

☐☐ PCC SMALL GROUPS — Discovery Bible Study

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ANGER

James 3:3-12

Written by James:

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. **4** Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. **5** Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. **6** The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. **7** All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, **8** but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. **9** With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. **10** Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. **11** Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? **12** My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Matthew 5:21-22

Jesus speaking:

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' **22** But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

Ephesians 4:26-27

Written by Paul:

"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** and do not give the devil a foothold.

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Ephesians 4:31-32

Written by Paul:

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

James 1:19-21

Written by James:

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, **20** because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. **21** Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

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ANXIETY — WORRY — STRESS

Philippians 4:4-9

Written by Paul:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. **9** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Mark 4:35-41

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” **36** Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. **37** A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. **38** Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” **39** He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. **40** He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” **41** They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Matthew 11:28

Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

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Matthew 6:25-34

Jesus speaking:

“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? **27** Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? **28** “And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, **29** yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. **30** And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? **31** “So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ **32** These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. **33** Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. **34** “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

John 14:27

Jesus speaking:

“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”

1 Peter 5:7

Written by Peter:

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

BEAUTY — WHAT IS BEAUTY TO GOD?

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Now the LORD said to Samuel, “You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king.” **2** But Samuel asked, “How can I do that? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.” “Take a heifer with you,” the LORD replied, “and say that you have come to make a sacrifice to the LORD. **3** Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you which of his sons to anoint for me.” **4** So Samuel did as the LORD instructed. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town came trembling to meet him. “What’s wrong?” they asked. “Do you come in peace?” **5** “Yes,” Samuel replied. “I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then Samuel performed the purification rite for Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice, too. **6** When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, “Surely this is the LORD’s anointed!” **7** But the LORD said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” **8** Then Jesse told his son Abinadab to step forward and walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “This is not the one the LORD has chosen.” **9** Next Jesse summoned Shimea, but Samuel said, “Neither is this the one the LORD has chosen.” **10** In the same way all seven of Jesse’s sons were presented to Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” **11** Then Samuel asked, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” Jesse replied. “But he’s out in the fields watching the sheep and goats.” “Send for him at once,” Samuel said. “We will not sit down to eat until he arrives.” **12** So Jesse sent for him. He was dark and handsome, with beautiful eyes. And the LORD said, “This is the one; anoint him.” **13** So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

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1 Peter 3:3-4

Written by Peter:

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

Colossians 3:12-15

Written by Paul:

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. **13** Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. **14** Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

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IS THERE A COST FOR ME TO FOLLOW JESUS?

Luke 9:57-62

Written by Luke:

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

Luke 14:25-33

Written by Luke:

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: **26** “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. **27** And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. **28** “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? **29** For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, **30** saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’ **31** “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? **32** If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. **33** In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

Matthew 10:37-39

Written by Matthew:

“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. **38** Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. **39** Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

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Matthew 16:21-27

Written by Matthew:

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. **22** Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” **23** Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” **24** Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25** For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. **26** What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

Matthew 19:16-30

Written by Matthew:

Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” **17** “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.” **18** “Which ones?” he inquired. Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, **19** honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’” **20** “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?” **21** Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” **22** When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. **23** Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. **24** Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” **25** When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?” **26** Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” **27** Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?” **28** Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes

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of Israel. **29** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. **30** But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

John 21:15-22

Written by John:

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” **16** Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.” **17** The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. **18** Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” **19** Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” **20** Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”) **21** When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” **22** Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.”

DEPRESSION

Psalm 116:1-9

Written by David:

I love the LORD because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. **2** Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath! **3** Death wrapped its ropes around me; the terrors of the grave overtook me. I saw only trouble and sorrow. **4** Then I called on the name of the LORD: “Please, LORD, save me!” **5** How kind the LORD is! How good he is! So merciful, this God of ours! **6** The LORD protects those of childlike faith; I was facing death, and he saved me. **7** Let my soul be at rest again, for the LORD has been good to me. **8** He has saved me from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. **9** And so I walk in the LORD’s presence as I live here on earth!

Psalm 46:1, 10

Written by David:

1 God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

10 “Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Written by Paul:

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. **4** He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. **5** For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. **6** Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. **7** We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

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Psalm 40:1-3

Written by David:

I waited patiently for the LORD to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry.
2 He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along. 3 He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the LORD.

ETERNAL LIFE

John 3:16-17

Jesus Speaking:

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. **17** God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

John 5:24

Jesus Speaking:

“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

John 10:27-29

Jesus Speaking:

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. **28** I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. **29** My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.

Romans 6:23

Written by Paul:

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:10-11

Written by Paul:

But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. **11** And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

HAVING AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

Matthew 6:19-21

Jesus speaking:

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

Mark 10:17-31

As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” **18** “Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked. “Only God is truly good. **19** But to answer your question, you know the commandments: ‘You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.’” **20** “Teacher,” the man replied, “I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was young.” **21** Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. “There is still one thing you haven’t done,” he told him. “Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” **22** At this the man’s face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. **23** Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God!” **24** This amazed them. But Jesus said again, “Dear children, it is very hard to enter the Kingdom of God. **25** In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!” **26** The disciples were astounded. “Then who in the world can be saved?” they asked. **27** Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.” **28** Then Peter began to speak up. “We’ve given up everything to follow you,” he said. **29** “Yes,” Jesus replied, “and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, **30** will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life. **31** But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.”

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2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Written by Paul:

For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. **2** We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. **3** For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. **4** While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. **5** God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit. **6** So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. **7** For we live by believing and not by seeing. **8** Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. **9** So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. **10** For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.

Ecclesiastes 3:9-11

Written by Solomon:

What do people really get for all their hard work? **10** I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. **11** Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.

FAITH

Mark 4:35-41

As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.” **36** So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). **37** But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. **38** Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” **39** When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. **40** Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” **41** The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!”

Matthew 8:5-13

5 When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, **6** “Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.” **7** Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.” **8** But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. **9** I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.” **10** When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel! **11** And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. **12** But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” **13** Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, “Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened.” And the young servant was healed that same hour.

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Matthew 14:22-36

22 Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. 23 After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. 24 Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. 25 About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!" 27 But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" 28 Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." 29 "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. 31 Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?" 32 When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed. 34 After they had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret. 35 When the people recognized Jesus, the news of his arrival spread quickly throughout the whole area, and soon people were bringing all their sick to be healed. 36 They begged him to let the sick touch at least the fringe of his robe, and all who touched him were healed.

Galatians 6:4-10

Written by Paul:

Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. 5 For we are each responsible for our own conduct. 6 Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them. 7 Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. 8 Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. 9 So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. 10 Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.

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2 Corinthians 5:7

Written by Paul:

For we live by believing and not by seeing.

Mark 11:22-25

“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. **23** “Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. **24** Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. **25** And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

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FEAR

Mark 4:35-41

As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.” **36** So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). **37** But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. **38** Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” **39** When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. **40** Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” **41** The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!”

Joshua 1:7-9

Written by Joshua:

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. **8** Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. **9** This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Psalms 46:1

Written by David:

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

Romans 8:31-39

Written by Paul:

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? **32** Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won’t he also give us everything else? **33** Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. **34** Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God’s right hand, pleading for us. **35** Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love? Does it mean

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he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? **36** (As the Scriptures say, “For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.”) **37** No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. **38** And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. **39** No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isaiah 41:10

Written by Isaiah:

Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

FORGIVING OTHERS

Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus speaking:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ **44** But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **46** If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? **47** And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? **48** Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Luke 23:32-43

Written by Luke:

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. **33** When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. **34** Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. **35** The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” **36** The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar **37** and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” **38** There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the jews. **39** One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” **40** But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? **41** We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” **42** Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” **43** Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Mark 11:25

Jesus Speaking:

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

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Ephesians 4:31-32

Written by Paul:

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 3:13

Written by Paul:

You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

Proverbs 17:9

Written by Solomon:

Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.

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HEAVEN

John 14:1-4

Written by John:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. **2** My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. **4** You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Luke 23:39-43

Written by Luke:

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” **40** But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? **41** We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” **42** Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” **43** Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Revelation 21:3-5

Written by John:

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. **4** ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’ **5** He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

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Revelation 21:22-27

Written by John:

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. **23** The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. **24** The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. **25** On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. **26** The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. **27** Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

2 Peter 3:13

Written by Peter:

But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.

Hebrews 13:14

For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come.

JUDGING OTHERS

Luke 6:37-38

Jesus speaking:

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. **38** Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Matthew 7:1-5

Jesus speaking:

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. **2** For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. **3** “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? **4** How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

John 8:1-11

Written by John:

1 but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. **2** At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. **3** The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group **4** and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. **5** In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” **6** They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. **7** When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” **8** Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. **9** At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. **10** Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” **11** “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

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James 4:11-12

Written by James:

Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. **12** God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor?

GENEROSITY

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. **42** Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. **43** Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. **44** For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on.”

Matthew 6:1-4

Jesus speaking:

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

Luke 10:30-37

30 Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. **31** “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. **32** A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. **33** “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. **34** Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. **35** The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’ **36** “Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked. **37** The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.” Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

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Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus speaking:

“But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. **32** All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. **34** “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. **35** For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. **36** I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’ **37** “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? **38** Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? **39** When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ **40** “And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’ **41** “Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. **42** For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give me a drink. **43** I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn’t give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’ **44** “Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?’ **45** “And he will answer, ‘I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.’ **46** “And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.”

GRIEF AND LOSS

Psalm 34:18

Written by David:

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.

Lamentations 3:31-33

For no one is abandoned by the Lord forever. **32** Though he brings grief, he also shows compassion because of the greatness of his unfailing love. **33** For he does not enjoy hurting people or causing them sorrow.

Isaiah 43:1-4

Written by Isaiah:

But now, O Jacob, listen to the LORD who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says, “Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. **2** When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. **3** For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I gave Egypt as a ransom for your freedom; I gave Ethiopia and Seba in your place. **4** Others were given in exchange for you. I traded their lives for yours because you are precious to me. You are honored, and I love you.

Isaiah 53:2-10

2 My servant grew up in the LORD’s presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. **3** He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. **4** Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! **5** But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. **6** All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all. **7** He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a

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lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. **8** Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. **9** He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. **10** But it was the LORD's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands.

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GOD'S LOVE FOR US

Psalm 139:1-18

Written by David:

O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. **2** You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. **3** You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. **4** You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD. **5** You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. **6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! **7** I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! **8** If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. **9** If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, **10** even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. **11** I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night— **12** but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you. **13** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. **14** Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. **15** You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. **16** You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. **17** How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! **18** I can't even count them;; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Psalm 103:8-18

Written by David:

The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unending love. **9** He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. **10** He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. **11** For his unending love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. **12** He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. **13** The LORD is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. **14** For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust. **15** Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. **16** The wind blows, and we are gone—as though we had never been here. **17** But the love of the LORD remains forever with those who fear him. His

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salvation extends to the children's children **18** of those who are faithful to his covenant, of those who obey his commandments!

Romans 8:35-39

Written by Paul:

Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? **36** (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day;; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") **37** No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. **38** And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. **39** No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 12:5-11

And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the LORD's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. **6** For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child." **7** As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? **8** If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. **9** Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? **10** For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. **11** No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

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HOLY SPIRIT — WHO IS HE?

Mark 1:9-11

Written by Mark:

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. **10** As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove. **11** And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

John 15:15-17

Written by John:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. **16** You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. **17** This is my command: Love each other.

John 16:5-15

Written by John:

but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ **6** Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. **7** But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. **8** When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: **9** about sin, because people do not believe in me; **10** about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; **11** and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. **12** “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. **13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. **14** He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. **15** All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

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Acts 1:1-11

Written by Luke:

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach **2** until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. **3** After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. **4** On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. **5** For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” **6** Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” **7** He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” **9** After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **10** They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. **11** “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Acts 2:1-13

Written by Luke:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. **5** Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of

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God in our own tongues!” **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” **13** Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

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IDENTITY — WHO AM I TO GOD?

Galatians 3:26-4:7

Written by Paul:

For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. **27** And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. **28** There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you. **1** Think of it this way. If a father dies and leaves an inheritance for his young children, those children are not much better off than slaves until they grow up, even though they actually own everything their father had. **2** They have to obey their guardians until they reach whatever age their father set. **3** And that's the way it was with us before Christ came. We were like children; we were slaves to the basic spiritual principles of this world. **4** But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. **5** God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. **6** And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." **7** Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.

John 15:1-17

Jesus speaking:

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. **2** He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. **3** You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. **4** Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. **5** "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. **6** Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. **7** But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! **8** When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. **9** "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. **10** When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in

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his love. **11** I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! **12** This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. **13** There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. **14** You are my friends if you do what I command. **15** I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. **16** You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. **17** This is my command: Love each other.

Psalm 139:13-18

Written by David:

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. **14** Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. **15** You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. **16** You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. **17** How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! **18** I can't even count them;; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Ephesians 2:1-10

Written by Paul:

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. **4** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. **6** And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7** in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. **8** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9** not by works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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JOY

James 1:2-4

Written by James:

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. **3** For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. **4** So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

Proverbs 17:22

Written by Solomon:

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.

Zephaniah 3:17

Written by Zephaniah:

17 For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs."

John 16:16-24

Jesus speaking:

"In a little while you won't see me anymore. But a little while after that, you will see me again." **17** Some of the disciples asked each other, "What does he mean when he says, 'In a little while you won't see me, but then you will see me,' and 'I am going to the Father'?" **18** And what does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand." **19** Jesus realized they wanted to ask him about it, so he said, "Are you asking yourselves what I meant? I said in a little while you won't see me, but a little while after that you will see me again. **20** I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn over what is going to happen to me, but the world will rejoice. You will grieve, but your grief will suddenly turn to wonderful joy. **21** It will be like a woman suffering the pains of labor. When her child is born, her anguish gives way to joy because she has brought a new baby into the world. **22** So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again; then you will rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy. **23** At that time you won't need to ask me for anything. I tell you the truth, you will ask the Father directly, and he will grant your request because you use my name. **24** You haven't done this before. Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.

LOVING OTHERS

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Paul speaking:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

1 John 4:7-12

John speaking:

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. **10** This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

John 15:12-13

Jesus speaking:

This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. **13** There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

Mark 12:28-31

Jesus speaking:

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" **29** "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **30** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' **31** The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

MARRIAGE

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Written by Paul:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Ephesians 4:31-32

Witten by Paul:

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 5:21-33

Witten by Paul:

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. **22** Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. **23** For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. **24** Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. **25** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her **26** to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, **27** and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. **28** In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29** After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— **30** for we are members of his body. **31** “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” **32** This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. **33** However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

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John 13:1-17

Written by John:

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. **2** The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. **3** Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; **4** so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. **5** After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. **6** He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" **7** Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." **8** "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." **9** "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" **10** Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." **11** For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean. **12** When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. **13** "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. **14** Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. **15** I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. **16** Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. **17** Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Mark 10:6-9

Becoming One

Jesus Speaking:

"But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' **7** 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, **8** and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. **9** Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

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MONEY

Matthew 6:19-21

Jesus speaking:

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

1 Timothy 6:6-10

Written by Paul:

Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. **7** After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can’t take anything with us when we leave it. **8** So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. **9** But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. **10** For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

Mark 10:17-31

17 As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” **18** “Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked. “Only God is truly good. **19** But to answer your question, you know the commandments: ‘You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.’” **20** “Teacher,” the man replied, “I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was young.” **21** Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. “There is still one thing you haven’t done,” he told him. “Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” **22** At this the man’s face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. **23** Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God!” **24** This amazed them. But Jesus said again, “Dear children, it is very hard to enter the Kingdom of God. **25** In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!” **26** The disciples were astounded. “Then who in the world can be saved?” they asked. **27** Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God.

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Everything is possible with God.” **28** Then Peter began to speak up. “We’ve given up everything to follow you,” he said. **29** “Yes,” Jesus replied, “and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, **30** will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life. **31** But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.”

Proverbs 3:9-10

Written by Solomon:

9 Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. **10** Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

Matthew 6:24-30

Jesus speaking:

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. **25** “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? **27** Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? **28** “And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, **29** yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. **30** And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?”

Hebrews 13:5

Don’t love money;; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.”

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OBEDIENCE — WHY SHOULD I OBEY GOD?

John 14:15-24

Jesus Speaking:

“If you love me, keep my commands. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— **17** the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. **18** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. **21** Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” **22** Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?” **23** Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. **24** Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

John 15:9-11

Jesus Speaking:

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. **10** If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. **11** I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Matthew 7:21-23

Jesus Speaking:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ **23** Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

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James 1:22-25

Written by James:

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. **23** Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror **24** and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. **25** But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

1 John 2:4-6

Written by John:

Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. **5** But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: **6** Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Written by Moses:

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, **2** so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. **3** Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you. **4** Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **5** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **6** These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **7** Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **8** Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **9** Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

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PARENTING

Psalms 127:3-5

Written by Solomon:

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. ² In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves. ³ Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. ⁴ Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. ⁵ Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.

Proverbs 22:6

Written by Solomon:

Children: Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Written by Moses:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Colossians 3:21

Written by Paul:

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

Ephesians 6:4

Written by Paul:

And now a word to you fathers. Don't make your children angry by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction approved by the Lord.

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Proverbs 13:24

Written by Solomon:

If you refuse to discipline your children, it proves you don't love them; if you love your children, you will be prompt to discipline them.

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PATIENCE

James 5:7-11

Written by James:

Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. **8** You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. **9** Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door! **10** For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. **11** We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy.

Proverbs 3:5-7

Written by Solomon:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. **6** Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. **7** Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil.

2 Peter 1:5-9

Written by Peter:

In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, **6** and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, **7** and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. **8** The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.

Hebrews 6:13-15

For example, there was God's promise to Abraham. Since there was no one greater to swear by, God took an oath in his own name, saying: **14** "I will certainly bless you, and I will multiply your descendants beyond number." **15** Then Abraham waited patiently, and he received what God had promised.

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PERSONAL GOD — IS GOD PERSONAL?

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. **5** When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. **7** All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.” **8** But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Psalms 139:1-18

Written by David:

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. **2** In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves. **3** Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. **4** Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth. **5** Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. **2** You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. **3** You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. **4** Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. **5** You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. **6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. **7** Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? **8** If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. **9** If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, **10** even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. **11** If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,”

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¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. ¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. ¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸ Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand—when I awake, I am still with you.

Revelation 3:20

God speaking in a vision to Paul:

“Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.”

James 4:8

Written by James:

Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.

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PRAYER

Philippians 4:6-7

Written by Paul:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Luke 11:5-13

Written by Luke:

Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; **6** a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ **7** And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ **8** I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. **9** “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. **10** For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. **11** “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? **12** Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? **13** If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Luke 18:1-8

Written by Luke:

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. **2** He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. **3** And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ **4** “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, **5** yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’” **6** And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. **7** And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep

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putting them off? **8** I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Matthew 6:5-8

Written by Matthew:

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **6** But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. **7** And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

2 Chronicles 7:14-15

Written by Ezra:

if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. **15** Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

Proverbs 15:29

Written by Solomon:

The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayers of the righteous.

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PRIDE

Matthew 6:1-4

Jesus speaking:

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

Deuteronomy 8:11-20

Written by Moses:

“But that is the time to be careful! Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the LORD your God and disobey his commands, regulations, and decrees that I am giving you today. **12** For when you have become full and prosperous and have built fine homes to live in, **13** and when your flocks and herds have become very large and your silver and gold have multiplied along with everything else, be careful! **14** Do not become proud at that time and forget the LORD your God, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. **15** Do not forget that he led you through the great and terrifying wilderness with its poisonous snakes and scorpions, where it was so hot and dry. He gave you water from the rock! **16** He fed you with manna in the wilderness, a food unknown to your ancestors. He did this to humble you and test you for your own good. **17** He did all this so you would never say to yourself, ‘I have achieved this wealth with my own strength and energy.’ **18** Remember the LORD your God. He is the one who gives you power to be successful, in order to fulfill the covenant he confirmed to your ancestors with an oath. **19** “But I assure you of this: If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods, worshiping and bowing down to them, you will certainly be destroyed. **20** Just as the LORD has destroyed other nations in your path, you also will be destroyed if you refuse to obey the LORD your God.

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Mark 10:35-45

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came over and spoke to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do us a favor.” **36** “What is your request?” he asked. **37** They replied, “When you sit on your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left.” **38** But Jesus said to them, “You don’t know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?” **39** “Oh yes,” they replied, “we are able!” Then Jesus told them, “You will indeed drink from my bitter cup and be baptized with my baptism of suffering. **40** But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. God has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.” **41** When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. **42** So Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. **43** But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, **44** and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. **45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

John 13:1-17

Written by John:

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. **2** It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. **3** Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. **4** So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, **5** and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around Him. **6** When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” **7** Jesus replied, “You don’t understand now what I am doing, but someday you will.” **8** “No,” Peter protested, “you will never ever wash my feet!” Jesus replied, “Unless I wash you, you won’t belong to me.” **9** Simon Peter exclaimed, “Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!” **10** Jesus replied, “A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you.” **11** For Jesus

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knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.” **12** After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? **13** You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. **14** And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. **15** I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. **16** I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. **17** Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

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REAL MAN — WHAT IS A REAL MAN?

1 Kings 2:1-4

As the time of King David's death approached, he gave this charge to his son Solomon: **2** "I am going where everyone on earth must someday go. Take courage and be a man. **3** Observe the requirements of the LORD your God, and follow all his ways. Keep the decrees, commands, regulations, and laws written in the Law of Moses so that you will be successful in all you do and wherever you go. **4** If you do this, then the LORD will keep the promise he made to me. He told me, 'If your descendants live as they should and follow me faithfully with all their heart and soul, one of them will always sit on the throne of Israel.'

1 Peter 3:7-12

Written by Peter:

In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered. **8** Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. **9** Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing. **10** For the Scriptures say, "If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. **11** Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. **12** The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the LORD turns his face against those who do evil."

Psalm 1:1-6

Written by David:

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. **2** But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night. **3** They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do. **4** But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind.

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5 They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly. 6 For the LORD watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

Ephesians 5:21-33

Written by Paul:

And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church. 24 As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything. 25 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. 27 He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. 28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. 29 No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. 30 And we are members of his body. 31 As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." 32 This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. 33 So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

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REST

Genesis 2:1-3

So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. **2** On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. **3** And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. **39** Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. **40** But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me." **41** But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! **42** There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."

Psalms 46:10

"Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world."

Matthew 11:28

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

Psalms 23:1-6

Written by David:

The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. **2** He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. **3** He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. **4** Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. **5** You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. **6** Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

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SALVATION — HOW TO BE SAVED

John 3:3-18

Jesus speaking:

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” **4** “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” **5** Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. **6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. **7** You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ **8** The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” **9** “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. **10** “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? **11** Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. **12** I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? **13** No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. **14** Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, **15** that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” **16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. **18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

John 14:6

Jesus Speaking:

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 5:24

Jesus Speaking:

“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

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Romans 10:9-12

Written by Paul:

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. ¹¹ As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

Ephesians 2:8-10

Written by Paul:

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

SELFISHNESS

Philippians 2:3-11

Written by Paul:

Don't be selfish;; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. **4** Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. **5** You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. **6** Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. **7** Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, **8** he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. **9** Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus speaking:

"But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. **32** All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. **34** "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. **35** For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. **36** I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' **37** "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? **38** Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? **39** When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' **40** "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!' **41** "Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. **42** For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink.

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43 I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.' 44 "Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?' 45 "And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.' 46 "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."

Matthew 6:1-4

Jesus speaking:

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

James 3:13-18

Written by James:

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. 15 For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. 16 For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. 17 But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. 18 And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

SIN — DO I NEED TO STOP SINNING?

1 John 3:4-9

Written by John:

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. **5** But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. **6** No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. **7** Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. **8** The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. **9** No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.

Romans 6:1-14

Written by Paul:

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? **2** By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? **3** Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4** We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. **5** For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. **6** For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— **7** because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. **8** Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. **9** For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. **10** The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. **11** In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. **13** Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. **14** For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

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Romans 6:21-23

Written by Paul:

What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! **22** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. **23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 2:1-2

Written by John:

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. **2** He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

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SINNERS: HOW DOES JESUS TREAT SINNERS?

Luke 7:36-50

Written by Luke:

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. **37** A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. **38** As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. **39** When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner." **40** Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. **41** "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. **42** Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" **43** Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said. **44** Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45** You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. **46** You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. **47** Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little." **48** Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." **49** The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" **50** Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Matthew 5:27-32

Written by Matthew:

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' **28** But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. **29** If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. **30** And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. **31** "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must

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give her a certificate of divorce.’ **32** But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Luke 19:1-9

Written by Luke:

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. **5** When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. **7** All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.” **8** But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

John 8:1-11

Written by John:

but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. **2** At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. **3** The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group **4** and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. **5** In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” **6** They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. **7** When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” **8** Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. **9** At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. **10** Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” **11** “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

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John 4:1-37

Written by John:

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—² although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.³ So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."¹¹ "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."¹⁶ He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband.¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."¹⁹ "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet."²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."²¹ "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."²⁵ The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."²⁶ Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do

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you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?” ²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him. ³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.” ³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” ³³ Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” ³⁴ “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵ Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ³⁶ Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷ Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true.

John 4:39-42

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers. ⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

SUFFERING

James 1:2-8

Written by James:

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. **3** For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. **4** So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. **5** If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. **6** But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. **7** Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. **8** Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

Lamentations 3:19-26

The thought of my suffering and homelessness is bitter beyond words. **20** I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. **21** Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: **22** The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. **23** Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. **24** I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!" **25** The LORD is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him. **26** So it is good to wait quietly for salvation from the LORD.

Isaiah 25:4-8

Written by Isaiah:

4 But you are a tower of refuge to the poor, O LORD, a tower of refuge to the needy in distress. You are a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the heat. For the oppressive acts of ruthless people are like a storm beating against a wall, **5** or like the relentless heat of the desert. But you silence the roar of foreign nations. As the shade of a cloud cools relentless heat, so the boastful songs of ruthless people are stilled. **6** In Jerusalem, the LORD of Heaven's Armies will spread a wonderful feast for all the people of the world. It will be a delicious banquet with clear, well-aged wine and choice meat. **7** There he will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth. **8** He will swallow up death forever! The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears. He will remove forever all insults and mockery against his land and people. The LORD has spoken!

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2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Written by Paul:

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. **10** That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

1 Peter 4:12-16

Written by Peter:

Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. **13** Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. **14** If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. **15** If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people’s affairs. **16** But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!

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TEMPTATION: FACING TEMPTATION OR ADDICTION

James 1:12-15

Written by James:

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. **13** When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; **14** but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. **15** Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Written by Paul:

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! **13** No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Mark 14:38

Written by Mark:

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

James 4:7-8

Written by James:

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8** Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

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Galatians 5:16-25

Written by Paul:

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; **20** idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions **21** and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. **24** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **25** Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

TRUSTING GOD

Proverbs 3:5-7

Written by David:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; **6** in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. **7** Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.

Genesis 22:1-18

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied. **2** Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.” **3** Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. **4** On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. **5** He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.” **6** Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, **7** Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?” “Yes, my son?” Abraham replied. “The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” **8** Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together. **9** When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. **10** Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. **11** But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied. **12** “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.” **13** Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. **14** So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.” **15** The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time **16** and said, “I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only

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son, **17** I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, **18** and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

Exodus 14:10-31

Written by Moses:

As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the LORD, **11** and they said to Moses, “Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Weren’t there enough graves for us in Egypt? What have you done to us? Why did you make us leave Egypt? **12** Didn’t we tell you this would happen while we were still in Egypt? We said, ‘Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It’s better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!’” **13** But Moses told the people, “Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. **14** The LORD himself will fight for you. Just stay Calm.” **15** Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving! **16** Pick up your staff and raise your hand over the sea. Divide the water so the Israelites can walk through the middle of the sea on dry ground. **17** And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will charge in after the Israelites. My great glory will be displayed through Pharaoh and his troops, his chariots, and his charioteers. **18** When my glory is displayed through them, all Egypt will see my glory and know that I am the LORD!” **19** Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them. **20** The cloud settled between the Egyptian and Israelite camps. As darkness fell, the cloud turned to fire, lighting up the night. But the Egyptians and Israelites did not approach each other all night. **21** Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the LORD opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. **22** So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side! **23** Then the Egyptians—all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and charioteers—chased them into the middle of the sea. **24** But just before dawn the LORD looked down on the Egyptian army from the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw their forces into total confusion. **25** He twisted their chariot wheels, making their chariots difficult to drive. “Let’s get out of here—away from these Israelites!” the Egyptians shouted. “The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!” **26** When all the Israelites had

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reached the other side, the LORD said to Moses, “Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptians and their chariots and charioteers.” **27** So as the sun began to rise, Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the water rushed back into its usual place. The Egyptians tried to escape, but the LORD swept them into the sea. **28** Then the waters returned and covered all the chariots and charioteers—the entire army of Pharaoh. Of all the Egyptians who had chased the Israelites into the sea, not a single one survived. **29** But the people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, as the water stood up like a wall on both sides. **30** That is how the LORD rescued Israel from the hand of the Egyptians that day. And the Israelites saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the seashore. **31** When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the LORD had unleashed against the Egyptians, they were filled with awe before him. They put their faith in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Matthew 14:22-36

Written by Matthew:

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. **23** After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. **24** Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. **25** About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. **26** When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, “It’s a ghost!” **27** But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!” **28** Then Peter called to him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.” **29** “Yes, come,” Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. **30** But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted. **31** Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?” **32** When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. **33** Then the disciples worshiped him. “You really are the Son of God!” they exclaimed. **34** After they had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret. **35** When the people recognized Jesus, the news of his arrival spread quickly throughout the whole area, and soon people were bringing all their sick to be healed. **36** They begged him to let the sick touch at least the fringe of his robe, and all who touched him were healed.