

essence - (es'ens) n 1. The properties of a thing that make it what it is: fundamental nature. 2. The most important element. 3. A concentrate of a substance. 4. A perfume.

These New Testament Scriptures have been chosen because they comprise the essence of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, as well as a full declaration of the inseparable love and irrevocable salvation that every believer can be assured of through faith in Him.

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salvation by faith alone, and the New Birth. Tell others about how you received Christ and were saved. Get baptized and celebrate communion as a testimony that you have died and rose again with Jesus. Memorize key verses of Scripture on assurance of salvation and other vital doctrines that will help you be strong when you are attacked by the adversary. Pursue a close, abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus, and make spending time with Him the most important part of your day. Develop a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit by always obeying what He tells you to do. Study, believe, and obey the Scriptures and the Lord will bless your life with a great abundance of everlasting fruit.

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And this is the witness of John: when Jews from Jerusalem were sent to him, priests and Levites, they asked him, "Who are you?" He confessed, not denying in his confession, "I am not the Christ." And so they asked him, "What then, are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we may give an answer to the ones who sent us; what do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said." Then the ones sent by the Pharisees asked him, "Then why do you baptize if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the prophet?" Answering them, John said, "I baptized with water, but among you stands One whom you do not know, the One who comes after me, of whom I am not worthy to loosen the laces of His sandal." These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The next day, seeing Jesus coming toward him, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said: 'After me a Man will come who is above me, because He existed before me.' I did not know Him, but in order that He might be revealed to Israel, I came baptizing in water." And John further witnessed, saying, "I have seen the Spirit coming down as a dove out of heaven, and He remained on Him. I did not know Him, but the One who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit coming down and remaining on Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and have witnessed that this is the Son of God."

The following day John stood again with two of his disciples. Watching Jesus walking up he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Hearing him speak, the two disciples followed Jesus. Turning around and seeing them following Him, Jesus said to them, "What are you seeking?" They said, "Rabbi (meaning Teacher), Where are you staying?" He said

Who Jesus Is:

"I am the First and the Last, the Living One; I experienced death, and behold, I am alive forever and ever. Amen." Revelation 1:17-18

"Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!" John 1:29

"I am the light of the world; whoever follows Me will certainly not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." John 8:12

For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. I Timothy 2:5

. . . Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. Colossians 2:2-3

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6

. . . who committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth; who did not return the insult when insulted, nor threaten even while suffering, but committed Himself to the Righteous Judge. I Peter 2:22

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

"For the Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost." Luke 19:10

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto Me." Matthew 28:18

Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water,” so they filled them to the top. He then said to them, “Draw some out and give it to the head steward,” so they brought it to him. When he tasted it, the water had become wine. He did not know where it came from even though the servants knew. Calling the bridegroom, he said to him, “Everyone else sets out the good wine first, and when they have drunk, then the inferior, but you have kept the good wine until last.” This was the beginning of the signs that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, revealing His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

After this He went down to Capernaum, He and his mother, brothers, and disciples. And they stayed there for a few days. As the Passover of the Jews was nearing, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. There He found people selling oxen, sheep, and doves, together with money changers sitting there. Making a whip out of cords He drove them all out of the temple, the sheep, oxen, and money changers. He scattered the coins and overturned the tables. To those selling doves He said, “Take these out of here; do not make my Father's house a marketplace!” Then His disciples remembered that it had been written, “The zeal for Your house will consume Me.” The Jews responded, saying to Him, “What sign will You show us since You do these things?” Jesus answered, “Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it.” The Jews said, “For forty-six years this temple has been under construction and You will raise it in three days?” But He was speaking about the temple of His body. When He was raised from the dead His disciples remembered that He said this and believed the Scripture and the words which Jesus spoke.

When He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, many believed in His name after seeing the signs He was doing. But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them because He knew them all and needed no one to tell Him about men, for He Himself knew what was inside man.

. . . because they did not accept the love of the truth in order that they might be saved . . . God will send among them an overpowering delusion to believe a lie, so that all who have not believed the truth but have taken pleasure in wickedness may be judged. II Thessalonians 2:10-12

Beware of False Teachers

Beware of anyone trying to capture you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the world's elementary principles, and not according to Christ. Colossians 2:8

For such ones are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ; and no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. II Corinthians 11:13,14

Hope in Times of Trial

For this light, momentary affliction is producing for us an everlasting weight of glory that exceeds all measure, for we do not set our eyes on what is seen, but on the unseen; for what is seen is temporary, but the unseen things are eternal. II Corinthians 4:17,18

“Blessed are you when they insult and persecute you and falsely accuse you of every evil because of Me. Rejoice and be overjoyed, because your reward is great in heaven; for so they also persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Matthew 5:11,12

For which cause I also suffer like this, but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to safeguard what I have entrusted to Him until that Day. II Timothy 1:12

“And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, but people have loved darkness more than the Light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the Light, and will not come to it, because it exposes their evil deeds. But those who are of the truth come to the Light, so that it may be shown that their deeds are done through God.”

After this Jesus and His disciples came into the Judean country where He was spending time with them and baptizing. John was also baptizing in Aeon near Salem, because there was a lot of water there, so many were coming to be baptized. John had not yet been thrown into prison. A dispute arose between John’s disciples and a Jew about purification. They came to John and said to him. “He who was with you beyond the Jordan, whom you testified about, is baptizing and everyone is coming to Him.” John answered, “No man is able to receive anything unless it is given to him from heaven. You can testify yourselves that I said. ‘I am not the Christ, but have been sent before Him.’ The one who has the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands near and hears him, rejoices at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore, my joy has been fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.

“The One who comes from above is above all. The one from the earth is of the earth and can only speak of earthly things. The One who is above all comes from heaven. What He has seen and heard there He testifies about, yet no one accepts His testimony. Whoever accepts His testimony seals the fact that God is true. He who is sent by God speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit in unlimited measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hands. He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life, for the wrath of God remains upon him.”

4 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing

Love

“This is my command, that you love one another just as I have loved you.” John 15:12

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.” Luke 6:27

Prayer

And this is the confidence we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. I John 5:14

Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and petition along with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will safeguard your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6,7

Witness

. . . always be prepared with a defense for anyone who asks you about the reason for the hope that is in you, but with gentleness and respect. I Peter 3:15

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. Romans 1:16

Fellowship

But to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the good of all . . . For just as the body is one and has many parts, so also is Christ, whose parts are all one body even though being many. I Corinthians 12:7,12

Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know because salvation is of the Jews. That coming time is now, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; yes, for the Father is seeking such ones to worship Him. For God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” The woman said to Him. “I know the Messiah is coming,” (called Christ). “When He comes He will tell us everything.” Jesus said to her, “I am He, who speaks to you.”

At this point the disciples came back and wondered why He was speaking to a woman; however, no one said, “Who do you seek?” or “Why are you speaking to her?” The woman then left the water jar and went into the city and said to the men there, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have done; is this not the Christ?” They left the city and were approaching as His disciples entreated Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” Because of this the disciples were saying to one another, “No one has brought Him something to eat, have they?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the One who sent Me and finish His work. Why say, ‘There are still four more months before harvest?’ Behold, I say to you, ‘Lift up your eyes and see the fields, that they are already white for harvest.’ And the one who reaps receives wages and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that the one sowing and the one reaping may rejoice together. For the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap for that which you have not labored; others have labored and you are harvesting their work.”

And so many of the Samaritans from that city believed in Him because the woman testified, “He told me everything I have done.” When the Samaritans came to Him they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of His words. They said

the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall always be with the Lord. I Thessalonians 4:16-18

The Resurrection

“I am the Resurrection and the Life; whoever believes in Me, even though he may die, he will live. And whoever lives and believes in Me will never die.” John 11:25-26

We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. I Corinthians 15:51,52

Following Christ

“I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in Him will bear much fruit, because apart from Me you are able to do nothing.” John 15:5

And He died for all so that they who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and arose again. II Corinthians 5:14

The Gift of Righteousness

He is righteous and he declares as righteous whoever has faith in Jesus. Romans 3:26

For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Now to him who works, his wages are not accounted as a gift, but as a debt. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted as righteousness. Romans 4:3-5

condition, He said, “Do you wish to become well?” The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I do not have a man to put me into the pool when it is stirred up. Every time I try to jump in, another gets in before me.” Jesus said to him, “Arise, take up your mattress and walk.” Immediately the man became well and took up his mattress and walked.

This was on the Sabbath day, so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “This is the Sabbath and it is unlawful for you to carry your mattress.” He answered them, “The One who healed me said to me, ‘Take up your mattress and walk.’” They asked him, “Who is this man who said to you, ‘Take up your mattress and walk?’” The man who was healed did not know who He was, for Jesus had left because of the crowd there. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple said to him, “See, you have become well. Sin no more so that nothing worse happens to you.” The man then went back and reported to the Jews that Jesus was the One who had healed him.

This is why the Jews persecuted Jesus and were seeking to kill Him, because He healed on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now and so I work.” So the Jews were even more determined to kill Him, not only because He was breaking the Sabbath, but because He called God His Father, making Himself equal to God.

Jesus then said to them, “Very certainly I say to you, the Son is able to do nothing of Himself, except what He sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son does as well. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things which He Himself does, and greater works than these will He show Him, so that you will be amazed. Just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so the Son also gives life to whomever He wills. Neither does the Father judge anyone, but gives all judgment to the Son so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

believes in the One who sent Me has eternal life. They will not come into judgment, but have passed out of death into life.” John 5:24

The Word of God

For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. II Timothy 3:16-17

You Must Be Born Again

... but to as many as received Him, He gave them the right to become the children of God; to those believing in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12-13

“Very certainly I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

Freedom of the Christian

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. II Corinthians 3:17

“If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples; you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John 8:32

receive him. How can you believe if you receive glory from one another and do not seek glory from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you hope. If you believed Moses you would believe Me, because he wrote about Me, but if you do not believe his writings, how can you believe My words?"

6 After this Jesus went away beyond the Sea of Galilee to Tiberius. A large crowd was following Him because they saw the signs He was doing for those who were sick. Jesus went up to the mountain and there He sat down with His disciples. It was now near the Passover, the feast of the Jews. Raising His eyes, Jesus saw that a large crowd was coming to Him, and He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread so these people can eat?" (He said this to test Philip, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do). Philip answered Him, "Two hundred dollars worth of bread is not enough for them, so each would receive even a small piece." One of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Him, "There is a little boy here who has five loaves of barley bread and two small fish, but what are these for so many?" Jesus said, "Have them sit down." There was a lot of grass there, so about five thousand of them sat down. Jesus then took the loaves of bread and having given thanks He distributed them to His disciples, who gave them to those who were sitting, and the fish also, as much as they desired. When they were full, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftover pieces so that nothing will be wasted." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with pieces from the five loaves of barley bread left over from those who had eaten.

After seeing these signs which Jesus did, the people said, "Truly this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to seize Him to make Him king, withdrew into the mountains by Himself alone. When evening came His disciples went down to the

Selected New Testament Verses

These verses of Scripture have been chosen from the New Testament to help those who desire to know Jesus Christ personally and begin a new life of hope through faith in Him. Knowing these Scriptures will help the believer to establish their lives on the unshakable foundation of God's Word.

"Heaven and Earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away." Jesus Christ—Matthew 24:35

God Loves You

But God proves His own love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

The love of God is shown for us by this: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world in order that through Him we might live. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the sacrifice for our sins. I John 4:9-10

Faith and Works

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves, but is the gift of God—not because of works, lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2:8

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared for mankind, not because of righteous works that we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:4

shall never hunger, and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst. But you have both seen and heard Me, yet you do not believe.

“Everyone whom the Father gives Me will come to Me, and no one who comes to me will never be cast out. Because of this I have come down out of heaven, not to do My will, but the will of the One who sent Me. Now this is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all those He has give Me I should lose none, but will raise them up on the last day. And this is the will of the One who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I shall raise them up on the last day.”

Therefore the Jews were complaining about Him because He said, “I am the bread which came down out of heaven.” So they were saying, “Is this not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can He say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’” Therefore Jesus answered them saying, “Do not complain among yourselves. No one is able to come to Me unless the Father who sent Me should draw them, and I will raise them up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, ‘And all will be taught by God.’ So everyone who hears and learns from the Father comes to Me. No one has seen the Father except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.”

“Very certainly I say to you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life. I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread that comes out of heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread they will live throughout the ages. Indeed, the bread which I shall give is My flesh, which I give as life on behalf of the world.” Therefore the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, “How is this man able to give us his flesh to eat?”

Jesus then said to them, “Very certainly I say to you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink

Peace be to the brothers and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a never diminishing love. Amen.

into Judea, so that Your disciples may also see the works which You are doing; for no one who wants to be well known does anything in secret. Since You are doing these things, show Yourself to the world.” For not even His brothers believed in Him. Therefore Jesus said to them, “My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world is unable to hate you, but it hates Me because I testify about it, that its works are evil. Go up to the feast yourselves. I am not going up to the feast yet because My time has not been fulfilled.” Having said this to them He remained in Galilee. After his brothers went up then He also went up to the feast—not openly, but privately.

The Jews were looking for Him at the feast, saying, “Where is that man?” And there was much discussion about Him among the crowds, some saying, “He is a good man.” Others were saying, “No, but He deceives the people.” No one, however, spoke openly about Him because of the fear of the Jews.

In the middle of the feast Jesus went into the temple and began to teach. The Jews were amazed, saying, “How does this man know the writings without an education?” Jesus answered them, “My teaching is not Mine but the One’s who sent Me. If anyone desires to do His will, he will know about this teaching, whether it is from God or whether I speak from Myself. The one who speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but the One who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him is true, and in Him there is no unrighteousness. Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you seeking to kill Me?” The crowd answered Him, “You must have a demon; who is seeking to kill you?”

Jesus answered them, “I did a single work and you all marvel. Because Moses gave you circumcision (not from Moses, really, but from the fathers) you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man is circumcised on the Sabbath so the law of Moses is not broken, how can you be angry with Me

the unwise, but as the wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what is the will of the Lord. And do not get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless indulgence, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melodious praise in your hearts to the Lord. Always give thanks about all things to our God and Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit yourselves to one another out of respect for God.

Wives, subject yourselves to your own husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is also the head of the Church; He is the Savior of the body. But just as the Church is subjected to Christ, so too must wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your own wives just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself on her behalf in order that He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of water through the Word. That He might present her to Himself as the glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle of any kind, that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself, for no one ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as also the Lord does the Church. For we are members of His body. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I am referring to Christ and the Church. However, let each one of you also love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise: “That it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.” And fathers, do not provoke your children’s anger, but nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Hearing these words many of the people said, “This is truly the Prophet.” Others said, “This is the Messiah.” Still others asked, “But the Messiah does not come out of Galilee, does He? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from the line of David, and from the town of David, Bethlehem?” So a division occurred among the people because of Him, and some wanted them to arrest Him, but no one laid a hand on Him.

The attendants went back and the chief priests and Pharisees asked them, “Why did you not bring Him?” The attendants answered, “No man ever spoke like this man!” The Pharisees answered them, “Have you also been deceived? None of the rulers or the Pharisees have believed in Him, have they? This crowd does not even know the law; they are accursed.”

Nicodemus, the man who came to Him by night and was one of them, said to them, “Does our law judge a man before it first hears from him and finds out what he is doing?” They answered, “You are not also from Galilee are you? Search and see if a prophet has ever risen out of Galilee.” Everyone then went home to his own house.

8 And Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

Early in the morning Jesus went into the temple. All the people were coming to Him, and He sat down and taught them. The scribes and Pharisees brought Him a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placed her in their midst. They said to Him, “Teacher, we found this woman in the very act of committing adultery. In our law, Moses commanded that such should be stoned. So what do You say about her?” They said this to test Him, so that they might have something to accuse Him of.

But Jesus bending down, began to write on the ground with His finger while they were questioning Him. He looked up and said, “Whoever of you is without sin, let him throw the first stone at her.” And again He bent down and

gave gifts to men.” Now what does it mean, “He ascended,” if He did not also descend into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill everything.

And He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and others to be pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for their work in the service of building up the body of Christ, until we all arrive at the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God—complete adults, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be like infants, tossed around by waves and carried away by every wind of teaching through the trickery, the slyness of men involved in deceitful schemes. But we tell the truth in love, so that in every way we might grow up into Him who is the head—Christ, from whom the whole body is fitted and held together through every supporting joint, as each part does its appropriate share, enabling the body to grow as it builds itself up in love.

And so I say as I testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk like the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their minds, having been darkened in understanding and estranged from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart. Having become calloused, they have given themselves over to depravity with a voracious appetite for perversion.

But this is not how you have come to know Christ, if indeed you have heard of Him and been taught of Him according to this truth that is in Jesus: that you put off the ways of your former life, that old self that is being corrupted by its deceitful lusts, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind as you put on the new self, created in the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore, putting aside dishonesty, “Let each one speak the truth with his neighbor,” because we are one another’s neighbors. “Be angry but do not sin.” Do not let the sun set on your anger, nor give opportunity to the devil.

to them, “Exactly what I have been telling you from the beginning. I have many things to say and judge about you, but He who sent Me is true, and what I heard from Him is what I tell the world.”

They did not know that He was speaking to them about the Father, so Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and do nothing from Myself, but speak just as My Father has taught Me. And the One who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone because I always do what is pleasing to Him.”

As He said these things many believed in Him. Jesus said to the Jews who believed in Him, “If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples; and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.” They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s offspring, and have never been slaves to anyone. How can you say, ‘You will become free’?” Jesus answered them, “Very certainly I say to you, anyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house throughout the ages but the Son remains throughout the ages. So if the Son makes you free, you will truly be free.

“I know that you are Abraham’s offspring but you seek to kill Me because My word finds no place in you. What I have seen from My Father I speak of, and you, what you have seen from your father, you do.” They answered Him, “Our father is Abraham.” Jesus said to them, “If you were children of Abraham you would do the works of Abraham. But instead you seek to kill Me, a Man who has spoken to you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You are doing the deeds of your father.”

Then they said to Him, “We have not been born illegitimately. We have one Father—God.” So Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father you would love Me because I have come from and am here from God. I have not come of Myself, but He has sent Me. Why do you not understand what I am saying to you? Because you cannot bear to listen

in the flesh, considered uncircumcised by the circumcision that is made in the body by human hands. At that time you were separated from Christ, estranged from Israel’s citizenship, strangers to the covenants of promise—in the world, Godless and without hope. But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who made us both one and destroyed the dividing wall that separated us, ending the hostility through His flesh, having abolished the ordinances of the commandments of the law, so that from the two He might create in Himself one new man, thus making peace, that He might reconcile them both in one body to God by the cross, putting to death the hostility Himself.

And when He came, He preached peace to you who were far away, and to those who were near, because through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household that is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets—the chief cornerstone who is Christ Jesus Himself, in whom the whole building is joined together as it grows into a temple that is holy to the Lord, in whom also you are being built up together as a dwelling for God’s Spirit.

3 Because of this, I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God that was given to me for you: how by revelation He has made known to me this mystery, just as I wrote briefly before; which upon reading you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy Apostles and Prophets. That is, the Gentiles are to be fellow heirs of the same body and participants of His promise through Christ by means of the Gospel, of which I became a minister by the free gift of the grace of God that was given to me according to the working of His power.

parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in Him. It is necessary for Me to perform the works of Him who sent Me while it is still day. Night is coming when no one is able to work. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After He had said this He spit on the ground, made clay from His saliva, and applied the clay to the eyes of the blind man. Then He said to him, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam (which means Having Been Sent)." So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

His neighbors and others who had seen that he was blind said, "Is this not the man who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is him." But others said, "He just looks like him." But the man kept saying, "I am he!" So they asked him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered them, "A man called Jesus made clay, anointed my eyes, and said, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' When I went and washed I received my sight." They said to him, "Where is this man?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought him who was formerly blind to the Pharisees. It was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees also asked him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, I washed, and I see." So some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath." Others were saying, "How can a sinful man to do such things?" And so a division arose among them.

They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he was born blind then received his sight, so they called his parents and asked them, "Is this your son whom you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. He is of age, ask him; he can speak for himself."

A Letter to New Christians

To the Ephesians

I Paul, the apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ. He has chosen us in Him before the world was founded to be holy and blameless in His presence. In love He predestined us through Jesus Christ to be His adopted sons, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glories of His grace, by which He has freely favored us in the Beloved One. We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins by the riches of His grace, which He has poured out on us in all wisdom and insight.

According to His good pleasure, He has revealed to us the secret of His will, which He plans to fulfill when the time fully comes to bring everything together in Christ, things in heaven and things on the earth.

We were also chosen to be His heirs, predestined according to the purpose of Him who works out all things by the design of His will, so that we, the first to put our hope in Christ, should bring praise to His glory. You too, after hearing the word of truth, and believing the good news of your salvation, have been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until that purchased possession is redeemed, to the praise of His glory.

Because of this, I also, after hearing about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, never cease to give thanks for you as I mention you in my prayers:

10 “Very certainly I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in another way is a thief and a robber. He who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. The doorkeeper opens to him, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And whenever he brings out his own sheep, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will certainly not follow a stranger but will run from him because they do not know a stranger's voice.”

Jesus used this figure of speech with them but they did not know what He was talking about. So again Jesus said to them, “Very certainly I say to you that I am the door of the sheep. All who came before were thieves and robbers but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me they will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, so he leaves the sheep and runs away when he see the wolf coming, allowing the wolf to catch the sheep and scatter them. The hired hand runs away because he is a just hired hand and does not really care about the sheep.

“I am the good shepherd; I know My own and My own know Me. Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep which are not of this fold that I must gather as well. And they too will hear My voice, so that there will be one flock with one shepherd.

“This is why the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life so I can raise it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down Myself. I have the power to lay it down

onto the land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty three, yet the net was not torn from so many. Jesus said to them, “Come and eat breakfast.” Not one of the disciples dared to ask Him, “Who are You?”—knowing that it was the Lord. Then Jesus took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish as well. This was the third time Jesus was revealed to His disciples after being raised from the dead.

When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” He then said to him a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter said to Him, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.” Jesus said to him a third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was upset because He asked him a third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to him, “Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep. Very certainly I say to you, when you were younger, you tied your clothes and walked wherever you wished, but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and another will tie you and take you where you do not wish to go.” He said this to signify what kind of death he would glorify God. And so having spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.”

But turning around Peter saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, the one who also leaned on His chest at the supper and asked, “Lord, who is the one who will betray You?” Seeing him, Peter asked Jesus, “Lord, but what about him?” Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.” So the word went out among the brothers that the disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die but, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?”

This is the disciple who testifies about these things, having written them, and we know that his testimony

is in Me and I in Him.” So they tried to seize Him again but He escaped through their hands.

And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing and stayed there. Many who came to Him said, “Even though John did no signs, everything he said about this man is true.” And so many there believed in Him.

11 Now a certain man, Lazarus of Bethany, from the village of Mary and her sister Martha, was sick. It was Mary who anointed the Lord with myrrh and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother was sick. So these sisters sent word to Him saying, “Lord, he whom You love is sick.” Hearing this Jesus said, “This sickness is not for death but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” And Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus.

But when He heard that he was sick, He stayed where He was for two more days. After this He said to the disciples, “Let us go into Judea again.” The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone You, and You are going back there?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day he does not stumble because he sees the light of the world. But if anyone walks in the night he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” After He said this to them, He told them, “Lazarus, our friend, has fallen asleep, but I am going to awaken him.” Then His disciples said, “If he has fallen asleep, he will be fine.” Jesus was talking about his death, but they thought that he was speaking about the resting of sleep. So Jesus said to them frankly, “Lazarus died. And I am happy for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

Then Thomas, the one called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, so that we may die with Him.”

So when He arrived, Jesus found that he had already been in the tomb for four days. Now this was in

tomb and saw two angels in white, sitting one at the head and one at the foot, where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, “Woman, why are you crying?” She answered them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have put Him.”

As she said this she turned and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize who He was. Jesus asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Whom do you seek?” Supposing that He was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put Him, and I will take Him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” Turning around, she cried out, “Rabboni!” (which means Great Teacher).

Jesus then told her, “Do not hold Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and to your God.’” Then Mary Magdalene went to the disciples and announced, “I have seen the Lord, and this is what He said to me!”

In the evening on the first day of the week, the disciples were assembled behind closed doors because of the fear of the Jews. Jesus came, stood among them, and said to them, “Peace be to you.” Having said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples rejoiced at seeing the Lord. Therefore Jesus again said, “Peace be to you. Just as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” He then breathed on them, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven. If you hold the sins of anyone, they are held.”

But Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “If I do not see the holes of the nails in His hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and put my hand into His side, I will certainly not believe.”

After eight days His disciples were inside again

the one who died, said, “Lord, it is the fourth day already; there will be an odor.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?” They then took away the stone from where the one who died was lying. And Jesus lifted His eyes upward and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I knew that You always hear Me, but because of those standing here I have said this, so that they may believe that You sent Me.” And after saying this He cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” And the one who died came out, having been bound hand and feet with grave clothes, with a cloth wrapped around his face. Jesus said to them, “Untie him and let him go.”

Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary saw what He did and believed in Him. But some of them went back to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus did. So the chief priests and Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What are we going to do about this? This man does so many signs that if we let Him go on like this, everyone will believe in Him. Then the Romans will come and take away both our nation and place of worship.” And one of them, Caiaphas, the high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing. You never even considered that it is better for one man to die on behalf of the people, rather than the whole nation should perish.” He did not say this from himself, but because he was the high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die, not just for the nation, but for all the scattered children of God, to gather them into one family. From that day on they made plans to kill Him.

Because of this, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews. He left for a country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and stayed there with His disciples. It was near the time of the Jewish Passover. Many came up to Jerusalem from the countryside to purify themselves before the Passover. As they stood around in the temple talking to one another they looked for Jesus, asking, “What do you

chief priests of the Jews told Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This Person said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’”” Pilate answered, “I have written what I have written.”

Then the soldiers, when they crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, a part to each soldier, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was seamless, wholly woven from top to bottom. Therefore they said to each other, “Let us not tear it but cast lots for it, to choose whose it will be,” so that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says, “They divided My garments among them, and upon My clothing the cast a lot.” So the soldiers did this.

By the cross stood the mother of Jesus, and the sister of His mother, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Upon seeing His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son.” Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own care.

After this Jesus saw that everything had been completed, and to fulfill the Scripture, He said, “I thirst.” A jar was sitting there full of vinegar, so they filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on hyssop branch, and brought it to His mouth. When Jesus received the vinegar, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He surrendered His Spirit.

Therefore the Jews, so that the bodies should not remain on the Sabbath, being the Preparation day (for it was a high day of that Sabbath), asked Pilate that their legs be broken, and they be taken away. The soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and then the other who had been crucified with Him. But upon coming to Jesus, they saw that He had already died so they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and immediately blood and water came out. The one who witnessed this has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows what he says is the truth so that you may believe. For

All those who were with Him when He raised Lazarus from the dead and called him out of the tomb were telling everyone. On account of this the crowds came out to meet Him, because they heard of this sign that He had done. So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, your efforts have done nothing. Look how the world has gone off after Him!”

There were some Greeks who had gone up to worship at the feast. They approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip came and spoke to Andrew and both Andrew and Philip spoke to Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very certainly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life will lose it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there will My servant be also. And if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

“Now My soul has become troubled, so what should I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour?’ But it is for this hour that I came. Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have glorified it and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it but some were saying that it thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come about for My sake but for yours. Now the judgment of the world is this: the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth will draw all peoples to Myself.” He said this to signify what kind of death He was about to die.

The crowd answered Him, “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains into the ages. So how can you say, ‘It is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?’” Jesus said to them, “For a short time

to them, “Take Him yourselves and judge Him according to your law.” So the Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to kill anyone,” so that the words of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He said, signifying by what sort of death He was about to die.

Then Pilate entered into the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, “You are the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered him, “Do you say this from yourself, or did others tell you about Me?” Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your nation and your chief priests have handed You over to me. What have You done?” Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as of now, My kingdom is not from here.” Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So then You are a king?” Jesus answered, “As you say, I am a king. For this reason I have been born, and for this reason I have come into the world, so that I should testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice.” Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?”

And having said this, he went out again to the Jews and told them, “I find no charge in Him. But you have a custom that I should release one person to you at the Passover. Therefore, do you want me to release the ‘King of the Jews?’” Then they all cried out again, saying, “Not Him, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19 So then Pilate took Jesus and had Him whipped. And the soldiers crafted a crown made of thorns, put it on His head, and tossed a purple robe around Him. They repeated, “Hail, King of the Jews!” while striking His face.

Then Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing Him out to you, so that you may know that I find no charge in Him.” Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, “Behold, the Man!” When the chief priests and attendants

world to His Father, having loved His own who were in the world; to the end He loved them. And after supper—the devil having already put into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to hand Him over—Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came from God and He was going to God, rose from the supper, laid aside His garments, took a towel, and tied it around Himself. Then He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciple’s feet and dry them with the towel with which He was wrapped. When He came to Simon Peter, Peter said to Him, “Lord, you are washing my feet?” Jesus answered him, “You do not realize what I am doing to you now, but later you will understand.” Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet, ever!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head!” Jesus said to him, “The one who has been bathed does not need to be washed except for his feet, but is completely clean, and clean you are, but not all of you.” For He knew who would hand Him over, so He said, “Not all of you are clean.”

So when He had washed their feet, taken His clothes, and sat back down, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and well you say, for so I am. Therefore, if I, your Teacher and Lord, wash your feet, you should also wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example, so that just as I have done, you should do also. Very certainly I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. I do not speak about all of you. I know those whom I have chosen, but that the Scripture might be fulfilled: ‘The one eating bread with Me, lifted up his heel against Me.’ From now on I tell you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe that I am He. Very certainly I say to you, the one who receives whom I send,

given to Me may be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given to me, because You loved Me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, indeed the world did not know You, yet I knew You, and these knew that You sent Me. And I made Your name known to them, and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me, and I Myself, may be in them.”

18 Having said this, Jesus went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden which He and His disciples entered. Judas, who would hand Him over, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with His disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers there from the chief priest and Pharisees’ attendants, who came with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

Then Jesus, knowing everything that was going to come upon Him, went out to them and asked, “Whom are you seeking?” They answered Him, “Jesus the Nazarene.” Standing among them was Judas, who was handing Him over. When He said to them, “I am He,” they fell backward to the ground. So He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus the Nazarene.” Jesus answered. “I told you that I am He, so if I am the One you are seeking, let these men go.” He said this so the word might be fulfilled: “Of those whom you have given Me, I have lost not one.” Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. And the slave’s name was Malchus. Therefore Jesus said to Peter. “Put your sword into your sheath! The cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not certainly drink it?”

Then the detachment of soldiers, their captain, and the attendants of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. They led Him away to Annas first, because he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who advised the Jews that it was necessary for one man to perish on behalf of the people.

now? I will lay down my life for You.” Jesus answered him, “You will lay down you life for Me? Very certainly I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you have denied Me three times.”

14 “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwellings; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to Myself, so that where I am, you also may be. You know where I am going, and you know the way.”

Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how are we able to know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father as well; so from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father and it will satisfy us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long and still you do not know Me, Philip? Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father, and so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I speak to you are not from Myself, but from the Father, who lives in Me. He is the One who does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me, but if not, then believe Me because of the works themselves.

“Very certainly I say to you, whoever believes in Me, the works that I do, they will do also—and greater works than these will they do, because I am going to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name I will do it. If you love Me, keep My commandments.

“And I will ask the Father, and another Counselor He will give you, so that He may live with you into the

ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be fulfilled.

“I have spoken to you about these things in figures of speech, but the hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but I will tell you openly about the Father. At that time you will ask in My name; and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me, and you have believed that I came forth from God. Indeed I came from the Father and have come into the world, and again, I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father.”

His disciples said to Him, “See, You are speaking openly now and You are not using figures of speech. We realize now that You know everything and You do not need to be questioned by anyone.” Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? See, an hour is coming, in fact has come, that you will be scattered each to his own, and you will leave Me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. I have spoken these things to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but have courage, I have overcome the world.”

17 Speaking these things Jesus raised His eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You. Just as You have given Him authority over all humanity, so will He give eternal life to all that You have given to Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the One whom You sent. I glorified You on earth. I finished the work which You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself with the glory I had with You before the world existed.

“I revealed Your name to the men whom You have given to Me out of the world. They were Yours and You have given them to Me and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that everything You have given to Me is

15 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me which does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every one that bears fruit, He prunes, so that it will bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch is not able to bear fruit from itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, if you do not abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, will bear much fruit, because apart from Me you are able to do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown out like a branch that is dried up, and they gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it will happen for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; and you will become My disciples.

“Just as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept the commandments of My Father and abide in His love. I have spoken these things to you so that My joy may abide in you and your joy may be made full.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this: than to lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do everything I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, because the slave does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends, because everything which I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go out and bear fruit, and your fruit should remain, so that whatever you may ask the Father in My name, He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.

“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. The world hates you because you are not of the world and because I chose you out of the world. Remember the word which I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. They will do all these things to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

“The one who hates Me, hates My Father as well. If I had not done the works among them which no one else has done, they would not have sin, but now they have both seen and have hated Me and My Father. But this was so that the word might be fulfilled which was written in their law: ‘They hated Me without cause.’

“But when the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who goes out from the Father, He will testify about Me. But you will testify about Me as well, because you were with Me from the beginning.

16 “I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be caused to stumble. They will expel you from the synagogue, and the hour is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. And they will do these things because they do not know the Father nor Me. But I have spoken these things to you, so that when that hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them.

“I did not say this to you from the beginning because I was still with you; but now I am going to Him who sent Me, yet none of you asks Me, ‘Where are you going?’ Your heart is filled with sorrow because I have said these things to you, but I am telling you the truth. It is to your benefit that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you.