

THE GREAT NEWS

as reported by

MARK

This is the amazing story of the Great News about Jesus the Messiah,^a the Son of God.

²Hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth in human form, God had foretold thru His prophets that someone would come on the scene to announce the coming of His Son and prepare the people of Israel to receive Him. God spoke thru His prophets Malachi and Isaiah, saying to His Son:

Look, I am sending My messenger ahead of You.

He will prepare the way for You.^a

³He will cry out in the wilderness,

**PREPARE FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD!
STRAIGHTEN OUT YOUR WAYS FOR HIM!^a**

⁴This was fulfilled when John the Baptizer appeared on the scene, baptizing people in a wilderness area. He told the people, "God will forgive your sins if you will turn from your sinning and openly declare that you have done so by being baptized^a!"

⁵Immense crowds of people from Jerusalem and from all over Judea went out to him. And he baptized in the Jordan River all who declared openly that they were giving up their sinning.^a

⁶John was dressed in rough clothes made from camels' hair, and he wore a wide leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷The message he continued to preach was, "Very soon now, Someone will come who is far greater than I am. I'm not worthy even to kneel down and untie the straps of His sandals.

⁸"Although I baptized you in water, He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism of Jesus

⁹After John had been preaching for some time, Jesus came down from the town of Nazareth in the

province of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan River.

¹⁰Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, John saw the heavens torn open and the Holy Spirit coming down like a dove and coming to rest upon Jesus!^a

¹¹Then a voice came out of the heavens, saying, "You are My Son whom I love so dearly. I have found such great delight in You."

¹²Immediately after that, the Holy Spirit compelled Jesus to go into the wilderness.

¹³And He was out in the wilderness with the wild animals for 40 days, being constantly tempted by Satan to sin. Afterward the angels came and waited on Him.^a

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

¹⁴After John was put in jail, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Great News about the Kingdom of God.

¹⁵"The promise God made so long ago has now been fulfilled!" He told the people. "The Kingdom of God has now come very close to you! Turn from your sinning and believe in^a the Great News!"

¹⁶One day, as He was walking along the shore of Lake Galilee, He saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were commercial fishermen and were throwing a large net out into the lake.

¹⁷"Come along with Me," Jesus invited them, "and I'll teach you how to harvest people instead of fish."

¹⁸They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

¹⁹When Jesus had walked a little farther up the beach, He saw two more brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat, mending their nets.

1:1a Or *the Christ*. See Matthew 1:16,18a note.

1:2a Malachi 3:1.

1:3a Isaiah 40:3. This message is also needed today, when we are expecting His second coming very soon.

1:4a Literally *immersed*. See Matthew 3:11.

1:5a This is the primary meaning of the words ordinarily translated *confessed their sins*.

1:10a John 1:32-34.

1:13a Evidently angels fed Him after He had fasted 40 days, according to Matthew 4:1-11.

1:15a Meaning—*Put your whole trust in the Great News and take all necessary action to obtain its promises and escape God's judgment*. See Matthew 7:13-14 and notes. For an explanation of the Great News read Appendix 247, page 520, entitled, *The Amazing Story of God*.

²⁰When He invited them to come with Him too, they immediately left their father, Zebedee, in the boat with the hired men and went with Him.

An Evil Spirit Driven Out

²¹Then they all went into Capernaum, and the next Sabbath,^a Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach.

²²The people were utterly shocked and amazed at the way He taught.^a He didn't teach at all like the teachers of the Law that God gave Moses,^b but as One who had great authority.

²³Suddenly a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit began screaming,

²⁴"Leave us alone! What business do You have being here with us, You Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are! You're the Holy One^a from God!"

²⁵Immediately Jesus rebuked the spirit, commanding him, "Keep quiet, and come out of the man!"

²⁶The evil spirit let out a piercing scream and threw the man into violent convulsions, and then came out of him.

²⁷All the people were so amazed that they kept talking about it among themselves, asking, "What is this? Some new kind of powerful teaching? Why, He speaks with such authority that even the evil spirits obey Him."

²⁸News about Him spread quickly thruout the whole region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many People

²⁹When they left the synagogue, Jesus, along with James and John, went with Simon and Andrew straight to their home.

³⁰When they arrived, they found that Simon's mother-in-law had a fever and was lying down, so they told Jesus about her.

³¹He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up, and immediately the fever left her! She then began to prepare a meal for them.

³²That evening after sunset,^a the people began bringing Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed.

³³Finally the whole town was gathered at the door!

³⁴He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and drove out many demons. But He wouldn't let the demons say anything because they knew who He was.

Preaching in Galilee

³⁵Very early the next morning while it was still dark, Jesus got up and left the house and went to a deserted area to pray.

³⁶When Simon and the others got up, they went out to look for Him.

³⁷When they finally found Him, they said, "Everyone is looking for You!"

³⁸"Let's go into the nearby towns, so I can preach there too," He replied. "That's the reason I've come."

³⁹So He traveled all over Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving demons out of people.

Jesus Heals a Leper

⁴⁰One day a man with leprosy came to Him, and kneeling down in front of Him he pleaded with Him for help. "If You want to," he said, "You are able to heal me."

⁴¹Jesus was deeply stirred with pity for the man, and, reaching out His hand and touching him, He said, "I do want to. Be healed!"

⁴²Immediately, as soon as He said that, the leprosy left the man, and he was healed!

⁴³Jesus then promptly sent him away, after sternly telling him:

⁴⁴"Listen, make sure you don't say anything to anyone about this. But go straight to the priest and show him that you are now healed, and present the offering for your healing that Moses commanded,^a as a testimony to everyone that you have indeed been healed."

⁴⁵But when the man left, he told everyone what had happened, and he continued to spread the news, until Jesus could no longer enter the city openly. He had to stay in unpopulated areas. Still the people kept coming to Him from everywhere.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

2 Several days later, Jesus went back to Capernaum. And the news soon got around that He

1:21a Saturday, the Jewish day of rest.

1:22a The Rabbis quoted other Rabbis, and would never think of contradicting other Rabbis. But Jesus had no Rabbi. He *was* the Rabbi.

1:22b Exodus 19:1 to 31:18.

1:24a The Messiah, the Christ. Daniel 9:25-26.

1:32a They came after their Sabbath had ended. The Jewish Sabbath is from sunset Friday evening to sunset Saturday evening. Actually, the Jewish teachers taught that the Sabbath officially ended when three medium-sized stars became visible after sundown.

was back home.

²He was immediately deluged with so many people that there wasn't room for any more. Many of those still outside couldn't even get near the door.

³As He was preaching God's message to them, four men came to Him carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher.

⁴When they couldn't even get near Him because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof right over His head. And when they had broken thru, they lowered the stretcher on which the paralyzed man was lying.^a

⁵When Jesus saw how strong and determined their faith was, He said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶But some of the teachers of the Law were sitting there, thinking to themselves,

⁷"How can this man dare to blaspheme like that! Only God can forgive sins—no one else!"

⁸Jesus knew immediately what they were thinking, so He said to them, "Why are you coming to such conclusions in your hearts?"

⁹"Which is easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Get up, and fold up your stretcher and walk,'?"

¹⁰"But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins ..." He then said to the paralytic,

¹¹"I command you, 'Get up, then pick up your stretcher, and be on your way home!'"

¹²And he got right up, picked up his stretcher, and walked out of there in full view of everyone! Utterly astounded, the people praised God and said, "We've never seen anything like this before!"

The Calling of Levi

¹³Then Jesus again went out by the lake, and there He preached to the crowds that continued to gather around Him.

¹⁴Later, as He was walking along, He saw Levi^a, the son of Alphaeus, sitting in the tax collector's booth. "Come along with Me," Jesus invited him. And without hesitation, he got right up and went with Him.

¹⁵Still later, Jesus and His followers were having

dinner at Levi's house. A large number of tax collectors and other sinners were also there, because many of them had been following Jesus, and they had also been invited to the dinner.

¹⁶But when the Pharisees and teachers of the Law saw Him eating with these outcast tax collectors^a and other sinners, they asked His followers, "Why does he eat and drink with these crooked tax collectors and all these other notorious sinners?"

¹⁷Jesus heard them, and He responded, "Those who are well don't need a doctor, but the sick do. I haven't come to call those who consider themselves so godly that they have no need of further help. I'm here to call sinners to turn from their sinning to living lives of obedience to God."

A Question About Fasting

¹⁸On one occasion, the followers of John the Baptist and the followers of the Pharisees had given up eating for a time. And they went to Jesus and said, "How is it that John's followers and the followers of the Pharisees fast, but Your followers never do?"

¹⁹"Would you expect the guests of the bridegroom at a wedding party to refuse to eat while the bridegroom is with them?" Jesus replied. "They won't fast as long as they have the Bridegroom with them.

²⁰"But the time will come when the Bridegroom will be taken from them. They will indeed fast after that happens.

²¹"No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, because later the new patch will shrink and pull away from the old cloth and make a bigger hole.

²²"Neither does anyone pour new wine into used wineskins. Because the new wine would burst those wineskins, the wine would be lost, and the skins ruined. New wine must be put into new wineskins."

A Question About the Sabbath

²³One Sabbath, as Jesus and His followers were walking by some grain fields, His followers began breaking off some heads of wheat and eating the

1:44a Leviticus 14:1-32.

2:4a Oriental houses were constructed with flat roofs accessible by outside stairs. So access thru the roof was possible as described here. Roofs were places of relaxation and social exchange.

2:8a Their hearts (the emotional centers of their beings) were the cause of their conclusions, not merely their minds. They were jealous, and were

looking for ways to discredit Him. See Matthew 27:18.

2:14a Also called Matthew. Matthew 9:9.

2:15-16a Israel was a captive nation at this time, paying taxes to Rome. And Jews who were willing to collect these taxes and get their cut were thoroughly despised by other Jews.

grain.

²⁴“Look!” the Pharisees challenged Jesus. “Why are your followers harvesting grain on the Sabbath? That’s unlawful!”

²⁵“Haven’t you ever read what David did when he and the men with him were hungry and in need of food?” Jesus replied.

²⁶“When Abiathar was High Priest, David went into the house of God and ate the sacred bread. Only the priests are allowed by the Law to eat this bread, but David even gave some to his men.

²⁷“The Sabbath was made for the benefit of man,” Jesus continued, “not man for the benefit of the Sabbath.

²⁸“And I, the Son of Man, am the Lord who decides what can and what cannot be done even on the Sabbath.”

Jesus Heals a Shriveled Hand

3 Another time when Jesus entered the synagogue, a man with a shriveled hand was there.

²Some of the Jewish religious leaders continued to watch Him closely, to see if He would heal this man, so they could accuse Him of working on the Sabbath.

³So Jesus said to the disabled man, “Step out into the middle of the room.”^a

⁴Then He asked those who were carefully watching Him, “Does our Jewish Law allow us to do good on the Sabbath, or are we to do evil^b? Are we to save life, or kill^b?” But no one said a word.

⁵So after looking around at them in anger, but also deeply grief-stricken by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And as he did so, it was restored! It was now just as well and strong as the other.

⁶When this happened, the Pharisees immediately went out and began plotting against Him with the Herodians,^a as to how they might destroy Him.

A Crowd by the Lake

⁷But Jesus withdrew with His followers to the lake. As the news had continued to spread about the many things He was doing, great crowds had converged on Him from Galilee,

⁸from Jerusalem and thruout Judea, from east of the Jordan River, from Tyre and Sidon, and even from Idumea.

⁹Because the crowd was so great, He told His followers to get a boat ready for Him to sit in on the lake, to keep the crowd from crushing Him.

¹⁰He had healed so many people that all the others who had various diseases and sicknesses kept pressing forward to touch Him.

¹¹And whenever evil spirits saw Him, they would cause those they were controlling to fall down before Him, and cry out, “You are the Son of God!”

¹²But He sternly commanded them not to reveal who He was.^a

Jesus Chooses Twelve Apostles

¹³Then Jesus went up into the hills. Later He called to Himself the men He wanted.^a

¹⁴When they came to Him, He appointed twelve to be constantly with Him, whom He would also send out to preach.

¹⁵He would also give them power^a to heal those with various diseases and to drive out demons.

¹⁶He chose Simon, to whom He added the name Peter;

¹⁷Zebedee’s two sons, James and John, whom He called Boanerges, which means, “Sons of Thunder”;

¹⁸Andrew; Phillip; Bartholomew; Matthew; Thomas; James, the son of Alphaeus; Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite;

¹⁹and Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Him.

Jesus and Beelzebul

²⁰Then they *came down from the hills and*^a went into a house. Again the crowds came, so many that Jesus and His followers couldn’t even eat.

²¹When His family heard about it, they tried to take custody of Him, because some were saying, “He’s out of his mind!”

²²And the teachers of the Jewish Law who had come from Jerusalem said, “He’s possessed by Beelzebul^a! He’s able to drive out demons because the king of the demons is doing it thru him.”

3:3a ... *where everyone can see you.*

3:4a ... *by refusing to do the good we are capable of doing?*

3:4b ... *by refusing to save the life we are capable of saving?*

3:6a The Herodians were not a religious sect, but a political party supporting Herod’s dynasty, which had been created by Caesar. The Pharisees regard-

ed them as untrue to their religion and country. But here we see them banding together with their bitter enemies against Christ as a common enemy.

3:12a He didn’t need or want their testimony.

3:13a Luke 6:12-13.

3:15a Matthew 10:1.

3:20a Implied.

3:22a See Matthew 10:25 note.

²³ So Jesus called them over to Him and spoke to them in parables, saying, “Why would Satan drive out Satan?”

²⁴ “If a nation is divided and fights itself, that nation won’t last long.

²⁵ “And if a family is divided and they fight among themselves, that family won’t last either.

²⁶ “So if Satan’s kingdom is divided and he’s fighting himself, his kingdom will fall apart and come to an end.

²⁷ “On the other hand, no one can enter a strong man’s house and rob him of what he has, unless he first of all ties the man up. Then he can take whatever he wants.

²⁸ “I tell you the truth: You can be forgiven all kinds of sin—even all kinds of abusive language and cursing.

²⁹ “But if anyone curses or speaks against the Holy Spirit, he will never be forgiven! He is guilty of a sin that will bring eternal judgment.”

³⁰ He said this because they were saying, “He’s possessed by an evil spirit.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

³¹ Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent in a message, asking Him to come out to them.

³² A crowd was sitting around Him when He was told, “Master, Your mother and brothers are outside asking for You.”

³³ “And just who is My mother?” he replied. “And who are My brothers?”

³⁴ Then looking around at the people sitting around Him, He said, “Look! Here are My mother and My brothers.

³⁵ “Because whoever does what God wants him to do is My brother, My sister, and My mother.”^a

Four Kinds of Soil

4 Another time when Jesus began to teach by the lake, such a large crowd gathered around Him that He got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while the crowd stood along the shore.

² He then taught them many things using parables.

³ “Listen!” He said. “A farmer went out to scatter

seed in a field.

⁴ “And it happened that as he scattered the seed, some fell on the hard path alongside the field, and the birds flew down and ate it.

⁵ “Some fell on a rocky area that had only a thin layer of soil on top of it. And because the soil was shallow and warm, the green stalks sprang up quickly.^a

⁶ “But they weren’t able to put their roots down,^a so when the hot sun came up they were scorched, and withered away.

⁷ “Some seed fell among thorns. And the thorns grew up and choked the good plants, so they didn’t produce any grain.

⁸ “But other seed fell on good soil. It sprang up and continued to grow, and finally produced a crop. Some produced 30, some 60, and some even 100 times as much as had been planted.”

⁹ Then He said, “Those of you who have been given ears for the purpose of hearing, listen!”

Why Jesus Used Parables

¹⁰ But when He was alone, some gathered around Him, together with the Twelve, and asked Him what He meant by the parable.

¹¹ “You have been given the privilege of understanding the secrets of the Kingdom of God,” He replied. “But to those outside the kingdom, all they hear is the parable.

¹² “The reason is, as the Scripture says:

While they do look, and can see, they are never able to gain knowledge. And while they do listen, and are able to hear, still they are never able to understand. If they did, they would be converted,^a and they would receive forgiveness for their sins.^b

¹³ “Do you mean that you don’t understand this simple parable?” He then asked them. “If that’s the case, how can you understand any of the other parables I’ll be giving?”

¹⁴ “The farmer is anyone who is sowing God’s message.

¹⁵ “The hearts of some people are like the hard path. They hear the message, but because of their hard hearts, Satan is able to come along immediately and take away the message that had been sown in their hearts.

3:35a What does this say about you, as to your relationship to Jesus?

4:5a ... *because the sun could heat the thin soil on the rock more quickly than the other soil.*

4:6a ... *to get any moisture or nourishment, because of the hard rock, ...*

4:12a They would then turn from their sinning

and begin to obey God. Notice that one must be converted from living to please oneself to living to please God if one is to receive God’s forgiveness for past sins. Unless there is this true conversion there is no forgiveness.

4:12b Isaiah 6:9-10.

¹⁶ “By using the same method of interpretation, those who received the seed on the rocky area are those who hear the message and immediately accept it joyfully.

¹⁷ “But since they don’t allow the message to take deep root in their hearts and lives, they last for only a short while. As soon as they’re given a hard time and are persecuted because of their faith in the message, they quickly fall away.

¹⁸ “Those who received the seed among thorns, are those who indeed continue to listen to the message,^a

¹⁹ “but because of their anxious concern about their earthly problems, and being deceived by desire to be rich and by desire for many other things—all of these take such possession of their lives that the message is choked, and it never produces any fruit.^a

²⁰ “But those who received the seed in good soil are those who continue to listen to the message and receive it with open hearts. These produce a crop for God—some 30, some 60, and some 100 times what had been planted.”^a

²¹ Then He said, “When you bring a lamp into a room, do you put it under a basket or a bed? No! You put it on a table.

²² “In the same way, whatever is now hidden will one day be revealed by the light. And whatever has been done in secret will then be exposed for everyone to see.

The Importance of Listening

²³ “If anyone has been given ears for the purpose of hearing, he must now listen!

²⁴ “You must continue to highly prize what you are hearing,” He continued. “Because to the extent that you put My words into practice and also share all that you learn with others, to that same extent you will be blessed with further truth and understanding. Also, to the extent that you continue to listen intently, to that same extent you will be given still more knowledge.

²⁵ “Because whoever continues to highly prize the knowledge he has, will be given more. But whoever does not highly prize what he has, even what he now has will be taken from him.”

Parable of the Growing Seed

²⁶ Then He said, “The Kingdom of God is like what happens when a farmer scatters seed on the soil.

²⁷ “Night and day, whether he sleeps or works, the seeds sprout and the stalks grow, even though he doesn’t know how they do it.

²⁸ “Because the soil produces the crops all by itself. First comes the tender stalk. Then the head forms. Then the full-grown grain finally forms in the head.

²⁹ “When the grain ripens, the farmer immediately cuts it down with the sickle, because harvest time has come.”

A Mustard Seed

³⁰ Then He continued, “To what else shall we liken the Kingdom of God? Or with what parable can we further describe it?

³¹ “It’s like what happens when a tiny mustard seed is planted in the ground. It’s the smallest of all seeds.

³² “But once it is planted, it grows up and becomes larger than all other garden plants. It shoots out branches so large that even the birds can perch in its shade.”^a

³³ As they were able to absorb them, He used many such parables to bring His message to the people.

³⁴ He didn’t say anything to the crowds without using parables. But when He was later alone with His followers, He explained everything to them.

Jesus Stops a Storm

³⁵ When evening came, Jesus said to His followers, “Let’s go across the lake.”

³⁶ So after Jesus dismissed the crowd, they took Him along in the boat just as He was,^a and several others followed Him in small boats.

³⁷ Suddenly a violent storm hit the lake. The wind became so fierce that it blew the waves into the boat until it was nearly full of water.

³⁸ But Jesus was in the back of the boat, asleep on a cushion. They frantically shook Him awake and shouted, “Teacher, don’t You care that we’re about to die?”

4:18a Such people even today go to church every Sunday and listen, but that’s about all they do.

4:19a Be sure to read John 15:1-6 here.

4:20a Where do you fit into this parable of Jesus? See Appendix 205, page 471.

4:32a This type of mustard plant is a tree that takes several years to mature. This resembles the

small seed of truth that is planted in a heart, which when nurtured over the years results in a mature Christian. It also resembles the Church of Christ, which began so small, and is now making its influence felt thruout the world. See Matthew 13:31 note.

4:36a He had been sitting in the boat teaching the

³⁹He then stood up and commanded the wind to stop blowing, and said to the waves, “Stop your violence! Be calm!” And the wind died down and the lake became perfectly calm.

⁴⁰“Why are you so fearful?” He asked them. “Do you still have no faith in Me?”

⁴¹They were totally awestruck, and said to one another, “Who is this Man? Why, even the wind and the waves obey Him!”

Jesus Frees a Man from Demons

5 When they arrived on the other side of the lake, in the country of the Gadarenes,

²Jesus had just gotten out of the boat, when a demon-possessed man came running up to Him from the burial caves nearby.

³This man lived in the caves, among the tombs.^a He was so wild that no one could keep him tied up, not even with chains.

⁴He had often been tied up with chains and leg irons, but he had ruthlessly torn the chains apart and smashed the iron shackles. No one was strong enough to control him.

⁵Day and night he constantly wandered among the tombs and in the hills, screaming and cutting himself with sharp stones.

⁶But when he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran up to Him and kneeled before Him.

⁷Jesus *immediately recognized the condition of the man and*^a commanded the demon within him, “Come out of the man, you evil spirit!”

⁸Whereupon it gave a loud shriek and screamed thru the man, “What are You planning to do with me, Jesus, You Son of the Most High God? I plead with You, swear to God You won’t torment me!”

⁹“What is your name?” Jesus then asked.

“My name is Legion,^a” the demon replied, “because there are so many of us in this man.”

¹⁰Again and again the demons begged Jesus not to send them out of the country.

¹¹Now on a nearby hillside, a large herd of pigs was feeding,

¹²and all the demons began pleading with Him, “Send us among the pigs, and let us go into them.”

¹³Immediately Jesus gave them permission. So the evil spirits all left the man and entered the pigs. And that herd of pigs, numbering about 2,000, ran madly down the steep bank and into the

lake, and drowned.

¹⁴At this the herdsmen ran into town, and told the people there, and also in the country, what had happened. So the people rushed out to see for themselves what had actually taken place.

¹⁵When they came to Jesus and saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons sitting there, now in his right mind and dressed, they were frightened.

¹⁶Then those who had been eye-witnesses told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man, and about the pigs.

¹⁷Upon hearing all this, the people began to urge Jesus to leave the area.

¹⁸When He got into the boat to leave, the man who had been freed from the demons begged Him, “Let me go with You!”

¹⁹But Jesus wouldn’t let him. He said, “Go home to your family and friends, and tell them about the great things the Lord has done for you, and how He took pity on you.”

²⁰So the man left and began telling people thru-out Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him. And they were all amazed.

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

²¹When Jesus had again crossed by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around Him. So He stayed by the lake for awhile.

²²Then Jairus, one of the officials of the local synagogue, came looking for Him. When he found Him, he fell to his knees right in front of Him.

²³“My little girl is at the brink of death! Please come and lay Your hands on her,” he earnestly pleaded with Him, “so that she may be healed, and she will live.”

²⁴So Jesus went with him. And a large crowd followed, pressing in close.

²⁵In that crowd was a woman who had suffered a severe bleeding problem for 12 years.

²⁶She had suffered a great deal thru many treatments under various doctors, and had spent all she had. Still she was no better, but rather had grown worse.

²⁷When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind Him in the crowd and merely touched His prayer shawl,^a

²⁸because she had kept saying to herself, “If I can

people for several hours. But now, without any preparation—taking no food or extra clothing—they started across the lake, taking Him *just as He was*.

5:3a The tombs were usually dug into the walls of

caves, and therefore, afforded some shelter.

5:7a Implied.

5:9a A legion in the Roman army consisted of a total of 6,000 soldiers.

just touch His clothes, I'll get well."

²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped, and she sensed in her body that she was healed.

³⁰ Aware at once that power had gone out of Him, Jesus turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched My clothes?"

³¹ "With all these people pressing in on You," His followers protested, "are You really asking, 'Who touched Me?'"

³² But when He kept looking around to see who had done this, the woman became frightened.

³³ And trembling, knowing what had happened to her, she came and fell to her knees before Him and told Him the whole truth.

³⁴ "Daughter," Jesus said to her, "your faith in Me has made you well. Go in peace, and be completely healed of your illness."

³⁵ While He was still speaking, some men came from the home of Jairus, and said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

³⁶ But when Jesus heard the report, He immediately said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid! Just keep on believing."

³⁷ Then He permitted no one to follow Him any farther except Peter, James, and James' brother John.

³⁸ When He came to the home of Jairus, He found the whole place in an uproar, full of weeping and loud wailing.

³⁹ When He went inside, He asked the people, "Why are you weeping and carrying on like this? The child isn't dead; she's only sleeping."

⁴⁰ But they couldn't believe He would say such a thing at such a time, and they contemptuously laughed at Him in scorn. So He sent them all out. Then He took the child's father and mother and those who were with Him, and entered the room where the 12-year-old child was lying.

⁴¹ Then taking her by the hand, He said to her, "Talitha, cumi," which is Aramaic for, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"

⁴² And immediately she got up and started walking around. Her parents were totally overwhelmed and ecstatic.

⁴³ But Jesus gave them strict orders to tell no one about this.^a Then He told them to give the girl something to eat.

Jesus is Rejected at Nazareth

6 Upon leaving there, Jesus and His followers went to Nazareth, His hometown.

² On the Sabbath, He began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard Him were utterly amazed. "Where did he get all this?" they questioned. "And what kind of wisdom is this that's been given him, that he's able to perform such great things with his hands!"

³ "Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? Don't his sisters live here with us?" And they deeply resented Him.

⁴ But Jesus told them, "A prophet is respected everywhere, except in his hometown and among his relatives and family members."

⁵ Although He wasn't able to do any great miracles there,^a He did lay His hands on a few sick people and healed them.

⁶ He was amazed at their unwillingness to believe. So He continued His teaching in the surrounding towns.

Sending Out the Twelve

⁷ Then He called the Twelve to Him, and sent them out by twos, and gave them authority and power over evil spirits.

⁸ "Don't take anything with you as you travel, except a walking stick," He told them, "no bag for provisions, no bread, no money in your wallets.

⁹ "Wear sandals, but don't take along any extra clothing.

¹⁰ "Whenever people welcome you into their home, stay there until you leave the area," He continued.

¹¹ "But whenever people refuse to offer you hospitality or listen to your message, when you leave there, shake the very dust from off your feet as a warning to them. I tell you the truth, God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah on Judgment Day than to the people of that city or home.

¹² So they went out and preached that people should turn from their sin and obey God.

¹³ They also drove out many demons, and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

5:27a See notes for Matthew 9:20.

5:43a For the reason see Matthew 12:16 note.

6:5a It was not that He couldn't, but that He chose not to because of their unbelief.

6:18a Leviticus 18:6,16; 20:21.

6:20a But he did not do the one thing that was

demanded of him — to turn from his sinning. He was like those today who treat ministers kindly, but refuse to believe the Great News about Jesus and forsake their sins. And, like those who believe in Jesus as Savior, but refuse to obey Him as Lord.

6:30a An apostle is a messenger.

The Death of John the Baptizer

¹⁴ Because Jesus' name had become well known, King Herod heard about Him as well. "It's John the Baptizer, risen from the dead," Herod said. "That's why he can do all these miracles."

¹⁵ Others said, "It's Elijah!" Still others said, "He's a new prophet, but he's just like the prophets of olden times."

¹⁶ But when Herod heard these opinions, he said, "No, this is John. I had his head cut off, but now he's come back to life!"

¹⁷ Herod himself had ordered John's arrest. He'd had him tied up and thrown in jail. He did this to please Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married.

¹⁸ He had imprisoned John because John had repeatedly told him, "You have broken God's Law^a by taking your brother's wife!"

¹⁹ In fury Herodias had lashed out against him and wanted him killed, but she wasn't able to because of Herod.

²⁰ Herod continually feared John. He knew he was an upright man, totally dedicated to God, and he protected him. When Herod heard John, he did many good things^a and enjoyed listening to him.

²¹ Finally, Herodias got her chance. On his birthday, Herod gave a banquet for his high officials, chief military officials, and the leading citizens of Galilee.

²² The daughter of Herodias came in and danced for them, and Herod and his guests were so pleased that the king told the girl, "Ask me for whatever you want, and I'll give it to you."

²³ With an oath he further promised, "I'll give you whatever you ask me, up to one-half of my kingdom."

²⁴ So she went out and asked her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"Ask him for the head of John the Baptizer," her mother replied.

²⁵ She hurried back in, went up to the king, and said, "I want you to immediately give me the head of John the Baptizer on a platter."

²⁶ The king was greatly distressed that she'd made this request, but because of his oath and because all the people there had heard him, he couldn't bring himself to refuse her.

²⁷ So he at once ordered an executioner to bring

John's head. And the man went and beheaded John in jail.

²⁸ He brought his head back on a platter and gave it to the girl, who gave it to her mother.

²⁹ When John's followers heard about it, they came and took his body away and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Feeds More than 5,000 People

³⁰ Following their preaching tour, the apostles^a gathered around Jesus and gave Him a full report of all they had done and what they had taught the people.

³¹ "Now I want you to go with Me to a remote area and rest awhile," Jesus said. (So many people were coming and going that they didn't even have a chance to eat.)

³² So they went alone by boat to a secluded place.

³³ But many in the crowds who saw them leave figured out where they were going. So people from every town around there ran on ahead and got there before they did, and met them when they landed.

³⁴ When Jesus got out of the boat and saw the great crowd, like sheep without a shepherd, He had pity on them. So He began teaching them many things.

³⁵ Late in the day, His followers came up to Him and said, "This is a remote area, and it's getting late.

³⁶ "You'd better send the people on their way, so they can go into the surrounding countryside and towns and buy food for themselves, because they don't have anything to eat."

³⁷ "You feed them," He replied.

"Do You mean," they questioned, "that You want us to go out and buy 200 denarii^a worth of food to feed all these people?"

³⁸ "How many loaves of bread^a do you have here now?" He asked them. "Go and find out." After they had investigated, they told Him, "We have only five small loaves, and two fish."

³⁹ Jesus then told them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass.

⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.

⁴¹ Then He took the five loaves and the two fish and, looking up to Heaven, He asked God to bless them. Then He broke the loaves and kept giving them to His followers to give to the people. He also

6:37a A denarius was a day's wages for a laboring man. Multiply 200 by a day's wage today for a working man and you get quite a sum. But even that amount would provide only *a tiny portion* of

food (John 6:7) for 5,000 men, besides women and children. Matthew 14:21.

6:38a A loaf of bread was generally seven inches in diameter and a half to one inch thick.

divided pieces of the two fish among all of them.

⁴²And everyone in that huge crowd ate until they were completely satisfied!

⁴³Afterward they gathered up 12 full baskets of leftovers!

⁴⁴That small amount of food had fed about 5,000 men!^a

Jesus Walks on the Water

⁴⁵Right after that, Jesus ordered His followers to go ahead of Him in the boat to the other side of the lake, to Bethsaida, while He dismissed the crowd.

⁴⁶After He had sent the crowd away, He went into the hills to pray.

⁴⁷When it got dark, the boat was in the middle of the lake, while He was alone on land.

⁴⁸He saw them out there straining at the oars, because they were rowing against the wind. Shortly before morning, He went out to them, walking on the lake! And He walked as though He intended to walk right by them.

⁴⁹But when they saw Him walking on the water, they screamed in terror, thinking it was a ghost!

⁵⁰They all saw Him, and were terrified. Immediately He spoke to them, and said, “Keep up your courage, men! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

⁵¹Then He climbed up into the boat with them, and the wind stopped. His followers were amazed beyond measure at what they had just seen. They just couldn’t get over their astonishment.

⁵²Obviously, they hadn’t learned anything from the miracle of the multiplying of the loaves of bread, because their hearts were still in a hardened state.

⁵³When they finished crossing, they arrived at Gennesaret, and tied up the boat on shore.

⁵⁴As they came out of the boat, the people there immediately recognized Jesus.

⁵⁵They then ran thruout the whole region and began bringing sick people on stretchers to wherever they heard He was.

⁵⁶Wherever He went—in the towns, cities, or countryside—they kept laying the sick in the marketplaces and pleading with Him that they might at least touch the fringe of His prayer shawl.^a And all who touched Him were healed.

God’s Commands or Man’s Traditions

7 Then the Pharisees and some of the teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Him.

²When they saw some of His followers eating food with unclean hands—that is, hands that hadn’t been washed as Jewish tradition dictated—they found fault.

³Neither the Pharisees nor any of the other Jews will eat unless they wash their hands in a certain way, in obedience to the tradition of the elders.

⁴When they come from the marketplace they won’t eat until they wash in this way. And there are many other traditions which they continue to practice, such as the certain ways they must wash cups, pitchers, copper pots, and beds.

⁵So the Pharisees and teachers of the Law asked Jesus, “Why don’t Your followers obey the tradition of the elders? Why do they eat food with unclean^a hands?”

⁶“Isaiah certainly prophesied the truth about you hypocrites,” Jesus replied, “when he wrote that God said:

These people honor Me with words, but their hearts are far from Me.

⁷**The worship they offer Me is worthless, because what they teach as vital truths are merely rules made up by men.^a**

⁸“You pay no attention to God’s commands, but you are so careful to obey your man-made traditions—such as the ceremonial washing of pots and cups, and many other such things.”

⁹Then He added, “You even have clever ways of setting aside God’s commands, so you can follow your traditions.

¹⁰“For instance, Moses commanded, **You must honor and revere your father and mother.^a** He also said, **Anyone who speaks cruelly to his father or mother must be put to death.^b**

¹¹“But you say, ‘A man does not need to help his needy father or mother if he tells them, “Whatever help I might have been able to give you is corban,”’ (that is, it has been dedicated as a future gift to God in his will).^a

¹²“By that arrangement, you no longer allow him

6:44a Matthew 14:21 adds *besides women and children*.

6:56a See notes for Matthew 9:20.

7:5a Not properly washed ceremonially.

7:6-7a Isaiah 29:13.

7:10a Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16. This would include helping his mother and father in

their old age or when they are sick and need his help.

7:10b Exodus 21:17.

7:11a That is, whatever money or property he could have used to give help to his parents had already been dedicated as a future gift to the Temple. The Jewish teachers of that day said it was

to use any of his money or property to help his father or mother.

¹³“In this way, you cancel out the word of God by the traditions of men, which you are now even teaching others. And you treat many other commands of God in the same way.”

¹⁴Then He called the whole crowd over and said to them, “Listen to Me, everyone! This is something you must understand and keep in mind:

¹⁵“It is not what goes into your body that pollutes you, but what comes out. These are the things that poison your soul.

¹⁶“If anyone has been given ears for the purpose of hearing, let him listen!”

¹⁷When He left the crowd and went into a house, His followers asked Him to explain what He meant by that statement.

¹⁸“Do you mean that you don’t understand either?” He asked. “Don’t you realize that a person is not defiled spiritually by what he eats?

¹⁹“No food goes into his heart,^a but into his stomach, and then passes thru the digestive system, and all that cannot be used by the body is then eliminated.

²⁰“But it’s what comes out of the person that pollutes him,” He continued.

²¹“Because from within, out of people’s hearts^a come evil thoughts and decisions about adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts,

²²covetous desires, wickedness, cheating, lust, envy, slander, pride, and all foolish desires and ambitions.

²³“All these evils come from the heart.^a These are the things that make a person unclean and unfit to be with God.”

The Faith of a Syrophenician Woman

²⁴Leaving there, Jesus went to the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. He entered a house and didn’t want anyone to know He was there. But He couldn’t keep it secret.

²⁵A woman whose little girl was possessed by an evil spirit heard He was there, and she came and fell to her knees at His feet,

²⁶begging Him to drive the demon out of her daughter. The woman was a Greek,^a born in the part of Syria known as Phoenicia.

²⁷But Jesus told her, “The children^a must first be allowed to eat until they are satisfied. It’s not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”^b

²⁸“Yes, Lord,” she replied. “But even the little dogs under the table eat the crumbs the children drop.”

²⁹“For making that admirable and compelling statement you may go now,” Jesus responded. “The demon has left your daughter.”

³⁰When she arrived home, she found that the demon had indeed left her daughter, and the girl was lying on the bed.

Jesus Heals a Man Who was Deaf and Could Hardly Talk

³¹Again He left the area of Tyre and Sidon and arrived at Lake Galilee after going thru the region of Decapolis.

³²While He was there, some people brought a man to Him who was deaf and could hardly speak. They pleaded with Jesus to put His hand on the man and heal him.

³³So Jesus took him aside, away from the crowd, and put His fingers in his ears. Then He spit, and touched the man’s tongue with the saliva.

³⁴Then with a deep sigh, He looked up to Heaven, after which He said to the man, “Effatha!” which is Aramaic for “Open up!”

³⁵Instantly the man was able to hear! His tongue was also set free, and he spoke plainly.

³⁶Jesus commanded the people to tell no one what happened.^a But the more He tried to stop them, the more widely they broadcast the news.

³⁷They were overwhelmed and utterly amazed. “He’s been effective in everything He’s tried to do!” they kept telling other people. “Just now He healed a deaf man, and also freed his tongue so he could speak!”

Jesus Feeds More than 4,000 People

8The crowd following Jesus at that time was huge. And because they had nothing to eat, Jesus called His followers and said,

²“I am deeply concerned about these people. They’ve been with Me now for three days, and have nothing to eat.

more important for a person to dedicate his property to God than to provide for the needs of his parents. See *Barnes’ Notes* on Matthew 15:5-6.

7:19,21,23a ... *the very heart center of your being, the zone of your thoughts, intellect, passions, impulses, affections, desires, all emotions,*

appetites, motives, intentions, and endeavors ...

7:26a A despised Gentile, not a Jew.

7:27a Referring to the people of Israel.

7:27b See Matthew 15:26 note.

7:36a For the reason see Matthew 12:16 note.

³“If I send them away to their homes as hungry as they are, they’ll collapse on the way, because some have come a long way.”

⁴“But how can we ever find enough food way out here in this deserted area to feed all these people?” they replied.

⁵“How many loaves of bread do you have?” He asked.

“Seven,” they replied.

⁶So He told the people to sit down on the ground. Then He took the seven small loaves and thanked God for them, after which He broke them and gave them to His followers to distribute among the people, which they did.

⁷Someone also gave Him a few small fish. After asking God to bless them, He told His followers to distribute them, too.

⁸All those people ate until they were completely satisfied! Then Jesus’ followers gathered up and filled seven large hamper baskets with the leftovers!

⁹About 4,000 men had eaten.^a Following this, Jesus sent them home.

The Yeast

¹⁰Immediately after doing so, He got into the boat with His followers and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

¹¹There the local Pharisees came to Him and began to argue. To test Him, they said, “Make a miracle happen in the sky.”

¹²Jesus sighed deeply, and then said, “Why do you people continue to demand another miraculous

sign? I tell you the truth, no such sign will be given you.”^a

¹³With that He left them, and getting back into the boat, He went to the other side of the lake.

¹⁴It so happened that His followers had forgotten to take along any bread. All they had in the boat was one loaf.

¹⁵So when Jesus warned them, “Watch out, and always be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, and the yeast of Herod,”

¹⁶they discussed the matter among themselves and concluded, “He said that because we don’t have any bread.”

¹⁷But Jesus knew how they were reasoning, so He said, “Why have you come to the conclusion that I said what I did because you have no bread? Don’t you see yet or understand? Are your hearts still hardened?”

¹⁸“You have eyes! Haven’t you seen anything? And you have ears! Haven’t you used them to listen to what’s been said? Don’t you remember anything you’ve seen and heard?”

¹⁹“When I broke the five loaves of bread for the 5,000 men, how many baskets full of fragments did you collect afterwards?”

“Twelve,” they replied.

²⁰“And when I broke the seven loaves for the 4,000, how many large hamper baskets full of fragments did you collect then?”

“Seven.”

²¹“How can it be,” He then asked them, “that even after seeing all that take place, you still don’t understand?”^a

8:9a Matthew 15:38 adds *besides women and children*.

8:12a See Matthew 16:2-4.

8:21a ... *that you don’t need to worry about having enough food to eat when you have Me with you*.

8:29a Or *the Christ*.

8:32a Peter may have said, “You must stop having such negative thoughts! With all the power You have You never need to allow anything like that to happen to You.” See Matthew 16:22.

8:34a That is *to be a Christian*. Jesus was not speaking only of those who decide to be preachers, priests, missionaries, or other Christian workers. Notice that He calls the whole crowd over to hear this message, not just the Twelve. This message is for everyone.

He was stating here in a very emphatic way, what it is that is necessary for one to be truly converted (born again)! He makes it very clear in verses 36 and 37 that this is what He is talking about. All the

words in these verses translated *life* and *soul* are translated from the same Greek word *psukáy*.

Jesus is talking about the necessity of living your present life *for Him* if you expect to have eternal life *with Him*.

You can live for Him now and joyfully look forward to happiness thruout eternity, or, live to fulfill your own desires and ambitions, with little real regard for Christ and others, and reap eternal regrets *in outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*. Matthew 8:12; 13:40-42; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30.

8:34b The word *cross* here has been greatly misunderstood by many. We hear such statements as, “I have a sick wife, but I guess that’s the cross I must bear.” Or, “I have a fatal disease, but I guess that’s the cross I must bear.” No, the *cross* of which the Lord speaks here is one which we willingly *take up*, and follow Christ. No one chooses to have a sick spouse or a fatal disease.

The cross is a symbol of death. Jesus died on His

Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

²² When they arrived at Bethsaida, some people brought a blind man to Jesus, and pleaded with Him to touch and heal him.

²³ So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of town. After He had spit on his eyes and had then laid His hands upon them, He asked him if he could see anything.

²⁴ He looked around, and said, “I see people, but they look like tree trunks walking around.”

²⁵ So Jesus put his hands on the man’s eyes again, and then told him to open them. This time his sight was completely restored. Now he was able to see everyone clearly.

²⁶ Jesus then sent him home, telling him, “Don’t tell anyone in town what happened. In fact, don’t even go back into town.”

Peter’s Confession of the Messiah

²⁷ Then Jesus and His followers went into the towns around Caesarea Philippi. Along the way, He asked His followers, “What are the people saying about who I am?”

²⁸ “Some say You’re John the Baptizer,” they replied. “Others say You’re Elijah; and still others, that You’re one of the other prophets come back to life.”

²⁹ “But who do you say I am?” He then questioned.

“You are the Messiah^a!” Peter responded.

³⁰ Jesus then firmly ordered them to tell no one who He really was.

Jesus Predicts His Death

³¹ Then He began to tell them that He, the Son of Man, must suffer many things. He also told them

He would be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law, and that He would be killed, but that three days later He would rise from the dead and come back to life.

³² After Jesus had told them plainly what would happen, Peter took Him aside and told Him He must never allow such a thing to happen to Him.^a

³³ But after turning and looking at the rest of His followers, Jesus spoke to Peter and gave Him a very stern rebuke, saying, “You get behind Me, Satan! Because your concern is not that God’s will be done, but that your own desires may be realized!”

A Powerful Warning

³⁴ Then Jesus called the crowd of people, as well as His twelve close followers, to come to Him and listen to something very special He had to say to them. Then He said, “Whoever decides he wants to follow Me^a must no longer live for the purpose of pleasing and satisfying his own natural desires. He must take up his own cross^b and die to those selfish desires, and make it his practice to obey what I have taught and commanded.^c

³⁵ “Because if you choose to continue to satisfy your desire to live as you yourself please, you will lose your soul! But if you will make it your purpose in life to put to death your own desires, and live as I desire that you live, and live for the sake of giving the Great News to others, you will save your soul.^a

³⁶ “Because what good would it do you even if you gained all the wealth and power and all the flesh-fulfilling experiences in all the world, but then found yourself barred from Heaven and sent to your judgment in Hell?^a

³⁷ “Or look at it this way: If you suddenly found

cross. In other words, Jesus is stating that if we would be followers of His we must die to self and live to Him. He calls us to death! The old person must die, with a new person being the result — a person who no longer lives for himself but for God and the Savior. This is what Jesus meant when He said, “You must be born again, or you will never see the Kingdom of God.” John 3:1-21. See also Appendix 221, page 483.

8:34c ... *and will yet teach and command thru My apostles.* The literal Greek for the last sentence of this verse is, *He must take up his cross and follow Me.* The expanded translation here states what it really means to take up our cross and follow Jesus. See most important comments on this verse in Appendix 206, page 472.

8:35a Whoever is determined to live his life as he pleases, *will lose his soul!* He will not only in the

end lose all that he has lived for, but he will lose his place with Christ in eternity. The Lord is not speaking about rewards here. It is a matter of life or death. He is speaking of losing eternal life—the death of the soul.

But in the last part of the verse, He again explains how one may receive eternal life. It is not a matter of *simply believing the facts* that Christ is the Son of God and that He died for sinners. It is the willingness to lose and surrender ourselves and our wills to the Lord, *for His sake, and for the sake of giving the Great News to others.* See Romans 10:9-10.

A good way to test yourself as to where you really are in the eyes of God, is to search your own heart and ask yourself the question, “What place does Christ really have in my life, and how really concerned am I to *lose* myself for Christ’s sake and for

yourself in awful suffering in Hell, how much would you then be willing to give of yourself to God in order to gain His forgiveness and eternal life?^a

³⁸“If you are ashamed of Me among the sex-crazed, and other sinners of your time, ashamed to fly your colors and share with them the message of Life that I came from Heaven to earth to give lost mankind, I, the Son of Man, will also be ashamed of you when I come in the glory of My Father with the holy angels.”^a

9“I tell you the truth,” Jesus continued, “some of you standing here today will definitely not die before you see the Kingdom of God present here on earth in a display of great power.”^a

The Glory of Jesus Revealed

²Six days later, Jesus led Peter, James, and John up a high mountain, where they were alone. Then right in front of their eyes, they saw His appearance change completely!^a

³His clothes became dazzling white—like snow—whiter than anyone on earth could ever whiten them.

⁴Then Elijah and Moses appeared on the scene, and began talking with Jesus.

⁵“Teacher!” Peter exclaimed, “it’s good for us to

be here! Should we perhaps put up three shelters—one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah?”

⁶He said this because he really didn’t know what to say—they were so terrified.

⁷Just then a cloud covered them completely, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is My Son, whom I love dearly. You must keep on listening to Him.”

⁸Immediately after hearing the voice, they looked around, but no one was there, except Jesus.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus told them to tell no one what they had seen until He^a had risen from the dead.

¹⁰So they didn’t even mention the matter to anyone else. But they continued to question among themselves what He could mean about rising from the dead.

¹¹But the question they put to Him was, “Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah must come on the scene before You, the Messiah, will come?”

¹²“That’s true,” Jesus replied, “Elijah does come first, and will strive to get everyone ready to receive the Messiah.^a Now let Me ask you: How is it that the Scriptures also state that the Son of Man must endure great suffering and be rejected as worthless?”^b

¹³“But as for Elijah, he has already come,^a just as it was written about him, and they treated him just

the sake of others? Just how concerned *am I*? Does my life and service for Christ prove that I’m truly concerned?”

The Lord stipulates here that to be assured that we are truly born again, we must find our lives completely surrendered to the Lord, with a deep desire to please Him and be deeply concerned about telling others thruout the world the Great News about life eternal thru Christ. Notice that we are to have concern not only for the Person of Christ but *for His message of life to the world*. We are to live to please Christ, and we are to live for the purpose of getting His message to the rest of the world by any and every means possible.

If we really believe that the lost are lost, and that Hell is terrible in the extreme, we will be concerned not only that Christ is our own Savior but also concerned for others for whom Christ is concerned. He was concerned enough about them to leave Heaven and die an awful death on the cross for them. It is not enough that we are glad to receive this message and the benefits of it for ourselves. Our concern must include *the sharing of Christ’s concern for others* who have not yet heard! See Appendix 207, p 473, for an additional most important note here.

For instructions on how to speak to others about Christ and His salvation, see Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 10:9-10; 2 Timothy 4:2, and the notes there, and Appendixes 212, p477, and 226, p 486.

8:36a This verse is one that many professing Christians quote to those who are not followers of the Lord. But the Lord is actually continuing to speak here to His followers, as well as to everyone else. He indicates that unless one is willing to obey His words concerning dying to self and living for Him and for the purpose of giving His message to the lost, he will *lose his soul*. v 35. All these verses go together. They cannot be separated.

So many are willing to accept the benefits of Christ, but they are not willing to die to self in order that they might share the benefits of Christ to the greatest extent possible with others who are still lost! Christ is not satisfied with just half of our love. He demands *all!* He will accept no less than all!

His warning in this verse is that no matter who we are, we must realize that unless we are living for Him and for the things that greatly concern Him, we are *lukewarm* and *wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*. Revelation 3:14-22.

All the so-called *freedom* we have in Christ, to do our own thing, has never been given to us by Christ.

as their evil hearts desired.”

Jesus Heals a Boy

¹⁴When Jesus came down to where His other followers were, He saw them arguing with the teachers of the Law, and a large crowd had gathered around them.

¹⁵When the people saw Jesus, they ran to greet Him, but they were all amazed at His appearance.^a

¹⁶Then Jesus asked the teachers of the Law, “What’s the argument about?”

¹⁷“Teacher,” one of the men in the crowd spoke up, “I’ve brought my son to You. He’s possessed by a demon that’s made him unable to speak.

¹⁸“Whenever it attacks him, it slams him to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth. He’s gradually wasting away! So I asked Your followers to drive the demon out, but they couldn’t.”

¹⁹“Oh, you faithless people!” Jesus replied. “How long must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring the boy to Me.”

²⁰So they brought him. But as soon as the boy saw Jesus, the demon in him threw him into violent convulsions, so that he fell to the ground writhing and foaming at the mouth.

²¹“How long has he been having attacks like

this?” Jesus asked the father.

“Ever since he was a small child,” he replied.

²²“The demon has often tried to kill him by throwing him into fire and into water. If you can do anything, please have pity on us and help us!”

²³“I can help you if you will believe,” Jesus replied. “Everything is possible for the one who continues to believe.”

²⁴Immediately the father cried out in tears, “Lord, I do believe! Help me to overcome my unbelief!”

²⁵When Jesus saw that the crowd was growing rapidly, He rebuked the evil spirit. “You spirit of deafness and speechlessness,” He said, “I command you, come out of the boy and never enter him again!”

²⁶The demon responded by screaming and throwing the boy again into violent convulsions, and then it came out. The boy lay there as motionless as death, causing many to say, “He’s dead!”

²⁷But Jesus took him by the hand and helped him up, and he stood on his feet.

²⁸After Jesus had come into the house, His followers asked Him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive that demon out?”

²⁹“This kind of demon cannot be driven out,” Jesus replied, “except by prayer and fasting.”

We are free from obligation to obey the ceremonial regulations of the Law of Moses, but we are not free to disobey God and live to please ourselves. We are to consider ourselves as wholly belonging to the Lord, or else not belonging to Him at all. And if we belong wholly to the Lord, the deep, intense desire and passion of our heart will be to please Him and serve Him faithfully and effectively.

We may go our own willful way and gain whatever enjoyment, ease, pleasure, freedom, or whatever is the desire of our hearts, but the end will be to lose one’s soul, no matter how often we attend church!

8:37a In a real sense, the Lord is saying in v 37: *Or look at it this way: If you die tonight, lost, and suddenly find yourself suffering extreme, torturing pain and agony in Hell, how much will you then be urgently and desperately willing to give of yourself to God, and utterly die to all your sinning by refusing any longer to satisfy the appetites of your body and mind in a wrong way, and instead, sincerely worship, obey, serve, and take a firm stand for God, in order to get free from there and escape to Heaven?* But then it will be forever too late! These are heavy questions indeed! For their consideration, see Appendix 208, page 474. Also see Matthew 16:26 notes.

8:38a What will be the fate of those who are

ashamed of Christ and unwilling to take a stand and speak out for Him? See Appendix 209, page 474; also Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; Revelation 3:14-16; 21:8; Ezekiel 33:1-9.

9:1a Some believe Jesus referred to what would happen six days later on the Mount of Transfiguration. Others believe He referred to the coming of the Holy Spirit in great power on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47), and what followed. He could have referred to both.

9:2a Matthew 17:2 states, “His face became as brilliant as the sun!” He revealed Himself in all His marvelous glory.

9:9a Literally *the Son of Man*.

9:12a See Matthew 17:11 note.

9:12b Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12; Psalm 22:1-21; Daniel 9:25-26a; Zechariah 12:10; Luke 24:25-27,45-47.

9:13a See Luke 1:17. John the Baptizer came in the spirit of Elijah. But many believe Elijah will return in person shortly before God judges the people on earth. Malachi 4:5-6. Some believe he may be one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11:1-14.

9:15a His face evidently still retained some traces of the glory He had revealed to Peter, James, and John. The same thing happened to Moses when he talked to God on Mount Sinai. Exodus 34:29-35.

³⁰ Then they left there and traveled thru Galilee.

³¹ But Jesus didn't want anyone to know where He was, because He was teaching His followers. He was telling them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men who will kill Him. But on the third day after He is killed, He will rise back to life again."

³² But they didn't understand what He was talking about, and they were afraid to ask Him.

Who Is the Greatest?

³³ When He arrived at Capernaum and was with His followers in the house, He asked them, "What was it that you men were arguing about among yourselves along the way?"

³⁴ They didn't answer, because along the road they had been arguing among themselves about which of them was the greatest.

³⁵ Then He sat down and called the Twelve to Himself and said, "Anyone who has a continual desire to be the greatest will end up being^a the least of all, and the servant of everyone else."

³⁶ Then He brought a little child into their group, and taking him up into His arms He said to them,

³⁷ "Whoever warmly welcomes one of these little children, to do for him what I would do,^a is welcoming Me. And whoever welcomes Me is welcoming not only Me, but the One who sent Me."

Whoever Is Not Against Us Is For Us

³⁸ Then John spoke up and said, "Teacher, we saw someone who's not a member of our group driving out demons in Your name, and we told him to stop, because he's not following You with us."

³⁹ "Don't stop him," Jesus replied. "Because anyone who performs a miracle in My name can't be one who will then turn right around and speak against Me.^a"

⁴⁰ "Anyone who is not against us is on our side.

⁴¹ "If anyone gives you even such a small thing as a cup of water as a favor to Me, because you belong to Me, I assure you, he will definitely be rewarded even for doing that.^a"

Frightful Judgment for Tempters

⁴² "Now back to the matter of the little child^a: Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble,^b would be better off if someone had hung a massive millstone around his neck and had thrown him into the sea.^c"

⁴³ "So if your hand is causing you to sin, cut it off! It's far better for you to gain eternal life without a hand, than to have two hands that take you to Hell, into the fire where the flames will never be quenched,

⁴⁴ where their worm^a never dies and the fire never goes out.

⁴⁵ "And if your foot is causing you to sin, cut it off! It's far better for you to gain eternal life lame, than to have two feet that take you to Hell, into the fire where the flames are never quenched,

⁴⁶ where their worm^a never dies and the fire never goes out.

⁴⁷ "And if your eye is causing you to sin, gouge it out! It's far better for you to enter the Kingdom of God with only one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fires of Hell,

⁴⁸ where their worm^a never dies and the fire never goes out.^b"

⁴⁹ "Because everyone will be seasoned with fire,^a just as every sacrifice is to be seasoned with salt.^b"

⁵⁰ "Salt serves a good purpose. But if the salt in your life and testimony has lost its pungently sharp penetrating qualities^a and healing powers, and has become insipid and useless, how will others be convinced, convicted, saved, and preserved in purity, uprightness, and self control by your influence and help? Continue to have genuine salt

9:35a This is future tense in the Greek, not imperative mood as some translate it. You should study this in connection with Matthew 18:1-5; 20:25-28; Luke 9:46-48.

9:37a Literally *in My name*.

9:39a God would not empower him to do miracles in Christ's name if he was an enemy of Christ.

9:41a "The eyes of the Lord are everywhere. So he sees every evil action, as well as the good that's being done" Proverbs 15:3. We will indeed be rewarded according to our works.

Even such a little thing as *a cup of water*, given to one *because he belongs to Christ*, will not be overlooked by the Lord.

9:42a Implied.

9:42b Or *to lose his faith in Me*.

9:42c ... *before he had a chance to do such a dastardly thing*.

9:44,46,48a *The worm of remorse*. Who can adequately imagine the awful, endless torment of this continually gnawing worm? "If only I had accepted God's forgiveness and had been truly born again, and had lived to obey and serve God instead of living as I pleased! What folly to have lived that brief life for such momentary and unsatisfactory attainments and pleasure, when such true riches and happiness were offered me for all eternity! Oh what a fool I've been! What a fool! What a fool!"

in the way you live and in the things you say.^b But at the same time, continue to live in peace with all who are true followers of Mine.”^c

Teaching About Divorce

10 Jesus then left Capernaum and went south into the region just across the Jordan River from Judea. Again people flocked to Him, and again, as always, He taught them.

²Then the Pharisees came with a question to trip Him up. “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” they asked.

³“What did Moses say about divorce?” Jesus responded.

⁴“Moses said a man needed to merely write a certificate of divorce and send her away,” they declared.

⁵“Moses gave you that law,” Jesus replied, “because you are so hard-hearted.”^a

⁶“But that’s not the way it was from the beginning when God created mankind. The record states, ‘God made man male and female.’^a

⁷For that reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife. And the two shall become so devoted to each other that they become as one person.”^a

⁸“So they are no longer two, but one.

⁹“And man has no right to separate what God has joined together.”

¹⁰When they were again in the house, His followers had further questions for Him about the subject.

¹¹“Any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her,” He replied.

¹²“And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.”^a

The Little Children and Jesus

¹³Then people began bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them. But His followers got upset and strongly demanded that the people not bother Jesus with little children.

¹⁴When Jesus saw this, He became very angry, and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me! Don’t hinder them! Because the Kingdom of God belongs to those who become like these little children in spirit.

¹⁵“I tell you the truth, anyone who does not receive the Kingdom of God with the unmistakable spirit of a little child^a will definitely not enter it.”

¹⁶Then He took the little children up in His arms, put His hands on each of them, and blessed them.”^a

Warning to Those Who Are Rich

¹⁷Later, as He was walking along on the road, a man came running up to Him and knelt down in front of Him and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do in order to live forever?”

¹⁸“Why do you call Me ‘good?’” Jesus replied. “Only One Person is truly good, and that’s God—no one else.

¹⁹“You know the commands God has given: **You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not tell lies about anyone, you shall not cheat anyone in any way, and honor your mother and father.**”^a

²⁰“Teacher,” he replied, “I’ve obeyed all of these from the time I was a child.”

²¹Jesus looked at him for a moment, really loving him for his sincerity. Then He said to him, “There’s one thing still missing in your life: Go and sell everything you have, and give the proceeds to the poor. Then you will have riches and wealth in Heaven. After that, take up your cross^a and follow

Turn to Appendix 247, page 520, and read *The Amazing Story of God*, and make your decision for God NOW, before it is forever too late.

9:48b Isaiah 66:24.

9:49a There is a fire which will be for *punishment* in Hell and the lake of fire, and there is a fire for the Lord’s followers which *purifies*. See Matthew 10:34-36; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12-14. So we can choose which fire we are willing to endure.

9:49b Leviticus 2:13.

9:50a Hebrews 4:12.

9:50b Matthew 5:13; Luke 14:34-35.

9:50c ... *even if you don’t agree with them in all things*.

10:5a Many men are so hard-hearted they would kill their wives if they couldn’t divorce them.

10:6a Genesis 1:27; 5:2.

10:7a Genesis 2:24.

10:12a See Matthew 19:9 for clarification.

10:15a —*teachable, mild, humble, free from prejudice and self-will, and wanting above all else to please and obey his heavenly Father* ... Matthew 18:1-3.

10:16a Oh, how our children need God’s blessing upon them in an age when the devil is bidding so highly for them. Pray most earnestly for your children. And pray with them, and for them in their presence, and truly love them.

10:19a Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20.

Me.”

²²The man was extremely sad when he heard that, and he went away with a heavy heart, because he was very rich.^a

²³Then Jesus turned around and said to His followers, “It is so hard for those who are rich to enter the Kingdom of God!”

²⁴His followers were astonished at that statement. But Jesus repeated it, this time saying, “Children, it is extremely difficult for those who put their trust in their wealth to enter the Kingdom of God.

²⁵“In fact, it is easier for a camel to go thru the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God.”^a

²⁶His followers were then even more astonished, saying among themselves, “Well, who then can be saved?”^a

²⁷Looking straight at them Jesus replied, “Yes, it’s impossible for people who look at riches from man’s sense of values to be saved, but not for the one who draws near to God and gladly receives his orders from Him. Because when even a rich person continues to live in close fellowship with God, everything is possible.”^a

²⁸Peter then spoke up, “Look, we’ve left everything and followed You.”

²⁹“I promise you,” Jesus replied, “anyone who has left home or brothers or sisters or father or

mother or wife or children or property for My sake, and for the sake of telling others the Great News,

³⁰will receive a hundred times more in this present life than he gave up—homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and properties. But along with all this, he will also receive persecutions—and in the age to come, everlasting life.

³¹“But many who are now thought of as being great will then have the lowest positions, and many who are now considered to be of little importance will then hold positions of great importance.”^a

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

³²Later, as they were on their way to Jerusalem, Jesus was walking ahead of His followers. They walked behind, both amazed and afraid, because Jesus had again taken the Twelve aside and described all that would happen to Him when they arrived at Jerusalem.

³³“Look,” He had said, “we are now on our way up to Jerusalem, where I, the Son of Man, will be handed over to the chief priests and teachers of the Law. They will sentence Me to death and hand Me over to the Romans to be killed.”^a

³⁴“The Romans will mock Me, flog Me, spit on Me, and kill Me, but three days later I will rise back to life again.”

10:21a What does Jesus mean by *your cross*? See Appendix 221, page 483.

10:22a He chose his possessions (the things that would give him what he wanted in *this* life) instead of Christ and eternal life and riches. Don’t envy the rich, because it is far more difficult for the rich to make the full surrender to God that is necessary to gain Heaven, than it is for the poor or for those relatively poor. Without God’s help, none of us will make it. Philippians 2:13 applies here. See Appendix 218 for a most important note on that Scripture.

10:25a We must make Jesus the Lord of our money as well as Lord in every other area of our life. To refuse to do so is to be in rebellion against Him. What Jesus is teaching here is that the more money a person has the more difficult it becomes for him to surrender that money to his Lord.

The more money people have the more dependent they become upon it. They trust in their money to get them thru any and every situation. For that reason, the rich are so in love with the wealth they have that they find it very difficult to make the full surrender of all they are and have to God, which is essential if they are to be converted to him (born again) and be saved.

10:26a See Matthew 19:25 note.

10:27a See Luke 18:27 note.

10:28-31a Matthew 19:27-30 records Jesus’ answer to Peter’s question about future positions in His Kingdom. Jesus promised him that His twelve followers who had forsaken all and had followed Him would *sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel* when He returned. Mark does not mention that here, but he does record the additional words of the Lord which give promise to every one of us who love Christ and have forsaken the world in order to follow Him.

The promise to all true Christians is that they will receive vastly more in return, even in this life, of that which has been sacrificed for Jesus’ sake. A Christian may not receive actual title to properties in this life, or beget extra children or acquire extra brothers, in a natural sense. In faithfully following the Lord, however, he will find that extra properties or material goods are his to use. He will find many persons also, who will be as *brothers, sisters, mothers, or children* to him.

The Lord states in a definite promise to His followers that they will receive back immeasurably more than they have given up for Him. They will receive *a hundred times* the amount of *brothers, children, or material things* in one form or another

The Request of James and John

³⁵ It was also during this trip that James and John, the sons of Zebedee, went to Him and said, "Teacher, will You do for us whatever we ask?"

³⁶ "And what is it that you want Me to do for you?" Jesus responded.

³⁷ "Would you let one of us sit on Your right and the other at Your left in the glory of Your Kingdom?" they replied.

³⁸ "You don't realize what you're asking," Jesus replied. "Are you able to drink the bitter mixture in the cup of sorrow that I am about to drink, and be baptized into^a the baptism of extreme suffering into which I am about to be baptized?"

³⁹ "Yes, we are," they replied.

"You will indeed drink the cup that I drink," Jesus said, "and be baptized into the baptism into which I am baptized,

⁴⁰ but I have no authority to decide who will sit on My right and on My left. Those positions will be given by God to those for whom they have been prepared."^a

⁴¹ When the other ten heard what these brothers had requested, they were thoroughly disgusted with James and John.

⁴² Calling all of them together, Jesus said, "You know how heathen rulers lord it over their subjects, and how the highest rulers lord it over those rulers.

⁴³ "But that's not the way it's to be among you. If any of you want to be great, then you must become one who serves others.

⁴⁴ "And whoever of you wants to be first, you must be a slave to everyone else.

⁴⁵ "Because even I, the Son of Man, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give My life as a ransom for many."

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

⁴⁶ Following this they arrived at Jericho. When Jesus and His followers, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside begging.

⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus from Nazareth who was passing by, he began to shout, "Jesus! Son of David!^a Have pity on me!"

⁴⁸ "Stop that! Calm down!" many in the crowd shouted at him in return. But he just kept on shouting, louder than ever, "Son of David, have pity on me!"

⁴⁹ So Jesus stopped and said, "Tell him to come here."

Then the people called out to him, "Cheer up! He's calling for you. Get up now!"

⁵⁰ So throwing his cloak aside, he got up at once and went to Jesus.

⁵¹ "What can I do for you?" Jesus asked.

"Teacher!" the blind man said, "I want to be

that they have sacrificed for Him.

Accompanying these blessings, however, will be *persecutions*. Persecution is the lot of all true Christians. Anyone who honestly follows the Lord, allowing his or her light to shine for Him, and giving testimony concerning Him, must expect persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12.

But the greatest promise the Lord makes to those who have forsaken all for Him is that *in the age to come* they will receive *everlasting life*.

Most of Jesus' apostles came from the lower rungs of society. Their future position in Christ's Kingdom will be quite the opposite. The same transformation in rank will occur for those *many* who serve the Lord faithfully and zealously in lowly places today. In Christ's Kingdom they will rule! *Many* who are in prominent positions today, both in government and in the Church—even though saved—may find themselves among the least in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The mere act of serving in an obscure place today does not guarantee elevation tomorrow, of course, nor does it necessarily follow that all in high places

will be automatically lowered. The simple fact remains, however, that all true Christians will be rewarded by Christ according to their labors for Him—the wise use of their time, abilities, finances, their attitudes, and their degree of obedience to the Master in faithfully and fearlessly sharing the Great News with others—this will all be taken into consideration by our Lord. Christian, heed the obvious! Keep your eye constantly on the goal ... *on things above, not on things on earth*.

10:33a The words *priests, teachers, and Romans* assign responsibility for the crucifixion of Messiah to both Jews and Gentiles. A study of the political structure of the times will show that much was at stake for both groups, since the priesthood of Israel at this time was approved and in some cases sold by the government. So preservation of the establishment was essential to their security and control.

10:38a ... into *extreme suffering and death* ...

10:40a See Matthew 20:20-23 note.

10:47a "Son of David" a well-known and understood title of Messiah. Used 20 times in the New Testament. Still used in Judaism in reference to Messiah.

able to see!”

⁵²“Go your way,” Jesus told him. “Your faith has made you well.” And immediately he was able to see, and began hilariously following Jesus down the road.^a

Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

11 As they were approaching Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage and Bethany, just across from the Mount of Olives, and Jesus sent two of His followers on an errand.

²“Go into the village over there,” He told them. “As soon as you enter it, you’ll see a colt tied up. No one has ever sat on it, but untie it and bring it to Me.

³“If anyone asks you what you’re doing, just tell him, ‘It’s true Owner^a needs it and will send it right back.’”

⁴So they went. And sure enough, there was the colt in the street, tied near a door. So they untied it.

⁵“Hey! What are you doing there, untying that colt?” some bystanders demanded.

⁶They then told them what Jesus had said, and the men let them take it.

⁷When they brought the colt to Jesus, some of the people threw their robes on its back. Then Jesus mounted it.^a

⁸Many of the others spread out their robes on the roadway. Others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

⁹Then those who walked ahead and those who followed began loudly shouting:

“Hosanna!^a

God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord!^b

¹⁰“God bless the Kingdom of our father David, that now comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heavens!”

¹¹When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He went directly into the Temple area and looked around and observed all that was going on. But since it was already late in the day, He went out to Bethany with His twelve followers.

The Curse on a Fig Tree

¹²The next day, as they were coming back from Bethany, Jesus was hungry.

¹³In the distance, He saw a fig tree in leaf. He went over to it to see if He might find some fruit on it. But when He reached it, He found nothing but leaves, because it wasn’t the season for figs.

¹⁴“May no one ever eat fruit from you again,” He said to the tree. And His followers were listening as He said it.

Jesus Cleans Out the Temple

¹⁵When they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus went into the Temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers^a and the benches of those selling doves.

¹⁶Nor would He allow anyone to carry any merchandise thru the Temple courtyard.

¹⁷Then He taught them a short Bible lesson, saying, “It is written in the Scriptures that God said, **My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.^a** But you have turned it into a place for thieves to do business!^b”

¹⁸When the teachers of the Law and the chief priests heard Him say this, they began in earnest to look for a way to destroy Him, because they were truly afraid of Him, because all the people were completely captivated with amazement by His teaching.

¹⁹When evening came, He left the city.

A Lesson from the Fig Tree

²⁰The next morning, as they passed by the fig tree, they noticed that it was dried up clear down to the roots!

²¹Remembering the curse of the day before, Peter said to Jesus, “Look, Teacher! The fig tree You cursed is completely withered!”

²²In reply Jesus said to them, “Have faith in God!

²³“I tell you the absolute truth when I tell you that whoever will say to this mountain, ‘Remove yourself from here, and throw yourself into the sea!’ and doesn’t doubt in his heart, but believes

10:52a Imagine how it would be if you were blind, and then suddenly everything opened up to you in living color.

11:3a Literally *the Lord of it*.

11:7a See Matthew 21:1-11, and the notes.

11:9a Hosanna means “save now”. It later became an exclamation of praise.

11:9b Psalm 118:25-26.

11:15a It was required by Jewish law that the Temple tax of *half a shekel* be paid in Jewish coin. It was the *greed* and *fraud* rather than the practice that Jesus condemned.

11:17a Isaiah 56:7.

11:17b Jeremiah 7:11.

11:23a How will it be done? God will do it, in answer to fervent prayer and real faith in Him. See

that what he says will happen, whatever he says will indeed be done for him.^a

²⁴“For that reason I tell you: Whatever things you ask for as you pray, believe that you definitely^a are in the process of receiving them, and you most certainly^a will have them.^b

²⁵“But whenever you stand in prayer, and there think of something you are holding against someone, forgive that person, so your Father in Heaven may also forgive you your sins.

²⁶“Because if you don’t forgive others, neither will your Father in Heaven forgive you the wrongs you have done.”^a

Jesus’ Authority Questioned

²⁷Again they arrived in Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the Temple court, the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders came up to Him.

²⁸“Just what right do you think you have, to take authority into your own hands and do what you did here yesterday?” they demanded. “Who gave you authority to do such things?”

²⁹“I will also ask you a question,” Jesus replied. “If you answer Me, then I’ll tell you by whose authority I do the things I do.

³⁰“Did God order John the Baptizer to preach and baptize as he did, or was it just his own idea? Tell Me.”

³¹They talked this over among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘He was obeying God’s orders,’ he will say, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’

³²“But if we say, ‘It was all his own idea,’ this whole crowd will mob us, because they’re fully convinced that John was a prophet sent by God.”

³³So they answered, “We don’t know.”

“And neither will I tell you by whose authority I do the things I do,” Jesus replied.

Parable of the Sharecroppers

12 Then Jesus began speaking to them, using parables: “Once there was a man who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a hole for the press that pressed out the grape juice, and built a watchtower. Then he rented it out to

sharecroppers and left the area.

²“At harvest time, he sent a servant to the renters to get his share of the grapes.

³“But the renters grabbed the servant and beat him up, and sent him away with nothing.

⁴“The owner sent another servant to them. But they threw stones at him and wounded him in the head. After further insulting him, they sent him away.

⁵“They killed the next man he sent. He sent still others, but they beat some and killed others.

⁶“He still had one more person he could send. This was his only son, whom he loved dearly. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

⁷“But when the renters saw him coming, they said, ‘Look! Here comes the heir! Come on, let’s kill him, and this vineyard will be ours.’

⁸“So they grabbed hold of him and killed him, and threw his body out of the vineyard.

⁹“What do you think the owner of the vineyard will do now? Yes, without pity or compassion, he’ll come and kill those renters, and rent the vineyard to others.

¹⁰“Haven’t you ever read the Scripture that says:

The Stone which the builders threw out as worthless has now become the Chief Cornerstone.^a

¹¹ **This was done by the Lord, and it truly is something of great importance to look into with amazement^a?”**

¹²Those Jewish leaders knew very well that Jesus had really been speaking about them when He gave that parable, and they desperately wanted to arrest Him. But they were afraid of what the crowd would do if they did, so they left Him and went their way.

Question About Taxes to Caesar

¹³But they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians^a to Him, to see if they could trick Him into saying something they could use as an excuse to have Him arrested.

¹⁴So they came to Him and said, “Teacher, we know that you always tell the truth. And you’re not concerned about what anyone will think or do.^a Nor are you swayed by the importance of anyone,

Luke 17:6 notes.

11:24a Both are indicative mood, the mood of certainty.

11:24b ... *if you have met the other conditions for answered prayer* ... See Luke 11:9-10 note.

11:26a Matthew 18:23-35.

12:10a Both the Jews, as a religious body, and the world as a whole have rejected Jesus Christ as their

Lord and Savior. But this One who was rejected by man *has now become the Chief Cornerstone* of God’s Kingdom on earth. He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords over all the earth! Isaiah 2:1-5.

12:10-11a Psalm 118:22-23.

12:13a See 3:6 note.

but you teach all of us the truth about how God wants us to act and live. So is it right or not, according to the Laws God has given us, for us to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor? Should we pay those taxes, or shouldn't we?"

¹⁵ But Jesus knew what their hypocritical plans were. "Why are you trying to trap Me?" He demanded. "Bring Me a denarius, and let Me look at it."

¹⁶ So they brought one. "Whose picture and name are these on the coin?" He asked them.

"The Emperor's," they replied.

¹⁷ "Then give the Emperor the things that belong to him," Jesus responded, "and give God what belongs to Him." They were stunned and amazed at His answer.

The Resurrection and Marriage

¹⁸ Then some Sadducees, who say the dead won't be resurrected back to life, came to Him. They also had a question.

¹⁹ "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us in his writings that if a man dies and leaves his wife without any children, his brother should marry the widow and raise up a child for his brother.^a

²⁰ "Well, there were seven brothers. The oldest married, but he died before he had any children.

²¹ "The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no children. The same hap-

pened to the third one.

²² "All seven married her, but left no children. Finally the woman died also.

²³ "Now then, when the dead are raised back to life, whose wife will she be, since all seven were married to her?"

²⁴ "You are badly mistaken," Jesus replied, "because you don't know what the Scriptures teach about the resurrection.^a Nor do you realize how altogether powerful God is.^b

²⁵ "Because when God raises the dead back to life, no one will marry or be given in marriage. In Heaven they will all be like the angels.^a

²⁶ "In regard to the fact that the dead will indeed rise again, haven't you read about the burning bush in the book of Exodus—how God spoke to Moses there, saying, **I am the God who is worshipped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob^a?**

²⁷ "He is not the God of people who are dead,^a but of people who are very much alive! So you Sadducees are badly mistaken!"

The Greatest Commandment

²⁸ Then one of the teachers of the Law spoke up. He had been listening to the discussion, and realized that Jesus had given the Sadducees a good answer. So he asked Jesus, "Which is the most important of all the commands of God?"

²⁹ "The most important of all the commands,"

12:14a Or you don't show favoritism to anyone.

12:19a ... to inherit his property.

12:24a Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2.

12:24b There is absolutely nothing too hard for God. Whatever He has promised, He will do. Therefore the dead definitely will be raised. Genesis 18:14a.

12:25a "Glorified mankind are like angels in these respects especially: They are immortal, no longer subject to human wants, passions, failings, or temptations. They serve God perfectly without weariness or distraction; they have no conflict between flesh and spirit, between the old nature and the new; their life is peaceful, harmonious, satisfying.

"As Saint Augustine said, 'Marriages are on account of children; children are on account of succession; succession on account of death. But in Heaven, as there is no death, neither is there any marriage.'"—*Pulpit Commentary*. In the eternal state, our entire fulfillment will no doubt be found in the Lord.

12:26a Exodus 3:6.

12:27a ... and no longer exist ...

12:29a See John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6.

12:30a Deuteronomy 6:4-5. It does seem strange that God must command us to love Him, when our hearts should just naturally overflow with love for Him because of all that He is to us, and all He has done for us, is doing for us, and promises to yet do for us. And He desires that our love be genuine, fervent, always active, and fiercely ablaze for Him. True love for God includes giving Him complete obedience. And God does not mock us with commands that we cannot obey. So let us consider just how it is that God desires that we love Him:

1. We are first of all to love Him *with our whole heart*. That means that we are to love God as we love nothing and no one else. We are to love Him with all the powers we have. It means to love Him supremely, more than all other beings and things, and with all the fervency possible. To love Him with all our heart is to fix our affections supremely on Him, more strongly than on anyone or anything else, and to be willing to give up all that we hold dear if He commands.

2. We are to love God *with all of our soul*. That means, with all of our life. We are to be willing to give up our whole life to Him, and devote it all to His service; to live to Him and to be willing to die for

Jesus replied, “is this:

Listen, O Israel: The Lord our God is Lord of all, and is the one and only God.^a

³⁰ **And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.^a**

This is indeed the most important of all the commands.

³¹ “The second most important is similar. It’s this:

You shall love others in the same way that you love yourself.^a

There is no other command more important than these.”

³² “Teacher, that was a good answer,” the man replied. “You have spoken the truth, because there is only one God—so there is no other God, only He.^a

³³ “And to love Him with our whole heart, with all our understanding, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and to love others in the same way that we love ourselves—this is far more important to God than all the large or small material offerings we may give Him.”^a

³⁴ When Jesus saw how wisely the man had answered, He said, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” After that, no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

Whose Son Is the Messiah?

³⁵ Later on, while Jesus was teaching the people in the Temple courts, He asked them, “How is it that the teachers of the Law teach that the Messiah^a is to be a descendant of King David?

³⁶ “After all, David himself was inspired by the Holy Spirit to say:

God said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies into a footstool for Your feet.’^a

³⁷ “So David himself calls the Messiah ‘Lord’. How then can Messiah be his descendant?”^a That great crowd listened to Him with immense pleasure.

Warning About Pride

³⁸ As He continued teaching, He said, “Watch out for those teachers of the Law who like to go around in long, flowing robes, receiving honored greetings of recognition in the market places.^a

³⁹ “They want the most prominent seats in the synagogue and a place at the head table at banquets.

⁴⁰ “But these are the same men who cunningly cheat widows out of their homes and other properties, and then pretend to be so godly by making long prayers in public. Be sure of this, these men will receive far greater and more severe sentences

Him. This means a willingness to die to our own desires and plans and to live only to please Him.

3. We are to love God *with all our mind*. This means we are to apply ourselves first and foremost to know God and to know what His will is for us. We are to gladly receive His truth with submission, gratitude, and pleasure. All of our studies are to be done with God and His service in mind.

It means that we are to banish from our minds everything that would defile our souls or turn us away from concentrating on those things that are eternal. God desires that we think of Him at all times and in all situations, acknowledging Him as our Guide and Provider. God wants the communication lines between Him and us to be open at all times.

4. We are to love God *with all our strength*. This means we are to love Him with all the faculties of soul and body. We are to labor and toil for His glory (in whatever employment we believe He has led us), and to make that the great object of all our efforts. For the glory of our Maker, we are to spare neither labor nor cost, to sacrifice our time, body, and ease, for the glory of God. We are to be employed in His service with all of our wealth, talents, powers,

authority, and influence. Yes, such love is indeed total love—which we owe to our Maker, Savior and Sustainer.

Much of the above from Barnes’ Notes.

12:31a Leviticus 19:18.

12:32a 1 Corinthians 8:6.

12:33a Literally ... *than all burnt offerings and sacrifices*.

12:35a Or *the Christ*.

12:36a Psalm 110:1. This was God talking to God—God the Father talking to God the Son.

12:37a Christ was actually the Son of God, therefore David’s Lord. But He took on human form, and received His human body thru the ancestry of David. For that reason, He is called the Son of David, or, a descendant of David.

12:38a Jesus did not fault all teachers of the Law, as some versions imply, but rather those who tended towards self-exaltation, much as exists in Christian circles today. We are talking about “status” seekers. Then it was length of their robes or the flowery character of their greetings. Now it can be many other subtle things. Some won’t even attend a meeting unless they are speaking, or unless they will at least be given some recognition.

on Judgment Day than other sinners!"

The Widow's Offering

⁴¹As Jesus sat opposite the offering boxes, He watched as the people put money into them. Many who were rich put in much.

⁴²Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two tiny coins, worth less than a penny.

⁴³So Jesus called His followers to Him and said, "I tell you the truth, that poor widow put more into the offering box than anyone else.

⁴⁴"All the others put in part of their surplus, but even though she is poor, she put in everything she had—even what she was to live on!"

Signs of the End Time

13 As He was leaving the Temple, one of His followers said, "Teacher, look at these massive stones, and these beautiful buildings!"

²"Yes, look at these great buildings," Jesus replied. "But not one of these stones will be left upon another. They will all be torn down."

³Later, as He sat on the Mount of Olives across from the Temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately,

⁴"When will all these things take place? And what will happen to alert us that they are about to happen?"^a

⁵In answering them, Jesus said, "Be very careful that you don't allow anyone to fool you.

⁶"Because many will come claiming to be Me, saying 'I am the Christ.' And many will be fooled.

⁷"And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, don't be alarmed. All of these events must take place, but they won't mean that the end has come.

⁸"*Because when the end is actually approaching,*^a nation will rise up against nation,^b and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines and other troubles.^c But all of these will be only the beginning of the birth pangs.^d

⁹"You will need to be constantly on your guard, because those who oppose you will arrest you and take you to court. And because of your stand and testimony for Me, you will be beaten in the synagogues, and you will be summoned to stand before governors and kings so you can tell them the Great News.^a

¹⁰"But in spite of all the persecution from those who oppose and hate you and your message, your main, burning concern,^a must still be to tell the Great and Marvelous News to people everywhere, in all nations!

¹¹"And when they arrest you and bring you to court, don't worry and make careful plans beforehand about what you will say in your defense, or meditate about how you will answer their charges.^a Just say what comes to you as you are being tried. They won't be your words; they will be

13:3-4a Christ gave the prophecy recorded in Luke 21:5-36 to all who were standing near Him outside the Temple, immediately after He had prophesied about the destruction of the Temple. Afterward, Christ left the Temple. On His way to Bethany, at the top of *the Mount of Olives*, He sat down.

It is at this time and place that *Peter, James, John, and Andrew* approached him *privately*. They had heard His prophecy about the destruction of the Temple (which was fulfilled in A.D. 70). As they walked up the Mount of Olives they were no doubt deeply concerned about this impending destruction (Luke 21:20-24), but they were also concerned about what Christ had said about the end of the age. So they now asked Him when these end time things would happen, and what would alert them.

In front of the Temple (Luke 21:7), their question was about the timing of the destruction of the Temple. They had also asked what sign would indicate that the destruction was about to take place, and Christ had told them what the situation would be in Israel when the destruction was about to occur. On

the Mount of Olives, however, according to Matthew 24:3, they asked Him about the other matters of which He had spoken, about His second coming and the end of the age.

At this location, according to Mark, they asked Him, *Just when will all these things take place?—the other things you just told us about. And what will happen to alert us that these things—not the things concerning the stones of the Temple, but all the other statements—what will happen to alert us that these things are about to take place?* They were clearly asking about His second coming and about the end of the world, because now in His answer, the Lord no longer speaks about the destruction of the Temple.

A definite distinction can be made between the two separate discourses of Jesus. One takes place in front of the Temple and the other on the Mount of Olives. See Matthew 24 notes regarding Christ's answers to His followers' questions at this time.

13:8a Implied.

13:8b Some translate this, *race will rise up against race*. The word nation is translated from the Greek word *ethnos*, from which we get the word

words given you by the Holy Spirit.

¹² “A man will even betray his own brother to death. A father will betray his own child, and children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.^a

¹³ “Everyone will hate you because of your bold stand for Me. But the one who endures the persecutions that come and remains faithful to Me to the end of life will be saved.

A Warning to People in Israel

¹⁴ “But when you see the abominable thing, that represents the one who has caused so much devastation, standing where it has no business being, about which the prophet Daniel wrote,^a (let whoever reads Daniel give diligence to understand what he is saying), then those who are in Judea must flee to the hills.

¹⁵ “Anyone who is out on his roof deck when he hears the news^a must not go down into the house for any reason. If he’s elsewhere outside, he must not return to take anything out of the house.^b

¹⁶ “The person who is in the field must not go back to the house or anywhere else even to get his clothes.^a

¹⁷ “This will be a frightful and difficult time for those who are expecting babies or already have nursing babies.

¹⁸ “Pray that your flight will not be in the winter.

ethnic, pertaining to or characteristic of a people, especially a speech or culture group. Many of the wars today are indeed between different cultures.

13:8c In Matthew 24 the word *pestilence* is used in place of the word *troubles*. It could be that the Lord mentioned both words. The word *troubles* is translated from the Greek word *tarache*, which means *agitations, disturbances, resistance to lawful authority*.

13:8d ... *that will evidently first bring about the rebirth of Israel and ultimately the Kingdom of God on earth*. See Matthew 24:8 note.

13:9a See Matthew 24:9, and the note.

13:10a This phrase, from the Greek word *proton*, is ordinarily translated *first* in this verse. But the true meaning is *first in importance, chief, principal, most important*.

13:11a But do earnestly pray!

13:12a ... *because of their hatred for the truth* ... They will love their sin more than all else.

13:14a This all relates to the image of the Antichrist which will evidently be erected in front of the new Temple in Jerusalem, in place of the altar of sacrifice, which Antichrist will destroy (Daniel 11:31; 12:11) to make room for it. See Daniel 8:9-

¹⁹ “Because in those last days, there will be appalling trouble and persecution—far greater than at any other time since the creation of the world, until now. There will never again be anything like it.

²⁰ “If the Lord hadn’t shortened that terrible time, no one would be left alive on earth. But for the sake of His chosen ones, God has set a limit to those days.^a

²¹ “During that time, if anyone says to you, ‘Look, the Christ^a is over here!’ or, ‘Look, He’s over there!’ don’t believe it.^b

²² “Because false christs and false prophets will rise up with such amazing ability to do wonders and miracles^a that it will be convincing enough to deceive even God’s chosen ones, if that were possible.

²³ “So be on your guard. Always remember that I have forewarned you about all that’s ahead.

²⁴ “And during the days immediately after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shine.^a

²⁵ The stars will not give their light from the heavens,^a and the powers controlling the heavenly bodies will be violently disturbed and shaken.^b

²⁶ “It’s after all these happenings, that the people on earth will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory!

²⁷ “That’s when He will send out His angels to

14; 9:27; 11:45; 12:1,7; Revelation 13:1-18; 14:9-11; 20:4-6. See also Matthew 24:15 note.

13:15a ... *that the altar in front of the Temple has been destroyed and removed, and the image of the Antichrist now stands in its place* ...

13:15b Value only your life, or you will not escape! Trust God for everything you will need. This all applies to those living in Israel at the time Antichrist betrays them.

13:16a See Matthew 24:16-18 note for escape instructions.

13:19-20a See Matthew 24:21-22 note.

13:21a Or *the Messiah*.

13:21b See Matthew 24:27 note.

13:22a They will have power from Satan. Revelation 13:2,4-5,12,14-15.

13:24a Isaiah 13:10; Revelation 6:12.

13:25a Greek *ekpípto* can mean *fail to give light* or *fail to be seen*, or refer to meteorites crashing into the earth in horrendous judgment. See Isaiah 13:10; Joel 3:15

13:25b ... *so that the planets will stray from their courses*. Be sure to read the prophecy in Isaiah 13:9-14 regarding this. See also Joel 3:16; Hag-gai 2:6,21; Hebrews 12:26.

gather together His chosen ones from all over the earth, from the extremity of one horizon to the extremity of the other.^a

²⁸ “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: When its branches become tender and shoot out new leaves, you know that summer is near.

²⁹ “In the same way, when you see these things beginning to happen, realize that the end is near, right at the door.

³⁰ “I tell you the truth, this generation^a will positively not pass away before all of these events have taken place.

³¹ “The heavens and the earth will indeed pass away, but there’s no possibility whatever that what I say will come to nothing.

The Day and Hour Unknown

³² “But as for the day and hour when I will return with great power and glory, no one knows, not even the angels in Heaven. Even the Son doesn’t know. Only the Father knows.

³³ “So continually be on your guard! You must continually watch^a and pray! Because neither do you know when the time will come.^b

³⁴ “It’s like a man who went on a long trip. He left his servants in charge of his house, telling each what he wanted done. And he gave instructions to the doorkeeper to guard and watch the entrance faithfully.

³⁵ “You too must continue to be on your guard, because you don’t know when the Master of the house will return—in the late evening, at midnight, just before dawn, or during the morning

hours.

³⁶ “If He comes suddenly, you must not let Him find you sleeping!

³⁷ “And what I say to you I say to everyone: You must continually be awake and stay vigilantly alert!”^a

Jesus at Bethany

14 By this time, the annual Passover Festival and the Feast of Unleavened Bread^a were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the Law were still looking for a way by which they could arrest Jesus in some underhanded way and kill Him.

² “But we can’t do it during the Feast, or the people might riot,” they agreed.

³ Meanwhile, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, who at one time had leprosy. As He was reclining^a at the table, a woman came to Him with an alabaster jar containing a very expensive perfume made of pure nard. After breaking it open, she poured the perfume on His head.^b

⁴ But this made some of the men there very angry, and they said among themselves, “Why this senseless waste?

⁵ “That perfume could have been sold for more than a working man could earn in a year, and the money given to the poor!” And they scolded her harshly.

⁶ “Leave her alone!” Jesus demanded. “Why are you giving her a bad time? That was a beautiful thing she did for Me.

13:27a Matthew 24:29-31.

13:30a This refers to the generation living when these end time events begin to take place. It will all happen in one lifetime, with the climax being the return of Christ to earth in great power and glory, to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords! Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1 to 22:21.

It’s true that the generation listening to Christ at that time did not pass away before His prediction about the destruction of the Temple had been fulfilled. Luke 21:20-24. But Christ is referring here to the last generation of this age, when He says that the generation of which He spoke would *not pass away before all of these events had taken place. All the events of which He spoke here did not come to pass before the generation to whom He spoke had passed away.* He is definitely referring to the last generation of this age, the generation which is now seeing these end time events beginning to come to pass. See Matthew 24:32-34 note.

13:33a See note for v 37.

13:33b ... *when God will take you from this life, or when Christ will come to judge the earth.*

13:37a ... *by obeying the full instructions your Master left with you.* Christ is warning His followers to continually *watch how they are living and serving.* Are you obeying and serving as He has commanded? Are you living to please Him or yourself? Are you following His instructions in His Book? To neglect to do so will mean terrible loss. See Matthew, chapter 25.

The watchman was not to watch for the master’s return, but to faithfully watch and guard the gate, to keep the household safe (in this case from false teachers, sinful practices, etc.), until the Master returns. Pastor, evangelist, Bible teacher, this especially applies to you. In a sense, it applies to every follower of Christ. We dare not be cowardly (Revelation 21:8) about demanding that the truth, and the whole truth, be preached.

14:1a ... *when no bread with yeast was eaten* ...

14:3a The custom was to recline on couches while

⁷“You will always have the poor with you, and you can help them whenever you wish. But you will not always have Me.

⁸“She did all she could. She poured perfume on My body ahead of time to prepare it for burial.

⁹“I tell you the truth, wherever the Great News is told thruout the whole world, what this woman did for Me will also be told as a memorial to her.”

¹⁰It was at this time that Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests and offered to help them arrest Jesus.

¹¹When they heard what he wanted to do, they were extremely glad, and promised him money. So from then on, he kept looking for the best time and place to hand Him over to them.

The Passover Meal

¹²On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the day the lambs for the Passover meal were being killed, His followers asked Jesus, “Where do You want us to go to prepare the Passover meal for You?”

¹³“Go into the city,” He instructed two of His followers, “and when you meet a man carrying a pitcher of water, follow him.”^a

¹⁴“Wherever he enters, say to the man of that house, ‘The Teacher sent us to ask, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover supper with My followers?”’

¹⁵“He will then lead you to a large upstairs room, all furnished and prepared. Get things ready for us there.”

¹⁶The two men left, and when they came into the city, they found everything just as Jesus had said they would, and they went ahead and prepared the

Passover meal.

¹⁷In the evening, Jesus came with His twelve followers.

¹⁸As they were eating at the table, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, that one of you eating here with Me will betray Me.”

¹⁹His followers were deeply distressed at that announcement, and one by one they asked Him, “You surely don’t mean me, do You?”

²⁰“It is one of the Twelve,” he answered. “It’s the one who is dipping his bread with Me in the same bowl.”^a

²¹“The Son of Man will indeed leave this life in the very way it has been prophesied He would.”^a But woe to the man who is betraying the Son of Man. It would have been better for him if he had never been born.”

The Lord’s Supper

²²As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after thanking God for it and asking Him to bless it, He broke it and gave it to His followers. “Take this and eat it,” He said. “This pictures My body.”^a

²³Then He took the cup, and after giving thanks, He also gave that to them, and they all drank from it.

²⁴“This pictures My blood,^a which will be poured out for many,” He said. “It is My shed blood that seals and guarantees God’s New Will and Agreement with mankind.

²⁵“I tell you the truth, I will no longer drink any of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink the new wine in the Kingdom of God.”

²⁶After they had sung a hymn, they went out to

eating.

14:3b John 12:3 states that the woman poured the perfume on His feet. She no doubt did both, as John 12:3 indicates she had a large amount.

14:13a Here was another miracle. It cannot be said that Jesus set this situation up, because it was His followers who asked Him where He wanted them to prepare the Passover meal. Then He gave them instructions to go into the city where they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. It was not customary for men to carry water. That was a woman’s job. But the Lord knew this man would be carrying this water at this particular time, and He may have even arranged for it to happen, though not in agreement with the man.

If Jesus knew a circumstance like that, then He must know all things. Then He sees all, hears all, and knows every circumstance in every situation. This just enforces the truth that those whose hearts

are right with Him are under His care, and that even every action by the wicked is known by Him. As much as they may wish to be unseen by Him, they are seen nevertheless. And when the Books are opened at The Judgment, then everything will be revealed.

What a comfort this should all be to those whose hearts are right with the Lord, but what terror this should strike in the hearts of all who refuse Him as both their Lord and Savior.

14:20a He apparently said this privately to John, according to John 13:21-26.

14:21a Psalm 22:1-21; 41:9; Isaiah 52:14; 53; Daniel 9:25-26a; Zechariah 11:12-13; 12:10.

14:22a Meaning *this represents* or *is a picture of* or *will bring to your remembrance* My body, which is being broken and sacrificed for you.

14:24a Meaning *this represents* My blood.

14:27a Zechariah 13:7.

the Mount of Olives.

Peter's Denial Predicted

²⁷“Tonight you will all be ashamed of Me and desert Me,” Jesus then informed them, “because it has been prophesied:

I will strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.^a

²⁸“But after I have risen back to life, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

²⁹Peter spoke up and said, “Even if everyone else loses faith and leaves You, I’ll never desert You!”

³⁰“I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “that today, before this night is over and before the rooster crows a second time, you will have said three times that you don’t even know Me.”

³¹But Peter emphatically insisted, “Even if I must die with You, there’s no way that I would ever say I don’t know You!” And all the others said the same.

Gethsemane

³²Then they came to a place called Gethsemane, where He told His followers to sit down while He went farther on and prayed.

³³But He took Peter, James, and John along with Him, and He soon began to be deeply distressed and troubled.

³⁴“I am totally overwhelmed with sorrow,” He confided to those with Him. “It is so intense and deep that I am very close to death. Stay here and continue to keep watch.”

³⁵Then He went on a little farther and threw Himself to the ground, and prayed, asking God if it were possible that He could be delivered from the awful time of suffering and separation from His Father that was just ahead for Him.^a

³⁶“O Father! My Father!” He earnestly prayed. “Everything is possible for You. Please! Oh, please take this cup^a from Me! But I don’t want only what I want, but whatever You know must be done.”

³⁷Then He went back to His three followers, and there they lay, asleep! “Simon!” He said to Peter, “are you sleeping? Couldn’t you keep watch with Me for even one hour?”

³⁸“You must all continue to watch and pray so you won’t fall into temptation. Your spirit indeed

wants to do what’s right, but your flesh is weak!”^a

³⁹Again He left them and prayed, saying the same words.

⁴⁰But when He returned, He again found them asleep. They just couldn’t keep their eyes open, and they didn’t know what to say to Him.

⁴¹When He came back the third time He said, “Are you still sleeping? Still taking your rest? But that’s enough of that! The time has now come. Listen, the Son of Man is right now being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

⁴²“Get up now and let’s be on our way. Look, here comes My betrayer now.”

The Arrest of Jesus

⁴³And there he was! While Jesus was still speaking, there came Judas, one of the Twelve, with a great mob carrying swords and clubs. They’d been sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and by the elders.

⁴⁴Now the traitor had given this mob a signal. “The one I greet with a kiss on the cheek is the man you want,” he had said. “Arrest him, and as you lead him away, make sure he doesn’t escape.”

⁴⁵Immediately upon his arrival, he went right up to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Teacher!” Then with a great show of affection, he embraced Him, and kissed Him.^a

⁴⁶The mob then grabbed hold of Him and arrested Him.

⁴⁷But as they did so, one of Jesus’ followers standing there drew out his sword and slashed out at one of the servants of the High Priest and cut off his ear.

⁴⁸Then Jesus asked the mob, “Have you come out against Me as you would against a thief, to arrest Me with swords and clubs?”

⁴⁹“I taught in the Temple every day, and you did not arrest Me. But this is happening so that the prophecies in the Scriptures^a may be fulfilled.”

⁵⁰It was at this turn of events that all of His followers deserted Him and ran.

⁵¹There was, however, a young man following Him. He had only a linen cloth thrown around his naked body, and some of the young men in the mob grabbed hold of him.

⁵²But he left the linen cloth in their hands and ran from them naked.

14:35a ... that the temptations and awful sorrows and anguish He was experiencing might be lifted from Him, and that God might redeem mankind in some other way, so that He would not need to go thru the awful time of extreme suffer-

ing which was ahead for Him on the cross. His suffering on the cross was much more than physical. He evidently experienced total rejection by God.

14:36a ... these bitter sufferings and separation from You ...

Jesus Before the Council

⁵³The mob then led Jesus away and brought Him to the High Priest. And gathered there with the High Priest in that very early morning hour were all the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the Law.

⁵⁴Meanwhile, Peter had followed Jesus at a distance, right into the courtyard of the High Priest. There he sat down with the guards and warmed himself by the fire.

⁵⁵The chief priests and the entire Council kept trying to find effective witnesses who would be able to give testimony that would prove that Jesus should be put to death, but they couldn't find any.

⁵⁶Many gave false testimony against Him, but their testimonies contradicted each other.

⁵⁷Some stood up and lied about Him, saying,

⁵⁸"We heard him say, 'I will destroy this Temple made with hands, and within three days, I will build another, made without hands.'"

⁵⁹But even in this case, they couldn't agree as to what He had actually said.

⁶⁰Then the High Priest stood up and came down among the other Council members and addressed Jesus, "Don't you have anything at all to say in answer to these charges being made against you?"

⁶¹But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the High Priest addressed Him, asking, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of our praiseworthy God?"

⁶²"Yes, I am," Jesus replied. "And you will one day see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Almighty. You will also see Him coming with the clouds of Heaven."^a

⁶³At this the High Priest tore his clothes and shouted, "What further need do we have of witnesses?"

⁶⁴"You all heard his blasphemy! What is your verdict?" And they all shouted their condemnation of Him, demanding that He die.

⁶⁵Then some of them began spitting on Him. Next they blindfolded Him. Then pounding Him with their fists, they'd snarl, "Prophecy, you messiah! Who hit you that time?" Some of the soldiers also slapped Him around!

Peter Disowns Jesus

⁶⁶Peter was still in the courtyard below when one

of the servant girls of the High Priest came by.

⁶⁷When she saw Peter warming himself at the fire, she looked at him intently and said, "You were also with this Jesus from Nazareth."

⁶⁸But he denied it. "I don't even know the Man," he said. "In fact, I don't understand what you're talking about." Then he went out into the entry court—and a rooster crowed.

⁶⁹The same servant girl saw him again, and she said to those standing there, "Here's one of them." But again he denied it.

⁷⁰A short while later, those standing nearby said to Peter, "You have got to be one of his followers. You look like a Galilean, and you talk like one, too."

⁷¹At this Peter began to curse. Then he said, "I swear to God, as I told you, I don't even know the Man you're talking about!"

⁷²Just then the rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had told him, "Before the rooster crows a second time, you will have said three times that you don't even know Me." When the terrible truth sank in, he burst into tears.

Jesus Before Pilate

15 Without further delay, in that early morning hour, the chief priests, together with the elders and the teachers of the Law—that is, the entire Jewish Council—hurriedly held a meeting and reached a decision. Then they tied Jesus up and led Him away and handed Him over to Pilate, the governor.

²"Are you the King of the Jews?" Pilate asked Him.

"Yes, what you say is true," Jesus replied.

³The chief priests then began heaping many charges against Jesus, but He didn't say a thing in His defense.

⁴So again Pilate questioned Him, "Do you have no answer for these men? What about all these charges they're bringing against you?"

⁵But still Jesus didn't say a word, and Pilate was amazed.

⁶Now it was the custom at the Feast of the Passover for the governor to release one prisoner to the people—whomever they requested.

⁷One well-known prisoner at that time was a

14:38a You may have very good intentions, but you need all the help you can receive from God. See Philipians 2:12-13.

14:45a This entire sentence is implied from the literal words *and ardently kissed Him*.

14:49a See Matthew 26:24 note.

14:62a A possible meaning is ... *with clouds of His people from Heaven*.

15:13,14a Meaning *Nail him to a cross!*

man by the name of Barabbas. He was chained in prison with several others who had committed murder during a revolt against the Romans.

⁸The crowd that had gathered there now began to shout at Pilate, asking him to release a prisoner to them as he had always done at this time of year.

⁹“Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

¹⁰He knew very well that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous of Him.

¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd and convinced them to ask for Barabbas instead.

¹²“What would you have me do, then, with the one you call the King of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

¹³“Crucify^a him!” the crowd shouted.

¹⁴“But why?” Pilate demanded. “What wrong has he done?” But that only caused them to roar louder than ever, “Crucify^a him! Crucify him!”

¹⁵Pilate was a cowardly and corrupt people-pleaser, so he finally let them have Barabbas. And after he’d had the Roman soldiers severely whip Jesus,^a he handed Him over to the soldiers to be crucified.

The Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

¹⁶The soldiers then led Him into the barracks within the courtyard and called the whole garrison together.

¹⁷There they put a purple^a robe on Him. After twisting some branches with long sharp thorns into a crown, they put that on His head.

¹⁸Saluting Him in mockery, they followed that up by contemptuously shouting, “Hail! King of the Jews!”

¹⁹Again and again they hammered Him on the head with a slender pole,^a and kept spitting on Him. Then they would kneel and bow down in front of Him in mock worship.

²⁰After finally losing interest in insulting Him further, they took off the purple robe and put His own robe back on Him. Then they led Him out to crucify Him.

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

²¹On the way, they met a man from Cyrene, in

Libya, named Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus. He was on his way into town from the country, and they forced him to carry Jesus’ cross.

²²They brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means, The Place That Looks Like a Skull.

²³There they offered Him a drink of wine that had a drug called myrrh^a mixed in it, but He refused to drink it.

²⁴After they crucified Him, the soldiers divided His clothing among themselves by throwing dice, to decide which piece each would get.

²⁵It was 9 o’clock in the morning when they nailed Him to the cross.

²⁶Then they nailed a sign above His head, stating the charge against Him, which read:

THE KING OF THE JEWS.^a

²⁷They also crucified two thieves with Him, one on His right, the other on His left.

²⁸So the Scripture was fulfilled that says,

He was treated as though He were a common criminal.^a

²⁹Many of those passing by kept hurling vicious insults at Him, shaking their heads and shouting, “So you’re the one who would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days!

³⁰“*If you’re so great,^a save yourself and come down from the cross!*”

³¹The chief priests, together with the teachers of the Law, also mocked Him, saying among themselves, “He saved others, but he can’t save himself.”

³²“So you’re the Messiah, the King of Israel,” they shouted at Him. “Come down now from the cross, so we can see a real miracle, and we’ll believe.” Even the two thieves who were crucified with Him hurled insults at Him.

The Death of Jesus

³³Then at noon, the whole country became enveloped in darkness, which lasted until three in the afternoon.

³⁴At 3 o’clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eloi! Eloi! Lama Sabachthani?” which means, **My God! My God! Why have You abandoned Me?^a**

³⁵When some of the people standing there heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling for Elijah.”

³⁶One of the men then ran and filled a sponge

15:15a See John 19:1 note.

15:17a Purple was the color of royalty. It was apparently used here in mockery.

15:19a ... *painfully pounding the long thorns ever deeper into His skull* ...

15:23a This was a drug given to stupefy the sens-

es, to make the pain more endurable. But Jesus was unwilling to blunt the pain of dying for us.

15:26a John 19:19-20 records that the sign was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

15:28a Isaiah 53:12.

15:30a Implied.

with vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Him to drink. "Leave him alone now," he then said. "Let's see if Elijah really will come and take him down."

³⁷ Following this, Jesus again cried out with a loud voice, and then breathed His last.

³⁸ Immediately following that, a most dramatic thing happened: The great curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom!^a

³⁹ When the captain of the soldiers, who was standing there in front of Jesus, heard how He cried out and then immediately died, he said, "Without question, this Man really was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰ Some women were also watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joseph, and Salome.

⁴¹ These and many other women who were followers of Jesus were there. They had helped Him while He was in Galilee, and had traveled with Him to Jerusalem.

Jesus Is Buried

⁴² It was already evening.^a And since preparations were being made for the Sabbath,^b

⁴³ Joseph from Arimathea took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. A prominent member of the Jewish Council, Joseph was himself looking forward to the day when God would establish His Kingdom on earth.

⁴⁴ Amazed that Jesus had died so soon, Pilate sent for the Roman captain and asked him if Jesus was indeed already dead.

⁴⁵ When the captain confirmed that He was, Pilate gave Joseph permission to take the body.

⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some fine linen cloth. Then He took Jesus' body down from the cross and wrapped it in the linen, and laid the body in a tomb that had been carved out of a wall of rock. Finally he rolled a huge stone to close the entrance to the tomb.

⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching as He was laid in the tomb.

The Resurrection

16 On Saturday evening, after the Sabbath had ended,^a Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went out and bought perfumed oils, so that they might go to the tomb and pour the perfume on Jesus' body.

² Then very early on Sunday morning, just after the sun had risen, they went to the tomb.

³ On the way, their question was, "Who will roll the stone away for us from the entrance to the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up as they were approaching the tomb, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled away.

⁵ Upon entering the tomb, they were extremely startled when they discovered a young man there, dressed in a long, flowing white robe, sitting at their right.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. But He's not here, because He has risen back to life again. Look, here's the place where they laid Him.

⁷ "But go now and tell His followers, and Peter, that He is going ahead of you to Galilee, just as He told you.^a You'll see Him there."

⁸ Those women got out of that tomb in a hurry, and ran. Trembling and amazed, they didn't say anything to anyone because they were too frightened to talk.

Jesus Makes Several Appearances

⁹ It was early on Sunday morning that Jesus came back to life, and the first person He appeared to was Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had driven seven demons.

¹⁰ She immediately went and told those who had been with Him, who were still mourning and weeping.

¹¹ When they heard her say that Jesus was alive and that she had even seen Him, they didn't believe it.

¹² Later that day, Jesus disguised His appearance and talked to two of His followers while they were

15:34a Psalm 22:1-21 and all of Isaiah 53, prophesy Christ's crucifixion.

15:38a Matthew 27:51 records that a great earthquake also took place at this moment. Regarding the *great curtain*, see Luke 23:45 note.

15:42a Evening began at 3 o'clock, and the new day began at sundown. So the body had to be buried before sundown, the beginning of the Sab-

bath.

15:42b The Jews prepared all food and did all other necessary work the day before every Sabbath. See Matthew 28:1 note.

16:1a ... *at sundown* ...

16:7a Mark 14:28.

16:12a See Luke 24:13-35 for a full account.

walking in the country.^a

¹³When they finally realized who had been with them, they rushed back and told the others what had happened, but no one believed them either.

¹⁴After these men had reported, however, Jesus suddenly appeared to the Eleven as they were at the table eating. He scolded them for their lack of faith and for their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen Him after He had risen back to life.

¹⁵Then He told them, "I want you to go to everyone in the whole world and tell them the Great News.^a

¹⁶"Those who believe^a and are baptized will be saved, but those who refuse to believe will be condemned.

¹⁷"And these miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: By using the authority of My name, they will drive out demons. They will speak

in new languages.

¹⁸"Even if they pick up a serpent^a or drink any poison,^a they will definitely not be harmed. They will place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed."

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

¹⁹After the Lord had spoken these words to them, He was taken up into Heaven, where He sat down at the right hand of God.

²⁰After this His followers went out and preached everywhere. And the Lord was continually working with them, proving by miracles that what they preached was true. So be it!

16:15a See Matthew 28:18-20 notes, and Appendixes 212, page 477, and 226, page 486.

16:16a What does it mean to *believe*? See Galatians 3:11; Luke 14:26-33; John 3:36; Acts 16:31, and

the notes there.

16:18a ... *accidentally or are forced to* ...

Then Jesus said, "Whoever wants to follow Me must no longer live for the purpose of pleasing and satisfying his own natural desires. He must take up his cross and die to those selfish desires, and make it his practice to obey what I have taught and commanded.

³⁵"Because if you choose to continue to satisfy your desire to live as you yourself please, you will lose your soul! But if you will make it your purpose in life to put to death your own desires, and live as I desire that you live, and live for the sake of giving the Great News to others, you will save your soul.

³⁶"Because what good would it do you even if you gained all the wealth and power and all the flesh-fulfilling experiences in all the world, but then found yourself barred from Heaven and sent to your judgment in Hell?

³⁷"Or look at it this way: If you suddenly found yourself in awful suffering in Hell, how much would you then be willing to give of yourself to God in order to gain His forgiveness and eternal life?

³⁸"If you are ashamed of Me among the sex-crazed, sinful people of your time, ashamed to fly your colors and share with others the message of Life that I came from Heaven to earth to give lost mankind, I, the Son of Man, will also be ashamed of you when I come in the glory of My Father with the holy angels."

—Mark 8:34-38