father’s will. This is the confidence we have in approaching Him “We have courage in God’s presence, because we are sure that he hears us if we ask him for anything that is according to his will” (1 John 5:14). In order to do this, you have to be well aware of what the Lord wants. James 4:3-4 explains that there are many who do not receive what they ask for. “And when you ask, you do not receive it, because your motives are bad; you ask for things to use for your own pleasures. Unfaithful people! Don’t you know that to be the world’s friend means to be God’s enemy? If you want to be the world’s friend, you make yourself God’s enemy.” This refers to worldly pleasures, meaning pleasures that are not biblical.
3. The third condition pertains mainly to married men. “In the same way you husbands must live with your wives with the proper understanding that they are more delicate than you. Treat them with respect, because they also will receive, together with you, God’s gift of life. Do this so that nothing will interfere with your prayers” (1 Peter 3:7).
4. John emphasizes the importance of a clean heart for prayer. The result of having a clean heart is confidence and the promise that “if our conscience does not condemn us, we have courage in God’s presence. We receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.” (1 John 3:21-22).
5. Paul says that prayer should always be with gratitude: “Don’t worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart.” (Philippians 4:6).

6. In Psalm 66:18, the Psalmist says: “If I had ignored my sins, the Lord would not have listened to me.” In other words, recognized sin hinders prayer. Sin deprives you of communion with the Father and consequently, God the Father cannot hear a believer’s prayer when there is unconfessed recognized sin. Therefore, it’s very important to confess, forgive, ask for forgiveness, reconcile, and restore in order to keep the lines of communication open (Mark 11:25-27).
7. When everything is said and done, the most important part of prayer is faith. You have to pray with faith. Faith opens the doors of Heaven through prayer (Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24). The Bible explains that “no one can please God without faith” (Hebrews 11:6).

I encourage you to do your part, starting today, and begin receiving specific answers from the Lord. Start praying the kind of prayer that He likes to answer and remember every time He answers.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Proverbs 15:29; Matthew 21:22; Luke 18:1-8;  
Colossians 4:2-4; 1 Timothy 2:1.2*



**PRAYER:**

*Lord, I ask You to forgive my sins and give me abundant faith. Teach me to ask for what I truly need that is in accord with Your will so I can see Your great power answering my prayer.*

*In Jesus’ name, Amen.*





## DAY 6:

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**Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another all the more, since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer. For there is no longer any sacrifice that will take away sins if we purposely go on sinning after the truth has been made known to us. (Hebrews 10:25-26)**

Many people ask if they have to attend church. The Bible clearly points out the importance of the local church. If you don't develop your relationship with a local church, everyone loses. What you do directly or indirectly affects the welfare of other believers: "If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness" (1 Corinthians 12:26).

Now you have become a part of a body that, just like the human body, is made up of many small parts that interlock like the gears of a clock. Starting today, you need to understand that you are important to God and to many people who count on you. First, there are your brothers and sisters in Christ, and then there are other lost people who have yet to accept Jesus.

For the first group, it is important for you to be with them, because God has given you gifts and skills that only you have and that your group needs.

For the second group, remember that you have found a treasure and you should share it with them. That treasure is Christ. We urge you to find a church near your home where you can put down roots.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

The Church is an assembly of believers who meet in a locale (1 Corinthians 16:19) with the purpose of edifying and educating its members (Ephesians 4:11-16; Matthew 28:19) to glorify

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God (Titus 2:10; John 4:23-24; Philippians 3:3; Romans 15:6,9; Ephesians 1:5-6, 12, 14, 18), to purify itself (Ephesians 5:26-27; John 15:2; Titus 3:10-11, 2 Corinthians 7:1), to evangelize the world (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 2:9), to act as light to hinder evil in the world (Matthew 5:13-16; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7), and to help the faithful discover their ministry in the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:1-8). Attending church does not save a person, only faith in Christ saves (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; John 5:24), but it is of vital importance for spiritual growth.

One of the first tasks for a new believer is to find a good place to attend church. However, you shouldn't expect to find a perfect church. Every church is made up of human beings who, in spite of being transformed by the power of Christ, are still imperfect and for that reason alone they will make mistakes.

Secondly, look for a church that preaches and emphasizes the Word of God (Acts 2:42). If the church isn't based on the authority of the Bible, it runs the risk of being carried away by any wind that blows its way.

Thirdly, look for a church where there is an atmosphere of love (Acts 2:43-47). Without love, the church will be like a noisy gong or a clanging bell (1 Corinthians 13:1).

As I've mentioned before, a church has at least four purposes. These are so the people who attend can worship God, it's for the edification of the believers, it's for communion among the believers, and it's a place of ministry for itself and for the outside world.

You should also look for a church where there is genuine communion among the brethren. Finally, find a church where you can discover your ministry or place of service in God's plan for your life (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10).

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Then be committed to attending regularly and become a member of the church. Tell the pastor you want to be baptized and let the leaders know that you want to be an active part of the church and that you will be subject to its authority.

Look for a ministry in your local church. Don't go to church only to satisfy your needs, but find a way to lovingly try to help others (John 13:35).

Contribute financially to your local church. The New Testament emphasizes the importance of regular offerings. In 2 Corinthians, Paul explains that we should give for specific needs (8:12-15), do it abundantly (9:6), do it with a purpose (9:7) and do it cheerfully (9:7).

This is a good time to begin getting settled in a local church.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*The entire Book of Acts*



**PRAYER:**

*Lord, I realize that You Yourself founded the Church and that it is Your Body in the world. Show me where there is a local church that reads, preaches and lives Your Word. I want to participate in its activities and be an effective member of Your Body in order to worship You, grow alongside other members in communion, and serve my brethren and society as a whole.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*







## DAY 7 :

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**For you have been given the privilege of serving Christ, not only by believing in him, but also by suffering for him. (Philippians 1:29)**

In the Word of God, we find the vital principles that will allow us not only to survive the storms of life but also grow and become strong through them. If you are suffering or have some need, it's essential that you know that God is good. He is fair and perfect. He takes you seriously, so much so that He gave Himself for you and promises that this is not our final home – a better one is waiting. God assures us that there's a good purpose in all our sufferings.

Now that you're a child of God, when you're having a difficult time, remember that God is with you. Never forget that He's doing something in your life and above all, always remember that He's doing something good.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

We all want to know that there's hope when we have to face a particular problem or when tragedy strikes. Who is totally free of the immense pain of losing a loved one, of the frustration of losing a job, of the anguish of a marriage in ruins, or a hundred other problems?

We feel trapped and overwhelmed by the weight of circumstances and we ask ourselves if there really is hope for solving our particular problem.

Let's remember the words of Romans 8:28: "We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose." Notice that Paul didn't say we understand how all things work for good. He said

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we know they work for good. This promise is a secure anchor when the storms of life knock us down unmercifully.

The Apostle Paul had claimed this promise many times, even before he wrote the passage we just quoted. He knew what it was like to suffer scarcity, persecution, indifference, betrayal, loneliness, disease, stoning, whippings, shipwreck, lack of clothing and sleep, hunger, thirst, and tremendous pressure.

What kept Paul from breaking down? It was his absolute confidence in the God who promises to sustain us no matter what happens. At the end of his life he could say “I know whom I have trusted, and I am sure that he is able to keep safe until that Day what he has entrusted to me” (2 Timothy 1:12). What had Paul entrusted to God? His own life.

In Isaiah we read: “You, Lord, give perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm and put their trust in you” (Isaiah 26:3). This promise is also for us today and is stated repeatedly in the New Testament.

Are you facing something difficult? Place your life in the Lord’s hands. Then believe wholeheartedly the words of Philippians 4:6-7: “Don’t worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. And God’s peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.”

When the storms of life seem overwhelming, God wants you to experience His perfect peace.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 37; 1 Peter 4*



**PRAYER:**

*Father, I praise You because You understand all our suffering and tears. I'm aware of my inability to resolve my problems in life alone. May Your grace be sufficient to supply my deepest needs. Console me while I'm waiting on You. Fill my heart with Your peace that passes all understanding. Thank You for Your rich provision for me today.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*







## DAY 8 :

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**Be on your guard! Make certain that you do not forget, as long as you live, what you have seen with your own eyes. Tell your children and your grandchildren. (Deuteronomy 4:9)**

These studies that you're using every day will last for only two weeks, but you should never stop having daily contact with God and reading His Word and praying. Just as your body needs to eat and sleep every day, you also need to be fed by God's Word and rest in Him daily.

I hope you aren't the only believer in Christ in your home. One of the nicest things in life is to be able to share the enthusiasm you feel today with the people around you. It's important to meet around the table, read the Bible and pray together just before going to work or school and having "family worship."

But, if your family is not a believing family yet, we encourage you to have a devotional time alone at home every day, and whenever you can, pray for your family and ask God to speak to them.

Have family devotions! Don't let the tedious tasks of daily life keep you from enjoying these precious encounters with the Lord.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

Some of the most important things we say or do take place at home. That's where our children receive their most crucial education. On an average, our children spend 1% of their time at church, 16% at school and the remaining 83% at home or close to home. In the life of a child, there's no other force that can be compared with the impact of his or her home.

It's never an exaggeration to say how vital is the influence of a good, fair, God-fearing parent.

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If our children don't see the difference that Christ makes in our lives and hear the Gospel presented clearly, they will almost always reject Christianity. Our children are not automatically children of God. They have to make a personal decision to accept Christ in their lives. Remember that God doesn't have grandchildren — only children.

God established the home as the place where His Word can be taught, experienced and transmitted generation to generation. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 says: "Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children. Repeat them when you are at home and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working."

When we share times around the table with our children while we're eating or doing something else, they notice our attitudes and every word we say, and they imitate us. Can you really feel no shame at all if you say to your children: "Imitate me, then, just as I imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

One of the best ways for parents to communicate their faith to their children is to guide them in family devotions. Set aside a time to study the Bible and pray every day, and these moments should become something natural and a happy time for family members.

Have your children read a small portion of the Bible and then talk about what it means. Try to be creative. It's not good to bore the people to whom we are teaching the Bible. Every Christian bookstore has a lot of material you can consult to find dynamic and interesting ways to teach the Bible to children and teenagers.

Prayer is another essential aspect of family life. We can talk to God in prayer at any moment, but there are moments in a day that are crucial in the life of a family such as just before leaving for school, before meals, and at bedtime.

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Teach your children to thank God for His protection and goodness. Teach them to confess their sins directly to God, to ask Him for forgiveness and to pray for their relatives and friends.

We're responsible for the care and teaching of every child God has given us. We normally have them at home for only a short time until they themselves form their own families. Make it your priority to say and do the things they will later teach their own children, the most important lessons for life. Take advantage of your family devotions to integrate Christianity into every aspect of your home.

Begin making plans now so you can establish family devotions in your home.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Chapters 1-4 of 1 Samuel (the sad story of Eli's rebellious sons); Proverbs 20:7 and 22:6; Ephesians 6:4*



**PRAYER:**

*Heavenly Father, thank You because You've talked to me personally in this study. I understand why I need to have daily communion with You. I promise to have a devotional time with You in my home where we can give thanks for Your blessings and worship You. I present my family members to You so they can also become part of Your Kingdom. I ask You to forgive all my failures. And most especially, I understand that my entire family needs to participate in family devotions. Help me put this into practice.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*





**Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete. (John 16:24)**

Now God is your Heavenly Father and you should talk to Him every day. You can do it wherever you are! You can talk to Him while you're walking down the street, when you're alone in the countryside or when you're in a big city. In the Bible this is called praying – it's talking to God. For a Christian who lives a normal life it's just as natural to talk to Him as to talk to a spouse or any friend. Normal and natural, that's how praying should be. "Fellowship" is a word we often hear. That's exactly what prayer means: its constant, conscious communion with God.

Now that you have Jesus in your heart, the door to the very presence of God the Father is open to you through prayer. Don't miss out on this glorious opportunity to talk to your Creator and explain everything that's going on in your heart and mind. Then rest in Him because He cares for you.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

Prayer is friendship with God — it's just two friends talking.

Sometimes we make prayer a simple monologue of requests, but it shouldn't be like that. Prayer is a dialog. God talks to us through His Word and through the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. We respond in prayers of worship, confession, requests, intercession and thanksgiving. Let's look at these five aspects related to prayer.

The first element of prayer is **worship**. When we enter God's presence in prayer, we begin by expressing our adoration and reverence for Him. An old Jewish refrain says, "A man must first of all offer praise and then he can pray." You should begin your prayers by worshiping God.

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**Confession** comes after worship. When the Prophet Isaiah saw the Lord in all His glory, he exclaimed: “There is no hope for me! I am doomed because every word that passes my lips is sinful, and I live among a people whose every word is sinful. And yet, with my own eyes I have seen the King, the Lord Almighty” (Isaiah 6:5). We really can’t praise the God of Holiness if we don’t have a profound sense of our own impurity. The Bible teaches us that God is merciful and forgives us when we confess our sins (1 John 1:9).

Only after worshiping and confessing can we present our **petitions**. True prayer consists of the requests of a person who is aware of his or her extreme need and of the provisions of someone who demonstrates His extreme goodness. Jesus encourages us to ask the Father for what we need: “You have not asked for anything in this way before, but now you must ask in my name. Then it will be given to you, so you will be completely happy” (John 16:24).

When we pray, we should also include **intercession** (praying for others). This is a precious service in favor of others before the throne of grace. The Prophet Samuel said to the people of Israel: “As for me, the Lord forbid that I should sin against him by no longer praying for you. Instead, I will teach you what is good and right for you to do” (1 Samuel 12:23). Intercession is an important spiritual responsibility that we should not neglect as Christians.

**Thanksgiving** should overflow the rest of our conversation with God. Listen carefully to these exhortations of the Apostle Paul: “Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). We experience the joy of the Lord when we talk to Him in prayer and we thank Him for His answers. When God wants to bless His people, He first encourages them to pray, to establish a dialog with Him.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Psalm 150; 1 John 1:7-10; Hebrews 7:25; Psalm 100:3-5*



**PRAYER:**

*Lord, I want to spend every moment of the rest of my life in Your presence, praying to You with thanksgiving for Your blessings and Your companionship with me, helping me pass through this world as a living testimony of Your love. I want my life to influence those around me and I want to present them with the message of salvation in Christ so many people can begin a fulfilled life with You.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*







## DAY 10 :

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**Christ's message in all its richness must live in your hearts. Teach and instruct one another with all wisdom. Sing psalms, hymns, and sacred songs; sing to God with thanksgiving in your hearts. (Colossians 3:16)**

There are times in life when from one moment to another we suddenly experience testings and serious problems. Something that has always helped me at those times is to remember passages from the Bible that remind me that God is at my side. How beautiful it is to remember and repeat verses like these: The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures...(Psalm 23). I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13).

If you really want to hold these promises in your heart, you should prepare a huge file in your mind to store them in.

You should start this very day to memorize passages from the Bible and meditate on them. Memorizing along with meditating helps us think in a straight line while living in a crooked world. Perhaps you have only just begun reading the Bible for the first time. If that's the case, don't just settle for reading it every day. You can underline the verses that touch your heart in a special way. Later you can start repeating them and memorizing them because they will greatly help you feed your soul, wherever in this world you may find yourself.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

“In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable” (Philippians 4:8).

How can we think about what is pure when every day we are surrounded by impurity? Precisely by meditating on the Word of God.

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It's impossible to spend the whole day reading the Bible, but we can always be meditating on Scripture passages if we have memorized them. There are studies that show that after 24 hours we can remember only 5% of what we have heard, 15% of what we have read, 35% of what we have studied, but 100% of what we have memorized.

There are five tips that can help you memorize Scripture:

1. Read the verse at least 10 times.
2. Copy it slowly 20 or 30 times, thinking about every word.
3. Try to recite it and practice it. It should be easy now.
4. Think about it during the day and review it over the following days.
5. Share the verse with other people when you are talking with them.

I've been able to memorize all the following passages. I've meditated on them, and they have produced a great change in my life. I assure you that they can change your life too. The Psalmist says: "I keep your law in my heart, so that I will not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

**About the "new birth:"**

1. Salvation, John 3:16
2. New life, 2 Corinthians 5:17
3. Identity as God's children, 1 John 3:1-2
4. God lives in me, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
5. Baptized in one Body, 1 Corinthians 12:13

**About God:**

6. The eternal Christ, John 1:1
7. The Spirit of God, John 15:26
8. The Spirit of God as Counselor, John 14:16-17
9. The strength of God, Ephesians 6:10.11

**About the family:**

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10. Wives, Ephesians 5:22
  11. Husbands, Ephesians 5:25
  12. Children, Ephesians 6:1-3
  13. Parents, Ephesians 6:4

**About spiritual growth:**

14. Temptation, I Corinthians 10:13
15. Confession and pardon, 1 John 1:9
16. Prayer, John 14:13-14
17. Communion with Christians, Hebrews 10:24-25
18. Love among Christians, John 13:34-35
19. Freedom from legalism, Colossians 2:20-22

**About the Word of God:**

20. Authority, 2 Peter 1:20-21
21. Inspiration and purpose, 2 Timothy 3:16-17
22. For our purity, Psalm 119:9, 11

**About victory:**

23. Walking in the Spirit, Galatians 5:16-18
24. Dedication and transformation, Romans 12:1-2
25. Victory through the Cross, Galatians 2:20
26. The fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-23
27. The Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20
28. Death and resurrection in Christ, Romans 6:3-4

**About the future:**

29. Eternal condemnation, Revelation 21:8
30. Heaven, John 14:1-3

Start memorizing the passages listed here. Then choose others. Your entire life will become saturated with the Word of God. Make memorizing the Bible your personal experience. But remember one thing: doing this may change your life for good.

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**VERSES TO READ:**



*Psalm 19; 119:105; Isaiah 55:11; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 4:1-8*

**PRAYER:**



*Eternal Father, now that I know that the Bible is full of beautiful promises for me, I want to keep them in my memory so they will encourage me when things in my life are difficult. I want to saturate myself in Your words in order to repeat them to my children, my friends and everyone around me. Lord, I ask You to give me, starting today, all the strength I need to remember Your Word and put it into practice.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**NOTES:**

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## DAY 11 :

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**Instead, be kind and tender-hearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ. (Ephesians 4:32)**

If you try to think of people who have hurt you in some way, you'll probably come up with more than one person. Perhaps your heart still carries some scars.

Today as you're reading this devotional and now that you have accepted Jesus in your heart, the time has come for you to close those old wounds and begin to rest. In the same way that God forgave you so many things, now you need to forgive the people who have hurt you. And if some part of what is worrying you now is not from the past but rather something you're experiencing at this time, you need to turn your concern over to God who will be the judge and will act in your stead.

I know this is difficult, but it's not impossible. The option of never forgiving is terrible and the price is very high. The resentment, bitterness and lack of joy that comes from not forgiving can destroy you. With all my heart, I encourage you to forgive.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

Has anyone ever offended you? Has your spouse ever been unfaithful? Has someone deceived you in a business deal?

The way we deal with difficult experiences in life directly affects our spiritual welfare.

My father died when I was only ten years old. He left several properties and some money. However, some people close to the family deceived my mother and they took everything we had. Three years later, we were living in poverty and submerged in debt.

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As I grew older, I began to realize what they had done to us and I insisted that my mother retaliate. The older I grew, the more resentful I felt. However, the Bible says, “Dear friends, don’t try to get even. Let God take revenge. In the Scriptures the Lord says, ‘I will take revenge, I will pay back’” (Romans 12:19).

My mother always quoted verses like Romans 12:19 and in that way she completely forgave the people who had deceived us. Although it took us 20 years to pay off our debts, she didn’t want to be bitter. Therefore, God gave her freedom of spirit and opportunities to serve Him. Years later when I had also forgiven those people, I experienced that same freedom and peace of mind.

Were you very deeply hurt? Have you been inundated with bitterness and have refused to forgive? I encourage you to read the story of Joseph in Genesis, chapters 37 to 50. This passage teaches us many valuable lessons about the importance of forgiving and forgetting.

The Book of Genesis in the Bible gives us several reasons why Joseph, Jacob’s youngest son, could have been a bitter man. His boss’s wife falsely accused him of a serious crime and had him thrown into an Egyptian prison. In spite of everything, Joseph did not let bitterness dominate his life (Hebrews 12:15).

How many lives get wasted through bitterness and not being able to forgive! People become ill both physically and emotionally because they refuse to forgive others. We can’t let bitterness and resentment put down roots in our souls. They will end up destroying us.

The Bible says: “Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you” (Colossians 3:13). Once we have begun to experience forgiving another person, then it is vital to forget. Joseph named his first son Manasseh (which means “God made me forget”) because he said “God has made me forget all my sufferings and all my father’s

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family” (Genesis 41:51). Joseph not only forgave his brothers but he also forgot everything bad they had done to him.

Follow Joseph’s example. Don’t let bitterness and guilt take up lodging in your soul. Forgive and forget. This is one of the secrets that allows a Christian to enjoy spiritual health.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Matthew 5:23-24; 44; 18:21-22; Luke 17:3-4; Romans 12:16.21; Ephesians 4:29-32; Colossians 3:12-14*



**PRAYER:**

*Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus I’m ready to forgive everyone who has caused me problems and pain in the past. Right now I forgive them the same way You forgave all my wrongdoings and sins, and even ask You to bless them. I place my cause before You now, along with all the things and people who are causing me pain at present, so You can take control and carry out Your will. I want to live a healthy and victorious Christian life and I won’t allow roots of bitterness and sadness to grow in me. Lord, thank you for giving me Your example and Your power to forgive.*

*In Jesus’ name, Amen.*







## DAY 12 :

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**Job answered, "You are talking nonsense! When God sends us something good, we welcome it. How can we complain when he sends us trouble?" Even in all this suffering Job said nothing against God. (Job 2:10)**

There's a popular song in Spanish that goes like this:

*That's how we're born, with eyes closed,  
as if sensing the horrible world we're going to see;  
With a cry on our lips,  
as if regretting having reached a land that's not good;  
With hands clenched,  
as prepared to take hard knocks, to do or die;  
With wrinkled skin,  
as a certain premonition of the day old age will arrive.  
That's how we're born, tied to another body,  
as if to say we know a man can't run away just because  
he so desires.*

One of the most frequent questions asked is why God allows so much suffering in the world. Only by going to the Bible can we understand the problem of suffering. The Bible is the treasure chest of divine wisdom and its purpose is to teach us how to live well. You can also learn principles by observing people who have triumphed and others who have failed. Then decide to imitate the first group while avoiding the mistakes of the second.

The words of the song are an absolute truth for those who do not have Christ in their lives, but they are only a part of the truth for us who have accepted Jesus into our hearts. That's because although we recognize that we're in a world where we will suffer, we have a consoling God who, in the person of Jesus, suffered in the flesh the same situations we may be forced to suffer. That's why He understands and consoles us. But we also have the promise that everything will be for our good in the end.

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So, learn the principles that trials and suffering teach you every day and you will not be sorry.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

There are four kinds of suffering. The first kind is the result of natural disasters like earthquakes or severe storms. Their consequences affect both sinner and saint (Matthew 5:45).

The second kind of suffering can be called the “inhuman treatment of people.” War falls in this category. People try to hurt their fellow men because of their greed and their pride (James 4:1-2).

A third type of suffering can be clearly seen in the life of Job in the Old Testament. This was the result of a direct attack by Satan. After he received God’s authorization, Satan began to act and he brought about incredible suffering to Job and his family.

The fourth kind of suffering is what is produced as the result of our own wrongdoings. For example, many people suffer when they break God’s moral laws and very often He allows these people to live with the consequences of their actions (Galatians 6:7-8).

Every time people break God’s laws, other people will also be exposed to pain. When Achan (Joshua 7) was greedy and took part of the plunder from the battle of Jericho, his sin cost 36 men their lives in a battle against the people of Ai. It is inevitable that the disobedience of one person can cause the suffering of many others.

Whether we have caused our own suffering or not, the way we respond will make or break us as Christians. Circumstances do not generally mold our character but rather reveal it. But when we respond Biblically to trials, we can develop patience and a mature character (Romans 5:3-4).

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Problems, pressures, calamities, or the death of a loved one often force us to examine ourselves; to look for sin in our lives (1 Kings 17:18). However, we should be careful not to let Satan overwhelm us with a false sense of guilt and excessive pain (2 Corinthians 2:7). Job's wife urged him to curse God and die, but Job didn't give up and he remained faithful to the Lord. Notice that in the end God gave Job back everything that he had lost plus even more than he had before (Job 42:10-17).

Instead of focusing on the circumstances, we should keep our eyes on Jesus Christ. He will give us the victory in any situation in which we may find ourselves, and as the result of these trials, we'll be stronger Christians and better equipped to serve Him.

When we feel pessimistic and are suffering, we can say with the Psalmist, "The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid; what can anyone do to me?" (Psalm 118:6) The Lord Himself is our consolation and our hope in difficult times.

Trust in God and wait on Him when you are going through difficult or sad times.



**VERSES TO READ:**

*Genesis 37-49; Job 1-2; Romans 5:1-5; James 1:1-4*



**PRAYER:**

*My Lord and God, I understand that during my life I will have to "pass through the valleys of the shadow of death" as it says in Psalm 23, but I also understand that "You will be with me." Thank you because now I know there is always a better way for Your children. Help me endure trials, pressures and suffering. Console me when I'm sad and give me Your peace. Help me console others because You console me.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*





## DAY 13 :

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**Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. My Father will love those who love me; I too will love them and reveal myself to them. (John 14:21)**

The Ten Commandments are so famous that almost everyone in the world has heard of them. We know that God wrote them on two stone tablets and He gave them to Moses to read to the Israelites wandering through the desert. We know that they were supposed to put them into practice. But how can they affect us in the 21st century?

The Bible passage we've read today in John 14:21 reveals a beautiful panorama of how contemporary the Commandments are and what God promises when we comply with them. Do you want God to manifest Himself in your life today and give you the power to conquer and live a victorious life? Obey His Commandments and love Him with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

I encourage you to read them in the Book of Exodus, chapter 20, verses 1-17. Then ask yourself why God gave us each of the Ten Commandments. Write down all your answers.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

A careful study of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) highlights principles that will increase your understanding of the infinite wisdom and love of our Heavenly Father.

**God's Commandments reveal His character.** The most glorious aspect of the Ten Commandments is that they reveal the character of God. We worship a God who is possessive (Exodus 20:3), who is jealous in the sense that He abhors idolatry (20:4-6), who is holy and worthy of honor and respect (20:7), who

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desires to preserve the holiness of worship and who wants us to learn to rest in Him (20:8-11). He is a God who wants to protect the family (20:12), who respects and honors life (20:13), who wants saintly children, sexual purity and a holy people (20:14), who delights in giving gifts that cannot be taken away (20:15), who is 100% reliable (20:16), and who sees into the deepest part of every heart (20:17).

**God's Commandments reveal genuine freedom.** Society today produces an overwhelming sense of slavery. We hear constant mention of the need to escape, to get away, and to be free. The irony is that people believe that the road to freedom is to break the divine moral laws. However, by doing so they just experience a more marked type of slavery. Only God's moral law reveals genuine freedom.

**God's Commandments provide complete protection.** A careful reading of the Ten Commandments will reveal how God drafted them in order to protect us socially, politically, economically and physically. And most importantly, notice that those Commandments offer us spiritual protection from our adversary, the Devil, who is waiting to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8). Satan wages war against us, tempting us to reach God's limits, but we can be victorious because Christ lives in our heart (1 John 4:4).

God's Commandments reveal true love. As you were reading the Ten Commandments, were you able to understand what each one reveals with regard to love?

We show love for our Father by giving Him His rightful place in our lives (Exodus 20:3); by not attributing to Him characteristics that are not revealed in Scripture (20:4-6); by not grieving the Holy Spirit because of our undisciplined way of speaking (20:7); by separating one day a week to honor God and have communion with our family as well as with God's family (20:8-11); by honoring our parents, which also reveals God's love for us later in life and shows His desire that we have happy homes

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(20:12); by showing respect for life and doing for others what we would like others to do for us (20:13); by not dealing with our sexuality lightly (20:14); by being happy when we have a generous spirit with the Lord (20:15); by being worthy of trust and honoring God in what we say (20:16); by being satisfied, saintly, and sanctified through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in us (20:17).



**VERSES TO READ:**

*John 14:15, 21; John 15:10; 1 John 2:3-4; 1 John 3:23-24; 1 John 5:2-3; 2 John 1:6*



**PRAYER:**

*Our Father, I praise You and give You thanks, because You are the same yesterday, today and forever. Your words are true. When I read them, I discover Your great love for me and when I put them into practice, I enjoy Your love. And when I love You with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my strength, I receive the blessings You have in store for Your children.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*







## DAY 14 :

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**One of them was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. At once he found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah." (This word means "Christ.") Then he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas." (This is the same as Peter and means "a rock.") (John 1:40-42)**

Most of us have relatives who don't know Christ. Would it surprise you to know that the same thing happened to Jesus? The Bible says "Even Jesus' own brothers had not yet become His followers" (John 7:5). Later on, we find one of our Savior's brothers heading up the Church in Jerusalem (Acts 15).

The study for today is the last of our devotional studies in this series, which we have prepared for the first steps of your new Christian life, and we want to think about the people around you who have not given their lives to Jesus Christ as yet.

The great promise is that all the members of our family will also be saved (Acts 16:31). But we also read in 1 Peter 2:9, that we who have been called have the responsibility of announcing the virtues of the One who has called us.

Therefore, a new stage of your life is now beginning in which praying for people who haven't experienced salvation should become a daily routine until our Lord comes for us or we go to be with Him.

Keep up the good work! Because God is even more interested than we are in seeing that everyone comes to know Christ and attains eternal life.

### **AN IN-DEPTH STUDY:**

God wants to save the entire family, not just one member (Acts 16:31). But the process of salvation begins with one member and

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then extends to the others. In this case, you are the person God began to use in your family. What can you do?

1. Scripture indicates that God uses the lives of His children to bring their relatives to Christ (1 Peter 3:1-7). This highlights the importance of your example in the home. Peter explains it when he says: “Your conduct among the heathen should be so good that when they accuse you of being evildoers, they will have to recognize your good deeds and so praise God on the Day of his coming” (1 Peter 2:12).
2. You should make sure that your relationship with every family member is good if it is in your power to do so (Romans 12:18) When there are conflicts, your responsibility as a believer is to reconcile (2 Corinthians 5:19), forgive (Ephesians 4:32), and ask for forgiveness (James 5:16). Although it may be difficult, God will give you the necessary strength to do this. Reconciliation will open communication channels.
3. I recommend that you read the following verses that are related to the home: Ephesians 5:31-33; Colossians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Colossians 3:18-20.
4. I encourage you to pray for your relatives continually. When you pray for them, I suggest you follow these steps:

### **Specific Prayer**

First of all, pray specifically about the things that are keeping them from knowing God (2 Corinthians 10:5). Prayer is one of the main things that will bring them to Christ.

### **Opportunity**

In Colossians 4:3 we read that Paul is in jail and asks for the door to open so he can get his message out. You should do what Paul did and pray for opportunities so you can talk to your relatives and friends about the Word of God the way Andrew did in the passage we studied today.

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## Courage

Let's think about Ephesians 6:19. In this passage, Paul asks for "courage" in order to speak. We not only need opportunities; when the opportunity arises, we need courage too.

## The Right Message

Paul also requests prayer to be able to deliver his message: "Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19).

## A clear message

Let's keep in mind one last aspect related to praying for someone who doesn't know Jesus Christ as described in Colossians 4:4. Here Paul asks the believers to pray so he can preach the Word of God "with clarity." We should ask the Lord to help us give the message with courage and clarity when the right opportunity presents itself.



### VERSES TO READ:

John 1:40-42; Acts 16; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16;  
1 Peter 3:1-7



### PRAYER:

*Lord, I understand it's my responsibility to preach Your Gospel, the Good News about Your love. I want to begin with the people nearest to me, my family and my friends. I bring them to You, and I'll do this every day. I'm asking You to give me the opportunity to talk to them about Your love. Give me the courage to do this and especially let me give them the message based on my own testimony that will be clear and good for them at the right moment.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*



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## KEEP GOING **FORWARD**

*Although this 14-day devotional has come to a close, you can discover more of God's Word by visiting [abs.us/readtoday](http://abs.us/readtoday). You'll find a Bible-based devotional that will help you keep seeking God through His Word.*

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# YES TO **LIFE**

*Dear friend,*

*if you decided to follow Christ today,  
if you have reconciled with Him,  
if you have doubts about a decision  
you may have made before or  
if you need to renew your vows,  
whatever your situation with the  
Lord may be, we encourage you to review  
in your mind and heart each of these simple  
Biblical steps as you go forward towards  
a truly victorious life in Christ.*

## **STEP 1** : GOD LOVES US

Because He loves us, in the beginning God prepared a place for men and women: Heaven. The Bible describes it as a city with streets of gold (Revelation 21:21). That's why we're symbolizing this fact with the color **GOLD**, the color of Heaven.

The Gospel message is the Good News that God came to us in His Son, Jesus, who became a man in order to reach us. Consequently, the initiative is God's because He created us and loves us so much He gave His only Son to reconcile us with Him (Romans 5: 10-11).

In the Bible we read: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

"Our message is that God was making all human beings his

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friends through Christ. God did not keep an account of their sins, and he has given us the message which tells how he makes them his friends.” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

In the Old Testament 620 years before Christ, the Prophet Jeremiah wrote these words of God to us:

“I appeared to them from far away. People of Israel, I have always loved you, so I continue to show you my constant love” (Jeremiah 31:3).

And then we read the following in a letter the Apostle John wrote to the first Christians:

“This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven” (I John 4:10).

## ● **STEP 2** : WE ARE ALL SINNERS

The color **BLACK** symbolizes life full of sin. From the very beginning of time, human beings have used the liberty God created them with to separate themselves from Him and violate His laws.

The word sin has two literal translations: one is to miss the mark, and the other is to transgress or trespass a marked line or fence.

In a letter written by Saint Paul to the Christians in Rome, the Bible says: “everyone has sinned and is far away from God’s saving presence” (Romans 3:23).

In the beginning, a man and a woman sinned—they crossed the line God had laid out. So all humankind is stained by that

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original sin. That's why people find it natural to be inclined to do bad things.

If you think you're bad because of the bad things you've done, then let us tell you that you're even worse off than you think. And if you think you're good because you've always lived a decent life, let us tell you that, in spite of seeming to be good, you're a sinner. Saint Paul says in Romans 3:12: "All have turned away from God; they have all gone wrong; no one does what is right, not even one."

These natural desires to do what is wrong lead us to transgress the lines God has set out. The Bible declares: "But we are tempted when we are drawn away and trapped by our own evil desires. Then our evil desires conceive and give birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:14-15).

### ● **STEP 3** : CHRIST DIES FOR US

In Romans 5:8-9, we read: "But God has shown us how much he loves us—it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us! By his blood we are now put right with God; how much more, then, will we be saved by him from God's anger!"

The color **RED** symbolizes the Blood of Christ. In 1 John 1:7, we read: "But if we live in the light—just as he is in the light—then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin."

#### **Why BLOOD?**

Because, according to ancient law, only a sacrifice that involved blood—meaning the concept of life itself—was acceptable for forgiveness.

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In times past people would sacrifice an animal's blood. But now, since the life of the Son of God was given in sacrifice it's not necessary to repeat the sacrifice. Jesus died only once for you and now that sacrifice (if you accept it) is valid so God can forgive you.

The victory isn't only because He died for you but it's because HE ROSE AGAIN! He is alive today and can continue helping you live according to His rules, which were established for your protection and benefit.

In 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, the Bible says: "I passed on to you what I received, which is of the greatest importance: that Christ died for our sins, as written in the Scriptures; that he was buried and that he was raised to life three days later, as written in the Scriptures."

## 🌀 STEP 4 : I RECEIVE CHRIST IN MY HEART AND ACCEPT HIS SACRIFICE FOR ME

The color **WHITE** represents a clean heart. In Psalm 51:7 we read: "Remove my sin, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow."

When a person believes and accepts Jesus' sacrifice, God forgives and accepts him or her as His child. Saint John writes in John 1:12: "Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children."

Accepting Christ is voluntarily accepting Jesus' work of redemption, which reunites us with God and saves us from the consequences of our separation.

Accepting Jesus Christ is asking Him, in an act of faith, to enter

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the innermost part of our lives and allowing His Spirit to renew our inner self.

Accepting Christ is something personal because no other person can do this for you.

Accepting Christ is repentance of living separated from God and experiencing the consequences of this action.

Accepting Christ is something unique because, according to the very Word of God accepting Christ is the only way to reach God, receive His pardon, and experience an abundant and eternal life.

“Jesus answered him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me’” (John 14:6).

## **STEP 5** : I AM SAVED AND BEGINNING TO GROW IN MY NEW LIFE

The color **GREEN** means now that you have accepted Christ and His sacrifice for you, you are saved. Now God does not see you as you are, but He sees you as pardoned through Jesus’ sacrifice.

You are beginning to grow in a new life with hope, with a motive for living, with a new sense of direction.

In 1 John 5:12-13, the Bible says that you now have eternal life: “Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

In John 10:27-28, Jesus tells you: “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never die. No one can snatch them away from me.”

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## I LEFT THE LORD'S PATH AND NOW I WANT TO RETURN

At some point you accepted Christ in your heart but you have drifted away from His teachings. He is calling you to come home. He is once again holding out His hand to you.

In 1 John 1:9, the Bible says: "But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing." Proverbs 28:13 also says: "You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you."

So now you can confess your sins to the Lord. Ask Him for forgiveness with a repentant heart, which means that you are determined not to commit the same mistakes again. Start going back to church and enjoy being a member of God's family.

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# THE GOSPEL

## ACCORDING TO JOHN

### **Introduction**

The Gospel according to John presents Jesus as the eternal Word of God, who “became a human being and lived among us.” As the book itself says, this Gospel was written so that its readers might believe that Jesus is the promised Savior, the Son of God, and that through their faith in Him they may have life (20:31).

After an introduction that identifies the eternal Word of God with Jesus, the first part of the Gospel presents various miracles which show that Jesus is the promised Savior, the Son of God. These are followed by discourses that explain what is revealed by the miracles. This part of the book tells how some people believed in Jesus and became His followers, while others opposed Him and refused to believe. Chapters 13-17 record at length the close fellowship of Jesus with His disciples on the night of His arrest, and His words of preparation and encouragement to them on the eve of His crucifixion. The closing chapters tell of Jesus’ arrest and trial, His crucifixion and resurrection, and His appearances to His disciples after the resurrection.

The story of the woman caught in adultery (8:1-11) is placed in brackets because many manuscripts and early translations omit it, while others include it in other places. John emphasizes the gift of eternal life through Christ, a gift which begins now and which comes to those who respond to Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. A striking feature of John is the symbolic use of common things from everyday life to point to spiritual realities such as water, bread, light, the shepherd and his sheep, and the grapevine and its fruit.

## JOHN

**Outline of Contents***Prologue 1:1-18**John the Baptist and the first disciples of Jesus 1:19-51**Jesus' public ministry 2:1-12.50**The last days in and near Jerusalem 13:1-19.42**The resurrection and appearances of the Lord 20:1-31**Epilogue: another appearance in Galilee 21:1-25***The Word of Life**

**I**n the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> From the very beginning the Word was with God. <sup>3</sup> Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him. <sup>4</sup> The Word was the source of life, <sup>4</sup> and this life brought light to people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

<sup>6</sup> God sent his messenger, a man named John, <sup>7</sup> who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light. <sup>9</sup> This was the real light—the light that comes into the world and shines on all people.

<sup>10</sup> The Word was in the world, and though God made the world through him, yet the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. <sup>13</sup> They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.

<sup>14</sup> The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he

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*a The Word was the source of life; or What was made had life in the union with the Word.*

received as the Father's only Son.

<sup>15</sup> John spoke about him. He cried out, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'He comes after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.'"

<sup>16</sup> Out of the fullness of his grace he has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another. <sup>17</sup> God gave the Law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. The only Son, who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

### **John the Baptist's Message**

<sup>19</sup> The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem sent some priests and Levites to John to ask him, "Who are you?"

<sup>20</sup> John did not refuse to answer, but spoke out openly and clearly, saying: "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> "Who are you, then?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No, I am not," John answered.

"Are you the Prophet?"<sup>b</sup> they asked.

"No," he replied.

<sup>22</sup> "Then tell us who you are," they said. "We have to take an answer back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John answered by quoting the prophet Isaiah:

"I am 'the voice of someone shouting in the desert: Make a straight path for the Lord to travel!'"

<sup>24</sup> The messengers, who had been sent by the Pharisees, <sup>25</sup> then<sup>c</sup> asked John, "If you are not the Messiah nor Elijah nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?"

<sup>26</sup> John answered, "I baptize with water, but among you stands the one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is coming after me, but I am not good enough even to untie his sandals."

<sup>28</sup> All this happened in Bethany on the east side of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

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*b THE PROPHET: The one who was expected to appear and announce the coming of the Messiah.*

*c The messengers, who had been sent by the Pharisees, then; or Those who had been sent were Pharisees; they.*

## The Lamb of God

<sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup> This is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.’ <sup>31</sup> I did not know who he would be, but I came baptizing with water in order to make him known to the people of Israel.”

<sup>32</sup> And John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. <sup>33</sup> I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, ‘You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup> I have seen it,” said John, “and I tell you that he is the Son of God.”

## The First Disciples of Jesus

<sup>35</sup> The next day John was standing there again with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> when he saw Jesus walking by. “There is the Lamb of God!” he said.

<sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this and went with Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, “What are you looking for?” They answered, “Where do you live, Rabbi?” (This word means “Teacher.”)

<sup>39</sup> “Come and see,” he answered. (It was then about four o’clock in the afternoon.) So they went with him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that day with him. <sup>40</sup> One of them was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.

<sup>41</sup> At once he found his brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah.” (This word means “Christ.”)

<sup>42</sup> Then he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas.” (This is the same as Peter and means “a rock.”)

## Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

<sup>43</sup> The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Come with me!” (<sup>44</sup> Philip was from Bethsaida, the town where Andrew and Peter lived.)

<sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one whom Moses wrote about in the book of the Law and whom the prophets also wrote about. He is Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth.”

<sup>46</sup> “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” answered Philip.

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, he said about him, “Here is a real Israelite; there is nothing false in him!”

<sup>48</sup> Nathanael asked him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you when you were under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

<sup>49</sup> “Teacher,” answered Nathanael, “you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said, “Do you believe just because I told you I saw you when you were under the fig tree? You will see much greater things than this!” <sup>51</sup> And he said to them, “I am telling you the truth: you will see heaven open and God’s angels going up and coming down on the Son of Man.”

## The Wedding in Cana

**2** Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, <sup>2</sup> and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup> When the wine had given out, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They are out of wine.”

<sup>4</sup> “You must not tell me what to do,” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.”

<sup>5</sup> Jesus’ mother then told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

<sup>6</sup> The Jews have rules about ritual washing, and for this

purpose six stone water jars were there, each one large enough to hold between twenty and thirty gallons.<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to the servants, “Fill these jars with water.” They filled them to the brim,<sup>8</sup> and then he told them, “Now draw some water out and take it to the man in charge of the feast.” They took him the water,<sup>9</sup> which now had turned into wine, and he tasted it. He did not know where this wine had come from (but, of course, the servants who had drawn out the water knew); so he called the bridegroom<sup>10</sup> and said to him, “Everyone else serves the best wine first, and after the guests have drunk a lot, he serves the ordinary wine. But you have kept the best wine until now!”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus performed this first miracle in Cana in Galilee; there he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

<sup>12</sup> After this, Jesus and his mother, brothers, and disciples went to Capernaum and stayed there a few days.

### **Jesus Goes to the Temple**

<sup>13</sup> It was almost time for the Passover Festival, so Jesus went to Jerusalem.<sup>14</sup> There in the Temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons, and also the moneychangers sitting at their tables.<sup>15</sup> So he made a whip from cords and drove all the animals out of the Temple, both the sheep and the cattle; he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and scattered their coins;<sup>16</sup> and he ordered those who sold the pigeons, “Take them out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!”<sup>17</sup> His disciples remembered that the scripture says, “My devotion to your house, O God, burns in me like a fire.”

<sup>18</sup> The Jewish authorities came back at him with a question,

“What miracle can you perform to show us that you have the right to do this?”

<sup>19</sup> Jesus answered, “Tear down this Temple, and in three days I will build it again.”

<sup>20</sup> “Are you going to build it again in three days?” they asked him. “It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple!”

<sup>21</sup> But the temple Jesus was speaking about was his body.

<sup>22</sup> So when he was raised from death, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and what Jesus had said.

### Jesus' Knowledge of Human Nature

<sup>23</sup> While Jesus was in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival, many believed in him as they saw the miracles he performed. <sup>24</sup> But Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew them all. <sup>25</sup> There was no need for anyone to tell him about them, because he himself knew what was in their hearts.

### Jesus and Nicodemus

**3** There was a Jewish leader named Nicodemus, who belonged to the party of the Pharisees. <sup>2</sup> One night he went to Jesus and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher sent by God. No one could perform the miracles you are doing unless God were with him."

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "I am telling you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God without being born again."<sup>d</sup>

<sup>4</sup> "How can a grown man be born again?" Nicodemus asked. "He certainly cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!"

<sup>5</sup> "I am telling you the truth," replied Jesus, "that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> A person is born physically of human parents, but is born spiritually of the Spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be surprised because I tell you that you must all be born again.<sup>e</sup> <sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

<sup>9</sup> "How can this be?" asked Nicodemus.

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "You are a great teacher in Israel, and you don't know this? <sup>11</sup> I am telling you the truth: we speak of

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*d* again; or from above.

*e* again; or from above.

what we know and report what we have seen, yet none of you is willing to accept our message. <sup>12</sup> You do not believe me when I tell you about the things of this world; how will you ever believe me, then, when I tell you about the things of heaven? <sup>13</sup> And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>14</sup> As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior.

<sup>18</sup> Those who believe in the Son are not judged; but those who do not believe have already been judged, because they have not believed in God's only Son. <sup>19</sup> This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil. <sup>20</sup> Those who do evil things hate the light and will not come to the light, because they do not want their evil deeds to be shown up. <sup>21</sup> But those who do what is true come to the light in order that the light may show that what they did was in obedience to God.

## Jesus and John

<sup>22</sup> After this, Jesus and his disciples went to the province of Judea, where he spent some time with them and baptized.

<sup>23</sup> John also was baptizing in Aenon, not far from Salim, because there was plenty of water in that place. People were going to him, and he was baptizing them. (<sup>24</sup> This was before John had been put in prison.)

<sup>25</sup> Some of John's disciples began arguing with a Jew<sup>g</sup> about the matter of ritual washing. <sup>26</sup> So they went to John and told him, "Teacher, you remember the man who was with you

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*f* The quotation may continue through verse 21.

*g* a Jew; some manuscripts have some Jews.

on the east side of the Jordan, the one you spoke about? Well, he is baptizing now, and everyone is going to him!”

<sup>27</sup> John answered, “No one can have anything unless God gives it. <sup>28</sup> You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.’ <sup>29</sup> The bridegroom is the one to whom the bride belongs; but the bridegroom’s friend, who stands by and listens, is glad when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. This is how my own happiness is made complete. <sup>30</sup> He must become more important while I become less important.”

### **He Who Comes from Heaven**

<sup>31</sup> He who comes from above is greater than all. He who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly matters, but he who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup> He tells what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his message.

<sup>33</sup> But whoever accepts his message confirms by this that God is truthful. <sup>34</sup> The one whom God has sent speaks God’s words, because God gives him the fullness of his Spirit. <sup>35</sup> The Father loves his Son and has put everything in his power. <sup>36</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not have life, but will remain under God’s punishment.

### **Jesus and the Samaritan Woman**

**4** The Pharisees heard that Jesus was winning and baptizing more disciples than John. (<sup>2</sup> Actually, Jesus himself did not baptize anyone; only his disciples did.) <sup>3</sup> So when Jesus heard what was being said, he left Judea and went back to Galilee; <sup>4</sup> on his way there he had to go through Samaria.

<sup>5</sup> In Samaria he came to a town named Sychar, which was not far from the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink of water.” (<sup>8</sup> His disciples had gone into town to buy food.)

<sup>9</sup> The woman answered, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan—so how can you ask me for a drink?” (Jews will not use the same cups and bowls that Samaritans use.)<sup>h</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, “If you only knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water.”

<sup>11</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, “you don’t have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water?”

<sup>12</sup> It was our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well; he and his children and his flocks all drank from it. You don’t claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?”

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, “Those who drink this water will get thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give them will become in them a spring which will provide them with life-giving water and give them eternal life.”

<sup>15</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, “give me that water! Then I will never be thirsty again, nor will I have to come here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup> “Go and call your husband,” Jesus told her, “and come back.”

<sup>17</sup> “I don’t have a husband,” she answered. Jesus replied, “You are right when you say you don’t have a husband. <sup>18</sup> You have been married to five men, and the man you live with now is not really your husband. You have told me the truth.”

<sup>19</sup> “I see you are a prophet, sir,” the woman said. <sup>20</sup> “My Samaritan ancestors worshiped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship God.”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, the time will come when people will not worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans do not really know whom you worship; but we Jews know whom we worship, because it is from the Jews that salvation comes. <sup>23</sup> But the time is coming and is already here, when by the power of God’s Spirit people will worship the Father as he really is, offering him the

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*h* Jews will not use the same cups and bowls that Samaritans use; or Jews will have nothing to do with Samaritans.

true worship that he wants. <sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people worship him as he really is.”

<sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah will come, and when he comes, he will tell us everything.”

<sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, “I am he, I who am talking with you.”

<sup>27</sup> At that moment Jesus’ disciples returned, and they were greatly surprised to find him talking with a woman. But none of them said to her, “What do you want?” or asked him, “Why are you talking with her?”

<sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar, went back to the town, and said to the people there, <sup>29</sup> “Come and see the man who told me everything I have ever done. Could he be the Messiah?” <sup>30</sup> So they left the town and went to Jesus.

<sup>31</sup> In the meantime the disciples were begging Jesus, “Teacher, have something to eat!”

<sup>32</sup> But he answered, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

<sup>33</sup> So the disciples started asking among themselves, “Could somebody have brought him food?”

<sup>34</sup> “My food,” Jesus said to them, “is to obey the will of the one who sent me and to finish the work he gave me to do.

<sup>35</sup> You have a saying, ‘Four more months and then the harvest.’ But I tell you, take a good look at the fields; the crops are now ripe and ready to be harvested! <sup>36</sup> The one who reaps the harvest is being paid and gathers the crops for eternal life; so the one who plants and the one who reaps will be glad together. <sup>37</sup> For the saying is true, ‘Someone plants, someone else reaps.’ <sup>38</sup> I have sent you to reap a harvest in a field where you did not work; others worked there, and you profit from their work.”

<sup>39</sup> Many of the Samaritans in that town believed in Jesus because the woman had said, “He told me everything I have ever done.” <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they begged him to stay with them, and Jesus stayed there two days.

<sup>41</sup> Many more believed because of his message, <sup>42</sup> and they told the woman, “We believe now, not because of what you said, but because we ourselves have heard him, and we know that he really is the Savior of the world.”

## Jesus Heals an Official's Son

<sup>43</sup> After spending two days there, Jesus left and went to Galilee. <sup>44</sup> For he himself had said, "Prophets are not respected in their own country." <sup>45</sup> When he arrived in Galilee, the people there welcomed him, because they had gone to the Passover Festival in Jerusalem and had seen everything that he had done during the festival.

<sup>46</sup> Then Jesus went back to Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. A government official was there whose son was sick in Capernaum. <sup>47</sup> When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to go to Capernaum and heal his son, who was about to die.

<sup>48</sup> Jesus said to him, "None of you will ever believe unless you see miracles and wonders."

<sup>49</sup> "Sir," replied the official, "come with me before my child dies." <sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live!" The man believed Jesus' words and went. <sup>51</sup> On his way home his servants met him with the news, "Your boy is going to live!"

<sup>52</sup> He asked them what time it was when his son got better, and they answered, "It was one o'clock yesterday afternoon when the fever left him." <sup>53</sup> Then the father remembered that it was at that very hour when Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." So he and all his family believed.

<sup>54</sup> This was the second miracle that Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

## The Healing at the Pool

**5** After this, Jesus went to Jerusalem for a religious festival. <sup>2</sup> Near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool<sup>i</sup> with five porches; in Hebrew it is called Bethzatha.<sup>j</sup> <sup>3</sup> A large crowd of sick people were lying on the porches—the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed.<sup>k</sup> <sup>5</sup> A man was there who had been sick for

*i* Near the Sheep Gate ... a pool; or Near the Sheep Pool ... a place.

*j* Bethzatha; some manuscripts have Bethesda.

*k* Some manuscripts add verses 3b-4: They were waiting for the water to

thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> Jesus saw him lying there, and he knew that the man had been sick for such a long time; so he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

<sup>7</sup> The sick man answered, “Sir, I don’t have anyone here to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am trying to get in, somebody else gets there first.”

<sup>8</sup> Jesus said to him, “Get up, pick up your mat, and walk.” <sup>9</sup> Immediately the man got well; he picked up his mat and started walking.

The day this happened was a Sabbath, <sup>10</sup> so the Jewish authorities told the man who had been healed, “This is a Sabbath, and it is against our Law for you to carry your mat.”

<sup>11</sup> He answered, “The man who made me well told me to pick up my mat and walk.”

<sup>12</sup> They asked him, “Who is the man who told you to do this?”

<sup>13</sup> But the man who had been healed did not know who Jesus was, for there was a crowd in that place, and Jesus had slipped away.

<sup>14</sup> Afterward, Jesus found him in the Temple and said, “Listen, you are well now; so stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”

<sup>15</sup> Then the man left and told the Jewish authorities that it was Jesus who had healed him. <sup>16</sup> So they began to persecute Jesus, because he had done this healing on a Sabbath. <sup>17</sup> Jesus answered them, “My Father is always working, and I too must work.”

<sup>18</sup> This saying made the Jewish authorities all the more determined to kill him; not only had he broken the Sabbath Law, but he had said that God was his own Father and in this way had made himself equal with God.

### **The Authority of the Son**

<sup>19</sup> So Jesus answered them, “I tell you the truth: the Son

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*move, <sup>4</sup> because every now and then an angel of the Lord went down into the pool and stirred up the water. The first sick person to go into the pool after the water was stirred up was healed from whatever disease he had.*

can do nothing on his own; he does only what he sees his Father doing. What the Father does, the Son also does.<sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. He will show him even greater things to do than this, and you will all be amazed.<sup>21</sup> Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, in the same way the Son gives life to those he wants to.<sup>22</sup> Nor does the Father himself judge anyone. He has given his Son the full right to judge,<sup>23</sup> so that all will honor the Son in the same way as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

<sup>24</sup> “I am telling you the truth: those who hear my words and believe in him who sent me have eternal life. They will not be judged, but have already passed from death to life.<sup>25</sup> I am telling you the truth: the time is coming—the time has already come—when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear it will come to life.<sup>26</sup> Just as the Father is himself the source of life, in the same way he has made his Son to be the source of life.<sup>27</sup> And he has given the Son the right to judge, because he is the Son of Man.<sup>28</sup> Do not be surprised at this; the time is coming when all the dead will hear his voice<sup>29</sup> and come out of their graves: those who have done good will rise and live, and those who have done evil will rise and be condemned.

### Witnesses to Jesus

<sup>30</sup> “I can do nothing on my own authority; I judge only as God tells me, so my judgment is right, because I am not trying to do what I want, but only what he who sent me wants.

<sup>31</sup> “If I testify on my own behalf, what I say is not to be accepted as real proof.<sup>32</sup> But there is someone else who testifies on my behalf, and I know that what he says about me is true.

<sup>33</sup> John is the one to whom you sent your messengers, and he spoke on behalf of the truth.<sup>34</sup> It is not that I must have a human witness; I say this only in order that you may be saved.<sup>35</sup> John was like a lamp, burning and shining, and you were willing for a while to enjoy his light.<sup>36</sup> But I have a witness on my behalf which is even greater than the witness that John gave: what I do, that is, the deeds my Father gave me to do, these speak on my

behalf and show that the Father has sent me.<sup>37</sup> And the Father, who sent me, also testifies on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his face,<sup>38</sup> and you do not keep his message in your hearts, for you do not believe in the one whom he sent.<sup>39</sup> You study the Scriptures, because you think that in them you will find eternal life. And these very Scriptures speak about me!<sup>40</sup> Yet you are not willing to come to me in order to have life.

<sup>41</sup> “I am not looking for human praise.<sup>42</sup> But I know what kind of people you are, and I know that you have no love for God in your hearts.<sup>43</sup> I have come with my Father’s authority, but you have not received me; when, however, someone comes with his own authority, you will receive him.<sup>44</sup> You like to receive praise from one another, but you do not try to win praise from the one who alone is God; how, then, can you believe me?<sup>45</sup> Do not think, however, that I am the one who will accuse you to my Father. Moses, in whom you have put your hope, is the very one who will accuse you.<sup>46</sup> If you had really believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me.<sup>47</sup> But since you do not believe what he wrote, how can you believe what I say?”

### Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

**6** After this, Jesus went across Lake Galilee (or, Lake Tiberias, as it is also called).<sup>2</sup> A large crowd followed him, because they had seen his miracles of healing the sick.<sup>3</sup> Jesus went up a hill and sat down with his disciples.<sup>4</sup> The time for the Passover Festival was near.<sup>5</sup> Jesus looked around and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, so he asked Philip, “Where can we buy enough food to feed all these people?” (<sup>6</sup> He said this to test Philip; actually he already knew what he would do.)

<sup>7</sup> Philip answered, “For everyone to have even a little, it would take more than two hundred silver coins<sup>l</sup> to buy enough bread.”

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*l SILVER COINS: A silver coin was the daily wage of a rural worker (see Mt 20.2).*

<sup>8</sup> Another one of his disciples, Andrew, who was Simon Peter's brother, said, <sup>9</sup> "There is a boy here who has five loaves of barley bread and two fish. But they will certainly not be enough for all these people."

<sup>10</sup> "Make the people sit down," Jesus told them. (There was a lot of grass there.) So all the people sat down; there were about five thousand men. <sup>11</sup> Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God, and distributed it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, and they all had as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup> When they were all full, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces left over; let us not waste a bit." <sup>13</sup> So they gathered them all and filled twelve baskets with the pieces left over from the five barley loaves which the people had eaten.

<sup>14</sup> Seeing this miracle that Jesus had performed, the people there said, "Surely this is the Prophet<sup>m</sup> who was to come into the world!" <sup>15</sup> Jesus knew that they were about to come and seize him in order to make him king by force; so he went off again to the hills by himself.

### **Jesus Walks on the Water**

<sup>16</sup> When evening came, Jesus' disciples went down to the lake, <sup>17</sup> got into a boat, and went back across the lake toward Capernaum. Night came on, and Jesus still had not come to them. <sup>18</sup> By then a strong wind was blowing and stirring up the water. <sup>19</sup> The disciples had rowed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the water, coming near the boat, and they were terrified. <sup>20</sup> "Don't be afraid," Jesus told them, "it is I!" <sup>21</sup> Then they willingly took him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached land at the place they were heading for.

### **The People Seek Jesus**

<sup>22</sup> Next day the crowd which had stayed on the other side of the lake realized that there had been only one boat there. They knew that Jesus had not gone in it with his disciples, but

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*m THE PROPHET: See 1.21.*

that they had left without him. <sup>23</sup> Other boats, which were from Tiberias, came to shore near the place where the crowd had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. <sup>24</sup> When the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they got into those boats and went to Capernaum, looking for him.

### Jesus the Bread of Life

<sup>25</sup> When the people found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they said to him, “Teacher, when did you get here?” <sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, “I am telling you the truth: you are looking for me because you ate the bread and had all you wanted, not because you understood my miracles. <sup>27</sup> Do not work for food that spoils; instead, work for the food that lasts for eternal life. This is the food which the Son of Man will give you, because God, the Father, has put his mark of approval on him.”

<sup>28</sup> So they asked him, “What can we do in order to do what God wants us to do?”

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “What God wants you to do is to believe in the one he sent.”

<sup>30</sup> They replied, “What miracle will you perform so that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? <sup>31</sup> Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, just as the scripture says, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

<sup>32</sup> “I am telling you the truth,” Jesus said. “What Moses gave you was not<sup>n</sup> the bread from heaven; it is my Father who gives you the real bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread that God gives is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

<sup>34</sup> “Sir,” they asked him, “give us this bread always.”

<sup>35</sup> “I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “Those who come to me will never be hungry; those who believe in me will never be thirsty. <sup>36</sup> Now, I told you that you have seen me but will not believe. <sup>37</sup> Everyone whom my Father gives me will come to me. I will never turn away anyone who comes to me,

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*n* What Moses gave you was not; or It was not Moses who gave you.

<sup>38</sup>because I have come down from heaven to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup>And it is the will of him who sent me that I should not lose any of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them all to life on the last day. <sup>40</sup>For what my Father wants is that all who see the Son and believe in him should have eternal life. And I will raise them to life on the last day.”

<sup>41</sup>The people started grumbling about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” <sup>42</sup>So they said, “This man is Jesus son of Joseph, isn’t he? We know his father and mother. How, then, does he now say he came down from heaven?”

<sup>43</sup>Jesus answered, “Stop grumbling among yourselves.

<sup>44</sup>People cannot come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them to me; and I will raise them to life on the last day.

<sup>45</sup>The prophets wrote, ‘Everyone will be taught by God.’ Anyone who hears the Father and learns from him comes to me. <sup>46</sup>This does not mean that anyone has seen the Father; he who is from God is the only one who has seen the Father. <sup>47</sup>I am telling you the truth: he who believes has eternal life. <sup>48</sup>I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup>Your ancestors ate manna in the desert, but they died.

<sup>50</sup>But the bread that comes down from heaven is of such a kind that whoever eats it will not die. <sup>51</sup>I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If you eat this bread, you will live forever. The bread that I will give you is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live.”

<sup>52</sup>This started an angry argument among them. “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” they asked.

<sup>53</sup>Jesus said to them, “I am telling you the truth: if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves. <sup>54</sup>Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them to life on the last day. <sup>55</sup>For my flesh is the real food; my blood is the real drink. <sup>56</sup>Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them. <sup>57</sup>The living Father sent me, and because of him I live also. In the same way whoever eats me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup>This, then, is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the bread that your ancestors ate, but then

later died. Those who eat this bread will live forever.”

<sup>59</sup> Jesus said this as he taught in the synagogue in Capernaum.

### **The Words of Eternal Life**

<sup>60</sup> Many of his followers heard this and said, “This teaching is too hard. Who can listen to it?”

<sup>61</sup> Without being told, Jesus knew that they were grumbling about this, so he said to them, “Does this make you want to give up? <sup>62</sup> Suppose, then, that you should see the Son of Man go back up to the place where he was before? <sup>63</sup> What gives life is God’s Spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God’s life-giving Spirit. <sup>64</sup> Yet some of you do not believe.” (Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones that would not believe and which one would betray him.) <sup>65</sup> And he added, “This is the very reason I told you that no people can come to me unless the Father makes it possible for them to do so.”

<sup>66</sup> Because of this, many of Jesus’ followers turned back and would not go with him any more. <sup>67</sup> So he asked the twelve disciples, “And you-would you also like to leave?” <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. <sup>69</sup> And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God.”

<sup>70</sup> Jesus replied, “I chose the twelve of you, didn’t I? Yet one of you is a devil!” <sup>71</sup> He was talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For Judas, even though he was one of the twelve disciples, was going to betray him.

### **Jesus and His Brothers**

**7** After this, Jesus traveled in Galilee; he did not want to travel in Judea, because the Jewish authorities there were wanting to kill him. <sup>2</sup> The time for the Festival of Shelters was near, <sup>3</sup> so Jesus’ brothers said to him, “Leave this place and go to Judea, so that your followers will see the things that you are doing. <sup>4</sup> People don’t hide what they are doing if they want to

be well known. Since you are doing these things, let the whole world know about you!” (5 Not even his brothers believed in him.)

6 Jesus said to them, “The right time for me has not yet come. Any time is right for you. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me, because I keep telling it that its ways are bad. 8 You go on to the festival. I am not going<sup>o</sup> to this festival, because the right time has not come for me.” 9 He said this and then stayed on in Galilee.

### Jesus at the Festival of Shelters

10 After his brothers had gone to the festival, Jesus also went; however, he did not go openly, but secretly. 11 The Jewish authorities were looking for him at the festival. “Where is he?” they asked.

12 There was much whispering about him in the crowd. “He is a good man,” some people said. “No,” others said, “he fools the people.” 13 But no one talked about him openly, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. 14 The festival was nearly half over when Jesus went to the Temple and began teaching. 15 The Jewish authorities were greatly surprised and said, “How does this man know so much when he has never been to school?”

16 Jesus answered, “What I teach is not my own teaching, but it comes from God, who sent me. 17 Whoever is willing to do what God wants will know whether what I teach comes from God or whether I speak on my own authority.

18 Those who speak on their own authority are trying to gain glory for themselves. But he who wants glory for the one who sent him is honest, and there is nothing false in him. 19 Moses gave you the Law, didn’t he? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you trying to kill me?”

20 “You have a demon in you!” the crowd answered. “Who is trying to kill you?”

21 Jesus answered, “I performed one miracle, and you

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*o I am not going; some manuscripts have I am not yet going.*

were all surprised. <sup>22</sup> Moses ordered you to circumcise your sons (although it was not Moses but your ancestors who started it), and so you circumcise a boy on the Sabbath. <sup>23</sup> If a boy is circumcised on the Sabbath so that Moses' Law is not broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? <sup>24</sup> Stop judging by external standards, and judge by true standards.”

### **Is He the Messiah?**

<sup>25</sup> Some of the people of Jerusalem said, “Isn't this the man the authorities are trying to kill? <sup>26</sup> Look! He is talking in public, and they say nothing against him! Can it be that they really know that he is the Messiah? <sup>27</sup> But when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from. And we all know where this man comes from.”

<sup>28</sup> As Jesus taught in the Temple, he said in a loud voice, “Do you really know me and know where I am from? I have not come on my own authority. He who sent me, however, is truthful. You do not know him, <sup>29</sup> but I know him, because I come from him and he sent me.”

<sup>30</sup> Then they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> But many in the crowd believed in him and said, “When the Messiah comes, will he perform more miracles than this man has?”

### **Guards Are Sent to Arrest Jesus**

<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering these things about Jesus, so they and the chief priests sent some guards to arrest him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus said, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I shall go away to him who sent me. <sup>34</sup> You will look for me, but you will not find me, because you cannot go where I will be.”

<sup>35</sup> The Jewish authorities said among themselves, “Where is he about to go so that we shall not find him? Will he go to the Greek cities where our people live, and teach the Greeks? <sup>36</sup> He says that we will look for him but will not find

him, and that we cannot go where he will be. What does he mean?”

### **Streams of Life-Giving Water**

<sup>37</sup> On the last and most important day of the festival Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice, “Whoever is thirsty should come to me, and <sup>38</sup> whoever believes in me should drink. As the scripture says, ‘Streams of life-giving water will pour out from his side.’”<sup>p</sup> <sup>39</sup> Jesus said this about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were going to receive. At that time the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not been raised to glory.

### **Division among the People**

<sup>40</sup> Some of the people in the crowd heard him say this and said, “This man is really the Prophet!”<sup>q</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Others said, “He is the Messiah!”

But others said, “The Messiah will not come from Galilee! <sup>42</sup> The scripture says that the Messiah will be a descendant of King David and will be born in Bethlehem, the town where David lived.” <sup>43</sup> So there was a division in the crowd because of Jesus. <sup>44</sup> Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

### **The Unbelief of the Jewish Authorities**

<sup>45</sup> When the guards went back, the chief priests and Pharisees asked them, “Why did you not bring him?”

<sup>46</sup> The guards answered, “Nobody has ever talked the way this man does!”

<sup>47</sup> “Did he fool you, too?” the Pharisees asked them.

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*p* Jesus’ words in verses 37-38 may be translated: “Whoever is thirsty should come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> As the scripture says, ‘Streams of life-giving water will pour out from within anyone who believes in me.’”

*q* THE PROPHET: See 1.21.

<sup>48</sup> “Have you ever known one of the authorities or one Pharisee to believe in him? <sup>49</sup> This crowd does not know the Law of Moses, so they are under God’s curse!”

<sup>50</sup> One of the Pharisees there was Nicodemus, the man who had gone to see Jesus before. He said to the others, <sup>51</sup> “According to our Law we cannot condemn people before hearing them and finding out what they have done.”

<sup>52</sup> “Well,” they answered, “are you also from Galilee? Study the Scriptures and you will learn that no prophet ever comes’ from Galilee.”

### The Woman Caught in Adultery

**8** [Then everyone went home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. <sup>2</sup> Early the next morning he went back to the Temple. All the people gathered around him, and he sat down and began to teach them. <sup>3</sup> The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and they made her stand before them all. <sup>4</sup> “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. <sup>5</sup> In our Law Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say?” <sup>6</sup> They said this to trap Jesus, so that they could accuse him. But he bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. <sup>7</sup> As they stood there asking him questions, he straightened up and said to them, “Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her.” <sup>8</sup> Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground. <sup>9</sup> When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. <sup>10</sup> He straightened up and said to her, “Where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you?”

<sup>11</sup> “No one, sir,” she answered.

“Well, then,” Jesus said, “I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again.”]<sup>s</sup>

*r* no prophet ever comes; one manuscript has the Prophet will not come.

*s* Many manuscripts and early translations do not have this passage (8.1-11);

## Jesus the Light of the World

<sup>12</sup> Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. “I am the light of the world,” he said. “Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness.”

<sup>13</sup> The Pharisees said to him, “Now you are testifying on your own behalf; what you say proves nothing.”

<sup>14</sup> “No,” Jesus answered, “even though I do testify on my own behalf, what I say is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going. You do not know where I came from or where I am going. <sup>15</sup> You make judgments in a purely human way; I pass judgment on no one. <sup>16</sup> But if I were to do so, my judgment would be true, because I am not alone in this; the Father who sent me is with me. <sup>17</sup> It is written in your Law that when two witnesses agree, what they say is true. <sup>18</sup> I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me also testifies on my behalf.”

<sup>19</sup> “Where is your father?” they asked him.

“You know neither me nor my Father,” Jesus answered. “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.”

<sup>20</sup> Jesus said all this as he taught in the Temple, in the room where the offering boxes were placed. And no one arrested him, because his hour had not come.

## You Cannot Go Where I Am Going

<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said to them, “I will go away; you will look for me, but you will die in your sins. You cannot go where I am going.”

<sup>22</sup> So the Jewish authorities said, “He says that we cannot go where he is going. Does this mean that he will kill himself?”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, “You belong to this world here below, but I come from above. You are from this world, but I am not from this world. <sup>24</sup> That is why I told you that you will die in

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*others have it after Jn 21.24; others have it after Lk 21.38; one manuscript has it after Jn 7.36.*

your sins. And you will die in your sins if you do not believe that 'I Am Who I Am.'"

<sup>25</sup> "Who are you?" they asked him. Jesus answered, "What I have told you from the very beginning.<sup>t</sup> <sup>26</sup> I have much to say about you, much to condemn you for. The one who sent me, however, is truthful, and I tell the world only what I have heard from him."

<sup>27</sup> They did not understand that Jesus was talking to them about the Father. <sup>28</sup> So he said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, you will know that 'I Am Who I Am'; then you will know that I do nothing on my own authority, but I say only what the Father has instructed me to say. <sup>29</sup> And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, because I always do what pleases him."

<sup>30</sup> Many who heard Jesus say these things believed in him.

### **The Truth Will Set You Free**

<sup>31</sup> So Jesus said to those who believed in him, "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples; <sup>32</sup> you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

<sup>33</sup> "We are the descendants of Abraham," they answered, "and we have never been anybody's slaves. What do you mean, then, by saying, 'You will be free'?"

<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, "I am telling you the truth: everyone who sins is a slave of sin. <sup>35</sup> A slave does not belong to a family permanently, but a son belongs there forever. <sup>36</sup> If the Son sets you free, then you will be really free. <sup>37</sup> I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are trying to kill me, because you will not accept my teaching. <sup>38</sup> I talk about what my Father has shown me, but you do what your father has told you."

<sup>39</sup> They answered him, "Our father is Abraham."

"If you really were Abraham's children," Jesus replied,

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*t* What I have told you from the very beginning; or Why should I speak to you at all?

“you would do” the same things that he did. <sup>40</sup> All I have ever done is to tell you the truth I heard from God, yet you are trying to kill me. Abraham did nothing like this! <sup>41</sup> You are doing what your father did.”

“God himself is the only Father we have,” they answered, “and we are his true children.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “If God really were your Father, you would love me, because I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own authority, but he sent me. <sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to listen to my message. <sup>44</sup> You are the children of your father, the Devil, and you want to follow your father’s desires. From the very beginning he was a murderer and has never been on the side of truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he is only doing what is natural to him, because he is a liar and the father of all lies. <sup>45</sup> But I tell the truth, and that is why you do not believe me. <sup>46</sup> Which one of you can prove that I am guilty of sin? If I tell the truth, then why do you not believe me? <sup>47</sup> He who comes from God listens to God’s words. You, however, are not from God, and that is why you will not listen.”

### Jesus and Abraham

<sup>48</sup> They asked Jesus, “Were we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon in you?”

<sup>49</sup> “I have no demon,” Jesus answered. “I honor my Father, but you dishonor me. <sup>50</sup> I am not seeking honor for myself. But there is one who is seeking it and who judges in my favor. <sup>51</sup> I am telling you the truth: whoever obeys my teaching will never die.”

<sup>52</sup> They said to him, “Now we know for sure that you have a demon! Abraham died, and the prophets died, yet you say that whoever obeys your teaching will never die. <sup>53</sup> Our father Abraham died; you do not claim to be greater than Abraham, do you? And the prophets also died. Who do you think you are?”

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*u If you really were ... you would do; some manuscripts have If you are ... do.*

<sup>54</sup> Jesus answered, “If I were to honor myself that honor would be worth nothing. The one who honors me is my Father—the very one you say is your God. <sup>55</sup> You have never known him, but I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I obey his word.

<sup>56</sup> Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see the time of my coming; he saw it and was glad.”

<sup>57</sup> They said to him, “You are not even fifty years old—and you have seen Abraham?”<sup>v</sup>

<sup>58</sup> “I am telling you the truth,” Jesus replied. “Before Abraham was born, ‘I Am.’”

<sup>59</sup> Then they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and left the Temple.

### Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

**9** As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been born blind. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, “Teacher, whose sin caused him to be born blind? Was it his own or his parents’ sin?”

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “His blindness has nothing to do with his sin or his parents’ sins. He is blind so that God’s power might be seen at work in him. <sup>4</sup> As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me; night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light for the world.”

<sup>6</sup> After he said this, Jesus spat on the ground and made some mud with the spittle; he rubbed the mud on the man’s eyes <sup>7</sup> and told him, “Go and wash your face in the Pool of Siloam.” (This name means “Sent.”) So the man went, washed his face, and came back seeing.

<sup>8</sup> His neighbors, then, and the people who had seen him begging before this, asked, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?”

<sup>9</sup> Some said, “He is the one,” but others said, “No he isn’t; he just looks like him.” So the man himself said, “I am the man.”

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*v you have seen Abraham?; some manuscripts have has Abraham seen you?*

<sup>10</sup> “How is it that you can now see?” they asked him.

<sup>11</sup> He answered, “The man called Jesus made some mud, rubbed it on my eyes, and told me to go to Siloam and wash my face. So I went, and as soon as I washed, I could see.”

<sup>12</sup> “Where is he?” they asked.

“I don’t know,” he answered.

### **The Pharisees Investigate the Healing**

<sup>13</sup> Then they took to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. <sup>14</sup> The day that Jesus made the mud and cured him of his blindness was a Sabbath. <sup>15</sup> The Pharisees, then, asked the man again how he had received his sight. He told them, “He put some mud on my eyes; I washed my face, and now I can see.”

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, “The man who did this cannot be from God, for he does not obey the Sabbath law.”

Others, however, said, “How could a man who is a sinner perform such miracles as these?” And there was a division among them.

<sup>17</sup> So the Pharisees asked the man once more, “You say he cured you of your blindness—well, what do you say about him?”

“He is a prophet,” the man answered.

<sup>18</sup> The Jewish authorities, however, were not willing to believe that he had been blind and could now see, until they called his parents <sup>19</sup> and asked them, “Is this your son? You say that he was born blind; how is it, then, that he can now see?”

<sup>20</sup> His parents answered, “We know that he is our son, and we know that he was born blind. <sup>21</sup> But we do not know how it is that he is now able to see, nor do we know who cured him of his blindness. Ask him; he is old enough, and he can answer for himself!” <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, who had already agreed that anyone who said he believed that Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> That is why his parents said, “He is old enough; ask him!”

<sup>24</sup> A second time they called back the man who had been born blind, and said to him, “Promise before God that you

will tell the truth! We know that this man who cured you is a sinner.”

<sup>25</sup> “I do not know if he is a sinner or not,” the man replied. “One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see.”

<sup>26</sup> “What did he do to you?” they asked. “How did he cure you of your blindness?”

<sup>27</sup> “I have already told you,” he answered, “and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Maybe you, too, would like to be his disciples?”

<sup>28</sup> They insulted him and said, “You are that fellow’s disciple; but we are Moses’ disciples. <sup>29</sup> We know that God spoke to Moses; as for that fellow, however, we do not even know where he comes from!”

<sup>30</sup> The man answered, “What a strange thing that is! You do not know where he comes from, but he cured me of my blindness! <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners; he does listen to people who respect him and do what he wants them to do. <sup>32</sup> Since the beginning of the world nobody has ever heard of anyone giving sight to a person born blind. <sup>33</sup> Unless this man came from God, he would not be able to do a thing.”

<sup>34</sup> They answered, “You were born and brought up in sin— and you are trying to teach us?” And they expelled him from the synagogue.

## Spiritual Blindness

<sup>35</sup> When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

<sup>36</sup> The man answered, “Tell me who he is, sir, so that I can believe in him!”

<sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, “You have already seen him, and he is the one who is talking with you now.”

<sup>38</sup> “I believe, Lord!” the man said, and knelt down before Jesus.

<sup>39</sup> Jesus said, “I came to this world to judge, so that the blind should see and those who see should become blind.”

<sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were there with him heard him

say this and asked him, “Surely you don’t mean that we are blind, too?”

<sup>41</sup> Jesus answered, “If you were blind, then you would not be guilty; but since you claim that you can see, this means that you are still guilty.”

### The Parable of the Shepherd

**10** Jesus said, “I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice.”

<sup>6</sup> Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

### Jesus the Good Shepherd

<sup>7</sup> So Jesus said again, “I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All others who came before me are thieves and robbers but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life-life in all its fullness.

<sup>11</sup> “I am the good shepherd, who is willing to die for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> When the hired man, who is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees a wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away; so the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them.

<sup>13</sup> The hired man runs away because he is only a hired man and does not care about the sheep. <sup>14-15</sup> I am the good shepherd. As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for

them. <sup>16</sup> There are other sheep which belong to me that are not in this sheep pen. I must bring them, too; they will listen to my voice, and they will become<sup>w</sup> one flock with one shepherd.

<sup>17</sup> “The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do.”

<sup>19</sup> Again there was a division among the people because of these words. <sup>20</sup> Many of them were saying, “He has a demon! He is crazy! Why do you listen to him?”

<sup>21</sup> But others were saying, “A man with a demon could not talk like this! How could a demon give sight to blind people?”

### Jesus Is Rejected

<sup>22</sup> It was winter, and the Festival of the Dedication of the Temple was being celebrated in Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> Jesus was walking in Solomon’s Porch in the Temple, <sup>24</sup> when the people gathered around him and asked, “How long are you going to keep us in suspense? Tell us the plain truth: are you the Messiah?”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, “I have already told you, but you would not believe me. The deeds I do by my Father’s authority speak on my behalf; <sup>26</sup> but you will not believe, for you are not my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they shall never die. No one can snatch them away from me. <sup>29</sup> What my Father has given me is greater<sup>x</sup> than everything, and no one can snatch them away from the Father’s care. <sup>30</sup> The Father and I are one.”

<sup>31</sup> Then the people again picked up stones to throw at him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus said to them, “I have done many good deeds in your presence which the Father gave me to do; for which one of these do you want to stone me?”

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*w they will become; some manuscripts have there will be.*

*x What my Father has given me is greater; some manuscripts have My Father, who gave them to me, is greater.*

<sup>33</sup> They answered, “We do not want to stone you because of any good deeds, but because of your blasphemy! You are only a man, but you are trying to make yourself God!”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “It is written in your own Law that God said, ‘You are gods.’ <sup>35</sup> We know that what the scripture says is true forever; and God called those people gods, the people to whom his message was given. <sup>36</sup> As for me, the Father chose me and sent me into the world. How, then, can you say that I blaspheme because I said that I am the Son of God? <sup>37</sup> Do not believe me, then, if I am not doing the things my Father wants me to do. <sup>38</sup> But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, you should at least believe my deeds, in order that you may know once and for all that the Father is in me and that I am in the Father.”

<sup>39</sup> Once more they tried to seize Jesus, but he slipped out of their hands.

<sup>40</sup> Jesus then went back again across the Jordan River to the place where John had been baptizing, and he stayed there. <sup>41</sup> Many people came to him. “John performed no miracles,” they said, “but everything he said about this man was true.” <sup>42</sup> And many people there believed in him.

## The Death of Lazarus

**I** A man named Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, became sick. Bethany was the town where Mary and her sister Martha lived. (<sup>2</sup> This Mary was the one who poured the perfume on the Lord’s feet and wiped them with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was sick.) <sup>3</sup> The sisters sent Jesus a message: “Lord, your dear friend is sick.”

<sup>4</sup> When Jesus heard it, he said, “The final result of this sickness will not be the death of Lazarus; this has happened in order to bring glory to God, and it will be the means by which the Son of God will receive glory.”

<sup>5</sup> Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup> Yet when he received the news that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days. <sup>7</sup> Then he said to the disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”

<sup>8</sup> “Teacher,” the disciples answered, “just a short time ago the people there wanted to stone you; and are you planning to go back?”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said, “A day has twelve hours, doesn’t it? So those who walk in broad daylight do not stumble, for they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But if they walk during the night they stumble, because they have no light.” <sup>11</sup> Jesus said this and then added, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I will go and wake him up.”

<sup>12</sup> The disciples answered, “If he is asleep, Lord, he will get well.”

<sup>13</sup> Jesus meant that Lazarus had died, but they thought he meant natural sleep. <sup>14</sup> So Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, <sup>15</sup> but for your sake I am glad that I was not with him, so that you will believe. Let us go to him.”

<sup>16</sup> Thomas (called the Twin) said to his fellow disciples, “Let us all go along with the Teacher, so that we may die with him!”

### **Jesus the Resurrection and the Life**

<sup>17</sup> When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days before. <sup>18</sup> Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many Judeans had come to see Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother’s death.

<sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed in the house. <sup>21</sup> Martha said to Jesus, “If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died! <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask him for.”

<sup>23</sup> “Your brother will rise to life,” Jesus told her.

<sup>24</sup> “I know,” she replied, “that he will rise to life on the last day.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup> and those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

<sup>27</sup> “Yes, Lord!” she answered. “I do believe that you are

the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.”

### **Jesus Weeps**

<sup>28</sup> After Martha said this, she went back and called her sister Mary privately. “The Teacher is here,” she told her, “and is asking for you.” <sup>29</sup> When Mary heard this, she got up and hurried out to meet him. (<sup>30</sup> Jesus had not yet arrived in the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.) <sup>31</sup> The people who were in the house with Mary comforting her followed her when they saw her get up and hurry out. They thought that she was going to the grave to weep there.

<sup>32</sup> Mary arrived where Jesus was, and as soon as she saw him, she fell at his feet. “Lord,” she said, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died!”

<sup>33</sup> Jesus saw her weeping, and he saw how the people with her were weeping also; his heart was touched, and he was deeply moved. <sup>34</sup> “Where have you buried him?” he asked them.

“Come and see, Lord,” they answered.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept. <sup>36</sup> “See how much he loved him!” the people said.

<sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “He gave sight to the blind man, didn’t he? Could he not have kept Lazarus from dying?”

### **Lazarus Is Brought to Life**

<sup>38</sup> Deeply moved once more, Jesus went to the tomb, which was a cave with a stone placed at the entrance. <sup>39</sup> “Take the stone away!” Jesus ordered. Martha, the dead man’s sister, answered, “There will be a bad smell, Lord. He has been buried four days!”

<sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believed?” <sup>41</sup> They took the stone away. Jesus looked up and said, “I thank you, Father, that you listen to me.

<sup>42</sup> I know that you always listen to me, but I say this for the sake of the people here, so that they will believe that you sent me.”

<sup>43</sup> After he had said this, he called out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” <sup>44</sup> He came out, his hands and feet wrapped in grave

cloths, and with a cloth around his face. “Untie him,” Jesus told them, “and let him go.”

### The Plot against Jesus

<sup>45</sup> Many of the people who had come to visit Mary saw what Jesus did, and they believed in him. <sup>46</sup> But some of them returned to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. <sup>47</sup> So the Pharisees and the chief priests met with the Council and said, “What shall we do? Look at all the miracles this man is performing! <sup>48</sup> If we let him go on in this way, everyone will believe in him, and the Roman authorities will take action and destroy our Temple and our nation!”

<sup>49</sup> One of them, named Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, said, “What fools you are! <sup>50</sup> Don’t you realize that it is better for you to have one man die for the people, instead of having the whole nation destroyed?” <sup>51</sup> Actually, he did not say this of his own accord; rather, as he was High Priest that year, he was prophesying that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish people, <sup>52</sup> and not only for them, but also to bring together into one body all the scattered people of God.

<sup>53</sup> From that day on the Jewish authorities made plans to kill Jesus. <sup>54</sup> So Jesus did not travel openly in Judea, but left and went to a place near the desert, to a town named Ephraim, where he stayed with the disciples.

<sup>55</sup> The time for the Passover Festival was near, and many people went up from the country to Jerusalem to perform the ritual of purification before the festival. <sup>56</sup> They were looking for Jesus, and as they gathered in the Temple, they asked one another, “What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?” <sup>57</sup> The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where Jesus was, he must report it, so that they could arrest him.

### Jesus Is Anointed at Bethany

**12** Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, the man he had raised from death. <sup>2</sup> They prepared a dinner for him there, which

Martha helped serve; Lazarus was one of those who were sitting at the table with Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Then Mary took a whole pint of a very expensive perfume made of pure nard, poured it on Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The sweet smell of the perfume filled the whole house. <sup>4</sup> One of Jesus' disciples, Judas Iscariot—the one who was going to betray him—said, <sup>5</sup> “Why wasn't this perfume sold for three hundred silver coins<sup>y</sup> and the money given to the poor?” <sup>6</sup> He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief. He carried the money bag and would help himself from it.

<sup>7</sup> But Jesus said, “Leave her alone! Let her keep what she has for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup> You will always have poor people with you, but you will not always have me.”

### **The Plot against Lazarus**

<sup>9</sup> A large number of people heard that Jesus was in Bethany, so they went there, not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from death. <sup>10</sup> So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus too, <sup>11</sup> because on his account many Jews were rejecting them and believing in Jesus.

### **The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem**

<sup>12</sup> The next day the large crowd that had come to the Passover Festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the King of Israel!”

<sup>14</sup> Jesus found a donkey and rode on it, just as the scripture says,

<sup>15</sup> “Do not be afraid, city of Zion!

Here comes your king,  
riding on a young donkey.”

<sup>16</sup> His disciples did not understand this at the time; but when Jesus had been raised to glory, they remembered that the

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<sup>y</sup> SILVER COINS: See 6.7.

scripture said this about him and that they had done this for him.

<sup>17</sup> The people who had been with Jesus when he called Lazarus out of the grave and raised him from death had reported what had happened. <sup>18</sup> That was why the crowd met him—because they heard that he had performed this miracle. <sup>19</sup> The Pharisees then said to one another, “You see, we are not succeeding at all! Look, the whole world is following him!”

### **Some Greeks Seek Jesus**

<sup>20</sup> Some Greeks were among those who had gone to Jerusalem to worship during the festival. <sup>21</sup> They went to Philip (he was from Bethsaida in Galilee) and said, “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

<sup>22</sup> Philip went and told Andrew, and the two of them went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered them, “The hour has now come for the Son of Man to receive great glory. <sup>24</sup> I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains. <sup>25</sup> Those who love their own life will lose it; those who hate their own life in this world will keep it for life eternal. <sup>26</sup> Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honor anyone who serves me.

### **Jesus Speaks about His Death**

<sup>27</sup> “Now my heart is troubled—and what shall I say? Shall I say, ‘Father, do not let this hour come upon me’? But that is why I came—so that I might go through this hour of suffering. <sup>28</sup> Father, bring glory to your name!”

Then a voice spoke from heaven, “I have brought glory to it, and I will do so again.”

<sup>29</sup> The crowd standing there heard the voice, and some of them said it was thunder, while others said, “An angel spoke to him!”

<sup>30</sup> But Jesus said to them, “It was not for my sake that this voice spoke, but for yours. <sup>31</sup> Now is the time for this world

to be judged; now the ruler of this world will be overthrown.<sup>32</sup> When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to me.”  
(<sup>33</sup> In saying this he indicated the kind of death he was going to suffer.)

<sup>34</sup> The crowd answered, “Our Law tells us that the Messiah will live forever. How, then, can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?”

<sup>35</sup> Jesus answered, “The light will be among you a little longer. Continue on your way while you have the light, so that the darkness will not come upon you; for the one who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.<sup>36</sup> Believe in the light, then, while you have it, so that you will be the people of the light.”

### **The Unbelief of the People**

After Jesus said this, he went off and hid himself from them.<sup>37</sup> Even though he had performed all these miracles in their presence, they did not believe in him,<sup>38</sup> so that what the prophet Isaiah had said might come true:

“Lord, who believed the message we told?  
To whom did the Lord reveal his power?”

<sup>39</sup> And so they were not able to believe, because Isaiah also said,

<sup>40</sup> “God has blinded their eyes  
and closed their minds,  
so that their eyes would not see,  
and their minds would not understand,  
and they would not turn to me, says God,  
for me to heal them.”

<sup>41</sup> Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.

<sup>42</sup> Even then, many Jewish authorities believed in Jesus; but because of the Pharisees they did not talk about it openly, so as not to be expelled from the synagogue.<sup>43</sup> They loved human approval rather than the approval of God.

## Judgment by Jesus' Words

<sup>44</sup> Jesus said in a loud voice, "Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in him who sent me. <sup>45</sup> Whoever sees me sees also him who sent me. <sup>46</sup> I have come into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. <sup>47</sup> If people hear my message and do not obey it, I will not judge them. I came, not to judge the world, but to save it. <sup>48</sup> Those who reject me and do not accept my message have one who will judge them. The words I have spoken will be their judge on the last day! <sup>49</sup> This is true, because I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has commanded me what I must say and speak. <sup>50</sup> And I know that his command brings eternal life. What I say, then, is what the Father has told me to say."

## Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

**13** It was now the day before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. He had always loved those in the world who were his own, and he loved them to the very end.

<sup>2</sup> Jesus and his disciples were at supper. The Devil had already put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the thought of betraying Jesus.<sup>z</sup> <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had given him complete power; he knew that he had come from God and was going to God. <sup>4</sup> So he rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later."

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*z The Devil ... betraying Jesus; or The Devil had already decided that Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, would betray Jesus.*

<sup>8</sup> Peter declared, “Never at any time will you wash my feet!” “If I do not wash your feet,” Jesus answered, “you will no longer be my disciple.”

<sup>9</sup> Simon Peter answered, “Lord, do not wash only my feet, then! Wash my hands and head, too!” <sup>10</sup> Jesus said, “Those who have taken a bath are completely clean and do not have to wash themselves, except for their feet.<sup>aa</sup> All of you are clean—all except one.” (<sup>11</sup> Jesus already knew who was going to betray him; that is why he said, “All of you, except one, are clean.”)

<sup>12</sup> After Jesus had washed their feet, he put his outer garment back on and returned to his place at the table. “Do you understand what I have just done to you?” he asked. <sup>13</sup> “You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so, because that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup> I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. <sup>16</sup> I am telling you the truth: no slaves are greater than their master, and no messengers are greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup> Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice!

<sup>18</sup> “I am not talking about all of you: I know those I have chosen. But the scripture must come true that says, ‘The man who shared my food turned against me.’ <sup>19</sup> I tell you this now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe that ‘I Am Who I Am.’ <sup>20</sup> I am telling you the truth: whoever receives anyone I send receives me also; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.”

### **Jesus Predicts His Betrayal**

<sup>21</sup> After Jesus had said this, he was deeply troubled and declared openly, “I am telling you the truth: one of you is going to betray me.”

<sup>22</sup> The disciples looked at one another, completely puzzled about whom he meant. <sup>23</sup> One of the disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was sitting next to Jesus. <sup>24</sup> Simon Peter

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*aa Some manuscripts do not have except for their feet.*

motioned to him and said, "Ask him whom he is talking about."

<sup>25</sup> So that disciple moved closer to Jesus' side and asked, "Who is it, Lord?"

<sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, "I will dip some bread in the sauce and give it to him; he is the man." So he took a piece of bread, dipped it, and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. <sup>27</sup> As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Hurry and do what you must!" <sup>28</sup> None of the others at the table understood why Jesus said this to him. <sup>29</sup> Since Judas was in charge of the money bag, some of the disciples thought that Jesus had told him to go and buy what they needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor.

<sup>30</sup> Judas accepted the bread and went out at once. It was night.

### **The New Commandment**

<sup>31</sup> After Judas had left, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man's glory is revealed; now God's glory is revealed through him. <sup>32</sup> And if God's glory is revealed through him, then God will reveal the glory of the Son of Man in himself, and he will do so at once. <sup>33</sup> My children, I shall not be with you very much longer. You will look for me; but I tell you now what I told the Jewish authorities, 'You cannot go where I am going.' <sup>34</sup> And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."

### **Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial**

<sup>36</sup> "Where are you going, Lord?" Simon Peter asked him.

"You cannot follow me now where I am going," answered Jesus; "but later you will follow me."

<sup>37</sup> "Lord, why can't I follow you now?" asked Peter. "I am ready to die for you!"

<sup>38</sup> Jesus answered, "Are you really ready to die for me? I am telling you the truth: before the rooster crows you will say three times that you do not know me.

## Jesus the Way to the Father

**14** “Do not be worried and upset,” Jesus told them. “Believe<sup>ab</sup> in God and believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> There are many rooms in my Father’s house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so.<sup>ac</sup> <sup>3</sup> And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am. <sup>4</sup> You know the way that leads to the place where I am going.”

<sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going; so how can we know the way to get there?”

<sup>6</sup> Jesus answered him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me. <sup>7</sup> Now that you have known me,” he said to them, “you will know<sup>ad</sup> my Father also, and from now on you do know him and you have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father; that is all we need.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, “For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Why, then, do you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

<sup>10</sup> Do you not believe, Philip, that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I have spoken to you,” Jesus said to his disciples, “do not come from me. The Father, who remains in me, does his own work. <sup>11</sup> Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. If not, believe because of the things I do. <sup>12</sup> I am telling you the truth: those who believe in me will do what I do—yes, they will do even greater things, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> And I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father’s glory will be shown through the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask me<sup>ae</sup> for anything in my name, I will do it.

## The Promise of the Holy Spirit

*ab Believe; or You believe.*

*ac here are ... were not so; or There are many rooms in my Father’s house; if it were not so, would I tell you that I am going to prepare a place for you?*

*ad Now that you have known me ... you will know; some manuscripts have If you had known me ... you would know.*

*ae Some manuscripts do not have me.*

<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, you will obey my commandments.

<sup>16</sup> I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you forever. <sup>17</sup> He is the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and is<sup>af</sup> in you.

<sup>18</sup> “When I go, you will not be left all alone; I will come back to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father and that you are in me, just as I am in you.

<sup>21</sup> “Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. My Father will love those who love me; I too will love them and reveal myself to them.”

<sup>22</sup> Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “Lord, how can it be that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and my Father and I will come to them and live with them. <sup>24</sup> Those who do not love me do not obey my teaching. And the teaching you have heard is not mine, but comes from the Father, who sent me.

<sup>25</sup> “I have told you this while I am still with you. <sup>26</sup> The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you.

<sup>27</sup> “Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid. <sup>28</sup> You heard me say to you, ‘I am leaving, but I will come back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father; for he is greater than I. <sup>29</sup> I have told you this now before it all happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe. <sup>30</sup> I cannot talk with you much longer, because the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me, <sup>31</sup> but the world must know that I love the Father; that is why I do everything as he commands me.

“Come, let us go from this place.

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*af is; some manuscripts have will be.*

## Jesus the Real Vine

**15** “I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have been made clean already by the teaching I have given you. <sup>4</sup> Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup> “I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me. <sup>6</sup> Those who do not remain in me are thrown out like a branch and dry up; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, where they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it. <sup>8</sup> My Father’s glory is shown by your bearing much fruit; and in this way you become my disciples. <sup>9</sup> I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

<sup>11</sup> “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. <sup>13</sup> The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them. <sup>14</sup> And you are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup> I do not call you servants any longer, because servants do not know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me; I chose you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures. And so the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name. <sup>17</sup> This, then, is what I command you: love one another.

## The World’s Hatred

<sup>18</sup> “If the world hates you, just remember that it has

hated me first. <sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, then the world would love you as its own. But I chose you from this world, and you do not belong to it; that is why the world hates you.

<sup>20</sup> Remember what I told you: ‘Slaves are not greater than their master.’ If people persecuted me, they will persecute you too; if they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours too. <sup>21</sup> But they will do all this to you because you are mine; for they do not know the one who sent me. <sup>22</sup> They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not come and spoken to them; as it is, they no longer have any excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup> Whoever hates me hates my Father also. <sup>24</sup> They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not done among them the things that no one else ever did; as it is, they have seen what I did, and they hate both me and my Father. <sup>25</sup> This, however, was bound to happen so that what is written in their Law may come true: ‘They hated me for no reason at all.’

<sup>26</sup> “The Helper will come—the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God and who comes from the Father. I will send him to you from the Father, and he will speak about me. <sup>27</sup> And you, too, will speak about me, because you have been with me from the very beginning.

**16** “I have told you this, so that you will not give up your faith. <sup>2</sup> You will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time will come when those who kill you will think that by doing this they are serving God. <sup>3</sup> People will do these things to you because they have not known either the Father or me. <sup>4</sup> But I have told you this, so that when the time comes for them to do these things, you will remember what I told you.

### **The Work of the Holy Spirit**

“I did not tell you these things at the beginning, for I was with you. <sup>5</sup> But now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me where I am going. <sup>6</sup> And now that I have told you, your hearts are full of sadness. <sup>7</sup> But I am telling you the truth: it is better for you that I go away, because if I do not go, the Helper will not come to you. But if I do go away, then I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when he comes, he will prove to

the people of the world that they are wrong about sin and about what is right and about God's judgment. <sup>9</sup> They are wrong about sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> they are wrong about what is right, because I am going to the Father and you will not see me any more; <sup>11</sup> and they are wrong about judgment, because the ruler of this world has already been judged.

<sup>12</sup> "I have much more to tell you, but now it would be too much for you to bear. <sup>13</sup> When, however, the Spirit comes, who reveals the truth about God, he will lead you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own authority, but he will speak of what he hears and will tell you of things to come. <sup>14</sup> He will give me glory, because he will take what I say and tell it to you. <sup>15</sup> All that my Father has is mine; that is why I said that the Spirit will take what I give him and tell it to you.

### Sadness and Gladness

<sup>16</sup> "In a little while you will not see me any more, and then a little while later you will see me."

<sup>17</sup> Some of his disciples asked among themselves, "What does this mean? He tells us that in a little while we will not see him, and then a little while later we will see him; and he also says, 'It is because I am going to the Father.' <sup>18</sup> What does this 'a little while' mean? We don't know what he is talking about!"

<sup>19</sup> Jesus knew that they wanted to question him, so he said to them, "I said, 'In a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me.' Is this what you are asking about among yourselves? <sup>20</sup> I am telling you the truth: you will cry and weep, but the world will be glad; you will be sad, but your sadness will turn into gladness. <sup>21</sup> When a woman is about to give birth, she is sad because her hour of suffering has come; but when the baby is born, she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. <sup>22</sup> That is how it is with you: now you are sad, but I will see you again, and your hearts will be filled with gladness, the kind of gladness that no one can take away from you.

<sup>23</sup> "When that day comes, you will not ask me for anything. I am telling you the truth: the Father will give you

whatever you ask of him in my name.<sup>ag 24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete.

### Victory over the World

<sup>25</sup> “I have used figures of speech to tell you these things. But the time will come when I will not use figures of speech, but will speak to you plainly about the Father. <sup>26</sup> When that day comes, you will ask him in my name; and I do not say that I will ask him on your behalf, <sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you. He loves you because you love me and have believed that I came from God. <sup>28</sup> I did come from the Father, and I came into the world; and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

<sup>29</sup> Then his disciples said to him, “Now you are speaking plainly, without using figures of speech. <sup>30</sup> We know now that you know everything; you do not need to have someone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

<sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, “Do you believe now? <sup>32</sup> The time is coming, and is already here, when all of you will be scattered, each of you to your own home, and I will be left all alone. But I am not really alone, because the Father is with me.

<sup>33</sup> I have told you this so that you will have peace by being united to me. The world will make you suffer. But be brave! I have defeated the world!”

### Jesus Prays for His Disciples

**17** After Jesus finished saying this, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son, so that the Son may give glory to you. <sup>2</sup> For you gave him authority over all people, so that he might give eternal life to all those you gave him. <sup>3</sup> And eternal life means to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus

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*ag the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name; some manuscripts have if you ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.*

Christ, whom you sent. <sup>4</sup> I have shown your glory on earth; I have finished the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made.

<sup>6</sup> “I have made you known to those you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me. They have obeyed your word, <sup>7</sup> and now they know that everything you gave me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> I gave them the message that you gave me, and they received it; they know that it is true that I came from you, and they believe that you sent me.

<sup>9</sup> “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those you gave me, for they belong to you. <sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine; and my glory is shown through them. <sup>11</sup> And now I am coming to you; I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world. Holy Father! Keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me,<sup>ah</sup> so that they may be one just as you and I are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I kept them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me.<sup>ai</sup> I protected them, and not one of them was lost, except the man who was bound to be lost—so that the scripture might come true. <sup>13</sup> And now I am coming to you, and I say these things in the world so that they might have my joy in their hearts in all its fullness. <sup>14</sup> I gave them your message, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>15</sup> I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but I do ask you to keep them safe from the Evil One. <sup>16</sup> Just as I do not belong to the world, they do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup> Dedicate them to yourself by means of the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> I sent them into the world, just as you sent me into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sake I dedicate myself to you, in order that they, too, may be truly dedicated to you.

<sup>20</sup> “I pray not only for them, but also for those who believe in me because of their message. <sup>21</sup> I pray that they may all

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*ah* Keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me; some manuscripts have By the power of your name keep safe those you have given me.

*ai* I kept them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me; some manuscripts have By the power of your name I kept safe those you have given me.

be one. Father! May they be in us, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they be one, so that the world will believe that you sent me. <sup>22</sup> I gave them the same glory you gave me, so that they may be one, just as you and I are one: <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that you sent me and that you love them as you love me.

<sup>24</sup> “Father! You have given them to me, and I want them to be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory, the glory you gave me; for you loved me before the world was made.

<sup>25</sup> Righteous Father! The world does not know you, but I know you, and these know that you sent me. <sup>26</sup> I made you known to them, and I will continue to do so, in order that the love you have for me may be in them, and so that I also may be in them.”

### The Arrest of Jesus

**18** After Jesus had said this prayer, he left with his disciples and went across Kidron Brook. There was a garden in that place, and Jesus and his disciples went in. <sup>2</sup> Judas, the traitor, knew where it was, because many times Jesus had met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So Judas went to the garden, taking with him a group of Roman soldiers, and some Temple guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees; they were armed and carried lanterns and torches. <sup>4</sup> Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward and asked them, “Who is it you are looking for?”

<sup>5</sup> “Jesus of Nazareth,” they answered.

“I am he,” he said.

Judas, the traitor, was standing there with them. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they moved back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Again Jesus asked them, “Who is it you are looking for?”

“Jesus of Nazareth,” they said.

<sup>8</sup> “I have already told you that I am he,” Jesus said. “If, then, you are looking for me, let these others go.” (<sup>9</sup> He said this so that what he had said might come true: “Father, I have not lost even one of those you gave me.”)

<sup>10</sup> Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck

the High Priest's slave, cutting off his right ear. The name of the slave was Malchus. <sup>11</sup> Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back in its place! Do you think that I will not drink the cup of suffering which my Father has given me?"

### **Jesus before Annas**

<sup>12</sup> Then the Roman soldiers with their commanding officer and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus, tied him up, <sup>13</sup> and took him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year. <sup>14</sup> It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish authorities that it was better that one man should die for all the people.

### **Peter Denies Jesus**

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That other disciple was well known to the High Priest, so he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the High Priest's house, <sup>16</sup> while Peter stayed outside by the gate. Then the other disciple went back out, spoke to the girl at the gate, and brought Peter inside. <sup>17</sup> The girl at the gate said to Peter, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of that man?"

"No, I am not," answered Peter.

<sup>18</sup> It was cold, so the servants and guards had built a charcoal fire and were standing around it, warming themselves. So Peter went over and stood with them, warming himself.

### **The High Priest Questions Jesus**

<sup>19</sup> The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered, "I have always spoken publicly to everyone; all my teaching was done in the synagogues and in the Temple, where all the people come together. I have never said anything in secret. <sup>21</sup> Why, then, do you question me? Question the people who heard me. Ask them what I told them—they know what I said."

<sup>22</sup> When Jesus said this, one of the guards there slapped him and said, "How dare you talk like that to the High Priest!"

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered him, “If I have said anything wrong, tell everyone here what it was. But if I am right in what I have said, why do you hit me?”

<sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the High Priest.

### **Peter Denies Jesus Again**

<sup>25</sup> Peter was still standing there keeping himself warm. So the others said to him, “Aren’t you also one of the disciples of that man?”

But Peter denied it. “No, I am not,” he said.

<sup>26</sup> One of the High Priest’s slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, spoke up. “Didn’t I see you with him in the garden?” he asked.

<sup>27</sup> Again Peter said “No”—and at once a rooster crowed.

### **Jesus before Pilate**

<sup>28</sup> Early in the morning Jesus was taken from Caiaphas’ house to the governor’s palace. The Jewish authorities did not go inside the palace, for they wanted to keep themselves ritually clean, in order to be able to eat the Passover meal. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate went outside to them and asked, “What do you accuse this man of?”

<sup>30</sup> Their answer was, “We would not have brought him to you if he had not committed a crime.”

<sup>31</sup> Pilate said to them, “Then you yourselves take him and try him according to your own law.”

They replied, “We are not allowed to put anyone to death.” (<sup>32</sup> This happened in order to make come true what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he would die.)

<sup>33</sup> Pilate went back into the palace and called Jesus. “Are you the king of the Jews?” he asked him.

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “Does this question come from you or have others told you about me?”

<sup>35</sup> Pilate replied, “Do you think I am a Jew? It was your own people and the chief priests who handed you over to me.”

What have you done?"

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, "My kingdom does not belong to this world; if my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish authorities. No, my kingdom does not belong here!"

<sup>37</sup> So Pilate asked him, "Are you a king, then?"

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. I was born and came into the world for this one purpose, to speak about the truth. Whoever belongs to the truth listens to me."

<sup>38</sup> "And what is truth?" Pilate asked.

### Jesus Is Sentenced to Death

Then Pilate went back outside to the people and said to them, "I cannot find any reason to condemn him. <sup>39</sup> But according to the custom you have, I always set free a prisoner for you during the Passover. Do you want me to set free for you the king of the Jews?"

<sup>40</sup> They answered him with a shout, "No, not him! We want Barabbas!" (Barabbas was a bandit.)

**19** Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. <sup>2</sup> The soldiers made a crown out of thorny branches and put it on his head; then they put a purple robe on him <sup>3</sup> and came to him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they went up and slapped him.

<sup>4</sup> Pilate went back out once more and said to the crowd, "Look, I will bring him out here to you to let you see that I cannot find any reason to condemn him." <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look! Here is the man!"

<sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the Temple guards saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "You take him, then, and crucify him. I find no reason to condemn him."

<sup>7</sup> The crowd answered back, "We have a law that says he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

<sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid. <sup>9</sup> He went back into the palace and asked Jesus, "Where do you come

from?” But Jesus did not answer. <sup>10</sup> Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Remember, I have the authority to set you free and also to have you crucified.”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, “You have authority over me only because it was given to you by God. So the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a worse sin.”

<sup>12</sup> When Pilate heard this, he tried to find a way to set Jesus free. But the crowd shouted back, “If you set him free, that means that you are not the Emperor’s friend! Anyone who claims to be a king is a rebel against the Emperor!”

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard these words, he took Jesus outside and sat down on the judge’s seat in the place called “The Stone Pavement.” (In Hebrew the name is “Gabbatha.”) <sup>14</sup> It was then almost noon of the day before the Passover. Pilate said to the people, “Here is your king!”

<sup>15</sup> They shouted back, “Kill him! Kill him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Do you want me to crucify your king?”

The chief priests answered, “The only king we have is the Emperor!”

<sup>16</sup> Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

## **Jesus Is Crucified**

So they took charge of Jesus. <sup>17</sup> He went out, carrying his cross, and came to “The Place of the Skull,” as it is called. (In Hebrew it is called “Golgotha.”) <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him; and they also crucified two other men, one on each side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross. “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,” is what he wrote. <sup>20</sup> Many people read it, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. <sup>21</sup> The chief priests said to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am the King of the Jews.’”

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written stays written.”

<sup>23</sup> After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each

soldier. They also took the robe, which was made of one piece of woven cloth without any seams in it. <sup>24</sup> The soldiers said to one another, “Let’s not tear it; let’s throw dice to see who will get it.” This happened in order to make the scripture come true:

“They divided my clothes among themselves  
and gambled for my robe.”

And this is what the soldiers did.

<sup>25</sup> Standing close to Jesus’ cross were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

<sup>26</sup> Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, “He is your son.”

<sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, “She is your mother.”  
From that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

### **The Death of Jesus**

<sup>28</sup> Jesus knew that by now everything had been completed; and in order to make the scripture come true, he said, “I am thirsty.”

<sup>29</sup> A bowl was there, full of cheap wine; so a sponge was soaked in the wine, put on a stalk of hyssop, and lifted up to his lips. <sup>30</sup> Jesus drank the wine and said, “It is finished!”

Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

### **Jesus’ Side Is Pierced**

<sup>31</sup> Then the Jewish authorities asked Pilate to allow them to break the legs of the men who had been crucified, and to take the bodies down from the crosses. They requested this because it was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses on the Sabbath, since the coming Sabbath was especially holy. <sup>32</sup> So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus’ side, and at once blood and water poured out. (<sup>35</sup> The one who saw this happen has spoken of it, so

that you also may believe.<sup>aj</sup> What he said is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.)<sup>36</sup> This was done to make the scripture come true: “Not one of his bones will be broken.”<sup>37</sup> And there is another scripture that says, “People will look at him whom they pierced.”

### The Burial of Jesus

<sup>38</sup> After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus’ body. (Joseph was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was afraid of the Jewish authorities.) Pilate told him he could have the body, so Joseph went and took it away.<sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes.<sup>40</sup> The two men took Jesus’ body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial.<sup>41</sup> There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried.<sup>42</sup> Since it was the day before the Sabbath and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus’ body there.

### The Empty Tomb

**20** Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the entrance.<sup>2</sup> She went running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and told them, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”

<sup>3</sup> Then Peter and the other disciple went to the tomb.

<sup>4</sup> The two of them were running, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first.<sup>5</sup> He bent over and saw the linen cloths, but he did not go in.<sup>6</sup> Behind him came Simon Peter, and he went straight into the tomb. He saw the

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*aj believe; some manuscripts have continue to believe.*

linen cloths lying there <sup>7</sup> and the cloth which had been around Jesus' head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in; he saw and believed. (<sup>9</sup> They still did not understand the scripture which said that he must rise from death.) <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back home.

### **Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

<sup>11</sup> Mary stood crying outside the tomb. While she was still crying, she bent over and looked in the tomb <sup>12</sup> and saw two angels there dressed in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>13</sup> "Woman, why are you crying?" they asked her.

She answered, "They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have put him!"

<sup>14</sup> Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there; but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> "Woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who is it that you are looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener, so she said to him, "If you took him away, sir, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him."

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned toward him and said in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (This means "Teacher.")

<sup>17</sup> "Do not hold on to me," Jesus told her, "because I have not yet gone back up to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them that I am returning to him who is my Father and their Father, my God and their God."

<sup>18</sup> So Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and related to them what he had told her.

### **Jesus Appears to His Disciples**

<sup>19</sup> It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus came and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. <sup>20</sup> After saying this,

he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup> Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive people’s sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

### **Jesus and Thomas**

<sup>24</sup> One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

Thomas said to them, “Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup> A week later the disciples were together again indoors, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then reach out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!”

<sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, “Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!”

### **The Purpose of This Book**

<sup>30</sup> In his disciples’ presence Jesus performed many other miracles which are not written down in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these have been written in order that you may believe<sup>ak</sup> that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you may have life.

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*ak believe; some manuscripts have continue to believe.*

## Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

**21** After this, Jesus appeared once more to his disciples at Lake Tiberias. This is how it happened. <sup>2</sup> Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael (the one from Cana in Galilee), the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of Jesus were all together. <sup>3</sup> Simon Peter said to the others, “I am going fishing.”

“We will come with you,” they told him. So they went out in a boat, but all that night they did not catch a thing. <sup>4</sup> As the sun was rising, Jesus stood at the water’s edge, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup> Then he asked them, “Young men, haven’t you caught anything?”

“Not a thing,” they answered.

<sup>6</sup> He said to them, “Throw your net out on the right side of the boat, and you will catch some.” So they threw the net out and could not pull it back in, because they had caught so many fish.

<sup>7</sup> The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Peter heard that it was the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken his clothes off) and jumped into the water. <sup>8</sup> The other disciples came to shore in the boat, pulling the net full of fish. They were not very far from land, about a hundred yards away. <sup>9</sup> When they stepped ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there with fish on it and some bread. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.”

<sup>11</sup> Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore full of big fish, a hundred and fifty-three in all; even though there were so many, still the net did not tear. <sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, “Come and eat.” None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> So Jesus went over, took the bread, and gave it to them; he did the same with the fish.

<sup>14</sup> This, then, was the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from death.

## Jesus and Peter

<sup>15</sup> After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Take care of my lambs.” <sup>16</sup> A second time Jesus said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Take care of my sheep.” <sup>17</sup> A third time Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” and so he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!”

Jesus said to him, “Take care of my sheep. <sup>18</sup> I am telling you the truth: when you were young, you used to get ready and go anywhere you wanted to; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you up and take you where you don’t want to go.” <sup>19</sup> (In saying this, Jesus was indicating the way in which Peter would die and bring glory to God.) Then Jesus said to him, “Follow me!”

## Jesus and the Other Disciple

<sup>20</sup> Peter turned around and saw behind him that other disciple, whom Jesus loved—the one who had leaned close to Jesus at the meal and had asked, “Lord, who is going to betray you?” <sup>21</sup> When Peter saw him, he asked Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?”

<sup>22</sup> Jesus answered him, “If I want him to live until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!”

<sup>23</sup> So a report spread among the followers of Jesus that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say he would not die; he said, “If I want him to live until I come, what is that to you?”

<sup>24</sup> He is the disciple who spoke of these things, the one who also wrote them down; and we know that what he said is true.

## Conclusion

<sup>25</sup> Now, there are many other things that Jesus did. If they were all written down one by one, I suppose that the whole world could not hold the books that would be written.

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ENCOURAGEMENT TO KEEP  
→  
**GOING FORWARD**

I encourage you to read this book, even develop a relationship with it, allowing your heart and mind to be shaped by the stories, messages, and ideas you discover there. Wrestle with each of the questions and diligently seek answers to your own questions. As your habit develops, consider digging deeper into Scripture through additional online resources. The Bible offers more wisdom than any of us could ever comprehend.

Along with the Luis Palau Association, I am delighted to support you in this journey of exploring Scripture.

May God bless you and keep you,

*Roy Peterson*

Roy Peterson  
President & CEO, American Bible Society



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