



The Jesus Book



The Bible in Easy English
NEW TESTAMENT

In memory of George Verwer (1938-2023)

THE JESUS BOOK

"Jesus is the greatest man that ever lived."

So claim many millions of people. All of us should read his life story for ourselves and find out why God sent him to live with us.

THE JESUS BOOK tells us the things Jesus said and did. It helps us to know how our lives can be changed by him. It then tells us how his followers passed this Good News to other parts of the world. It has many of the letters these followers wrote to people, to help them get right with God.

THE JESUS BOOK is the part of the Bible called the New Testament. It is written in easy, worldwide English. So it can help you if you are learning English or speak English as a second language.

THE JESUS BOOK can change your life. It can show the way to the real happiness that God wants you to find. It will also bring you freedom from fear of death and evil.

"As you read this New Testament, you will see clearly what God is wanting to say to us."

George Verwer, Operation Mobilisation

**SOON Publications, England
Republished by Manna Publications (UK)**

THE JESUS BOOK

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The NEW TESTAMENT in Worldwide Easy English

The Life, Teachings and Works of Jesus Christ and his Church

**First published by SOON Publications
and Operation Mobilisation**

Republished by Manna Publications (UK)

In memory of George Verwer (1938-2023)

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THE JESUS BOOK

The New Testament in Worldwide Easy English

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The NEW TESTAMENT in Worldwide Easy English

Introduction

This book is the New Testament which is part of the Bible. It is written in easy, worldwide English. It tells about the life and teachings of Jesus, who Christians believe is the Son of God. It also tells what the followers of Jesus did after he went back to heaven.

Jesus Christ was sent by God 2000 years ago to a country called Judea, the land of the Jews, which today is called Israel. His teachings have now spread all over the world. Millions of people have been given a new life from God by following Jesus and believing his teachings.

The Bible has another part as well as the New Testament. It is the Old Testament. The Old Testament (which we call here 'the holy writings') was written before Jesus lived on earth. Jesus knew these writings, and often spoke about them in his teachings.

The New Testament was first written in the Greek language. But this New Testament has been written in easy, worldwide English, so that many more people can read and understand it. It is based on the King James Authorised Version of the Bible.

A list of Bible words at the end of this book helps to make clear any difficult English words and ideas which you may find in this New Testament. It also tells something about the people and places which you will find in the Bible.

How this New Testament was published

Foreword to the 1998 edition

This New Testament was originally prepared by Annie Cressman, who died in 1993. She was a Canadian Bible teacher in Liberia in West Africa. Whilst teaching students in a Bible School where the language used was English, she found that she was spending more time explaining the meaning of the English than she was teaching the Bible itself. So she decided to write this simple version in easy English so that her students could easily understand.

For this purpose Miss Cressman used the Authorised (King James) Version – itself an easy English version of its day – rather than make a fresh translation from the Greek language. She taught and wrote down the New Testament in words and sentences that she knew her students would understand.

In 1959 the Full Gospel Publishing House in Toronto, Canada, printed a trial edition of the Gospel of Mark. A further edition was published in 1962 by the American Bible Society. The whole New Testament was first published by SOON Publications in India in 1969 in hardback form. This was assisted by Operation Mobilisation (OM) and was reprinted in 1971.

For some years that edition was out of print, although SOON, through WEC International (England) and Evangel Publishing House (Kenya), continued printing parts of the New Testament. The vision to reprint a new edition of the whole New Testament has now been carried out by SOON with help from WEC, EPH and OM. Introductions have been added to each part of the book. Where a change to a more modern wording has been made, this has been kept in line with the Authorised Version. Further revisions to Matthew and Romans were added in 1998 and the Word List enlarged.

This edition of the New Testament is unique. It uses a vocabulary of only 1,500 words plus names – much fewer than any other simple English edition. Each word and phrase has been carefully checked to give true understanding in different countries and regions. They are based on a word list selected by the late Frank Laubach of Laubach Literacy International, Syracuse, New York, for readers of English as a foreign language.

Jesus said: 'I am coming again SOON! Hold on to the faith you have, so that no one will stop you receiving your reward in heaven.' (Revelation 3:11)

How to know God

Read these parts of The New Testament to help you:

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John 3:16–17; 5:24; 14:6	89; 92; 104
Acts 4:12	115
Romans 1:17; 5:8; 10:9–11	144; 148; 152
2 Corinthian's 5:17–18	174
Titus 3:4–8	211
1 John 1:8–9; 4:10–11; 5:11–15	235; 237; 238

- † God loves you even though you do and think wrong things.
- † God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to show the right way to God.
- † Jesus took our punishment for sin and died for people like you.
- † God let Him die on a cross to show His love for us.
- † After three days God gave Him a new life.
- † If you believe in Jesus and follow his teachings,
- † He will forgive you and give you a new life.
- † He will free you from your bad ways and be put right with God.
- † Then you will live with Him for ever.
- † God has freely done all this for you, even when you think there is no hope.
- † This is the truth of God and the Good News of God's salvation through Christ alone.

THE GOOD NEWS AS TOLD BY MATTHEW

Matthew was one of twelve disciples (closest followers) of Jesus. He lived in Judea (part of Israel). At that time his country was under Roman rule. Matthew worked for the Romans. His book tells the Good News about Jesus. It was written to instruct the Jews, to help them to see that Jesus Christ is the true king. Matthew shows how the old holy writings spoke about Jesus, and about his kingdom. This Good News is for all people everywhere. Jesus teaches how to love and obey God. Matthew wrote down what Jesus said for us all to read.

CHAPTER 1

The family line of Jesus Christ

Here are the names of the people in the family line from which Jesus Christ came. He came from David's family. He came from Abraham's family.

2-16 Jesus' family line: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Perez (his mother was Tamar), Zebron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz (his mother was Rahab), Obed (his mother was Ruth), Jesse, David the king, Solomon (whose mother was Uriah's wife), Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jeconiah and his brothers (at the time the people of Israel were carried away to Babylon), Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Zadok, Achim, Eliud, Eleazor, Matthan, Jacob and Joseph who was the husband of Mary. Mary was the mother of Jesus, who is called the Christ.

17 There were fourteen families from Abraham to David. There were fourteen families from David to the time the people were taken to Babylon. And there were fourteen families after that until Christ was born.

The birth of Jesus Christ

18 This is the way Jesus Christ was born. Mary, his mother, was promised to Joseph to be his wife. But before they were married, she found out that she was going to have a baby. It was by the Holy Spirit.

19 Joseph, the man she was to marry, was a good man. He did not want her to be made ashamed. So he planned to leave her without telling people about it. **20** While he was thinking about this, he had a dream. An angel of the Lord came to him.

He said, 'Joseph, David's son, do not fear to take Mary to be your wife. Her baby is by the Holy Spirit. **21** She will have a baby son. Name him Jesus, because he will save his people from the wrong things they have done.'

22 All of this had been told long before by the Lord through his prophet. It came true. **23** The prophet said, 'A young woman who has not slept with a man is going to have a baby son.' His name will be Emmanuel. That means 'God is with us.' **24** Joseph woke up and did what the angel of the Lord told him to do. He took Mary to be his wife. **25** But he did not make love with her until her first son had been born. He named him Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

The visit of the wise men

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, in the country of Judea. Herod was the king. After Jesus was born, wise men came from the east to Jerusalem. **2** They asked, 'Where is the child who has been born to be King of the Jews? We saw his star rising and we have come to worship him.'

3 When King Herod heard this, he was very troubled. All the people in Jerusalem were troubled also. **4** He called all the chief priests and the scribes of the Jews for a meeting. He asked them, 'Where is the Christ to be born?'

5 They told him, 'In Bethlehem in Judea. That is what the prophet, the man of God long ago, wrote: **6** "Bethlehem in the country of Judah, you are not the least among the leaders in Judah. A leader will come from you who will rule over my people Israel".'

7 Then Herod called the wise men to talk with them secretly. He found out from them what time they saw the star. **8** He sent them to Bethlehem. He said, 'Go and ask everywhere until you find the child. When you have found him, come and tell me, so that I myself may go and worship him.' **9** After they heard what the king said, they went away. And the star, which they had seen rising, went in front of them. It stopped above the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they were very glad.

11 They went into the house, and there they saw the child and Mary his mother. They knelt down and worshipped him. Then they opened their bags and gave him gifts. These gifts were gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

12 In a dream they were told not to go back to Herod. So they went home by a different road.

Going to Egypt

13 After the wise men had gone, Joseph had a dream. An angel of the Lord came to him and said, 'Get up. Take the child and his mother, and go quickly to the country of Egypt. Stay there till I tell you, because Herod will try to find the child and kill him.' **14** Joseph woke up. He took the child and his mother in the night and went to Egypt. **15** He stayed there until Herod died.

What the Lord told through his prophet long ago, came true. He said, 'I called my son out of Egypt.'

The killing of baby boys

16 Herod saw that the wise men had fooled him. He was very angry. He sent men to kill all the baby boys in the town of Bethlehem and around it. They killed all the boys who were two years old or less. Herod remembered what the wise men had told him about the time they first saw the star.

17 So what the prophet Jeremiah said, came true. **18** He said, 'A voice could be heard in the town of Ramah. Rachel was crying for her children. She would not let anyone comfort her because her children were dead.'

The return from Egypt

19 Herod died. Then Joseph had a dream. An angel of the Lord came to him in Egypt. **20** The angel said, 'Get up. Take the child and his mother and go to the country of Israel. The men who wanted to kill the child are dead.'

21 Joseph woke up. He took the child and his mother and went to the country of Israel.

22 But he heard that Archelaus was king of Judea in his father Herod's place. So he was afraid to go there. In a dream he was told what to do. He went to the country of Galilee. **23** He went and made his home in the town of Nazareth. The prophets of God long ago had said, 'He shall be called a man from Nazareth.' What they said came true.

CHAPTER 3

John tells God's word

After some years had passed, John the Baptizer came and told God's word in the desert of Judea. **2** He said, 'Stop doing wrong things and turn back to God! The kingdom of heaven is almost here.' **3** This is the man that Isaiah the prophet of God spoke about long ago. He said, 'A man is calling in the wilderness, "Make the way ready for the Lord. Make the road straight for him".'

4 John wore clothes made of camel's hair and a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild honey.

5 People went to him from Jerusalem, from all of Judea, and from all the country near the Jordan River. **6** He baptised them in the Jordan River when they said how sorry they were for the wrong things they had done.

7 Many of the Pharisee group and the Sadducee group came to him to be baptised. But when he saw them, he said to them, 'You family of snakes! Who told you to run away from God's anger that is coming? **8** Stop your wrong ways to show that you have turned back to God. **9** Do not think you can say to yourselves, "Abraham is our father." I tell you, God can make children for Abraham from these stones. **10** The axe is ready to cut down the trees. Every tree that does not have good fruit is cut down and thrown into a fire.

11 'I baptise you with water when you stop your wrong ways. But another person is coming after me. He is greater than I am. I am not good enough to take off his shoes. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. **12** He has a cleaning fan in his hand and will fan his grain very clean. He will put the grain into his storehouse. But he will burn the chaff in the fire that never dies.'

Jesus is baptised

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River. He came to John to be baptised by him.

14 John tried to stop him. He said, 'I need to be baptised by you. Why do you come to me to be baptised?'

15 But Jesus answered, 'Please do it now. In this way we shall do all that is right.' Then John let him be baptised.

16 After Jesus was baptised, he came up out of the water right away. The sky opened. He saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a

dove. **17** A voice from the sky said, 'This is my dear Son. I am very pleased with him.'

CHAPTER 4

The devil tries to make Jesus do wrong

Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert. The devil tried to make Jesus do wrong. **2** Jesus did not eat anything for forty days and forty nights. Then he was very hungry. **3** The one who tries to make people do wrong came and said to him, 'If you are God's Son, tell these stones to be changed into bread.'

4 But Jesus answered him, 'The holy writings say, "Man cannot live on bread only. He needs to live by every word that God says".'

5 Then the devil took Jesus to the holy city. He put him on a high part of the temple. **6** The devil said to him, 'If you are God's Son, jump down. The holy writings say, "God will tell his angels to take care of you. They will hold you up in their hands so that you will not knock your foot on a stone".'

7 Jesus answered him, 'The holy writings say, "You must not test the Lord your God".'

8 The devil took Jesus to a very high hill. He showed him all the countries of the world and how great they were. **9** He said to Jesus, 'I will give you all these if you kneel down and worship me.'

10 But Jesus answered him, 'Get away, Satan. The holy writings say, "You must worship the Lord your God. and he is the only one you are to worship".'

11 Then the devil left Jesus. Angels came and took care of him.

Jesus begins his work in Galilee

12 Jesus heard that John was put in prison, so he went to Galilee. **13** He left the town of Nazareth and went to live in the town of Capernaum. It is by the sea (of Galilee in the district of Zebulun and Naphtali. **14** So what the prophet Isaiah said came true. **15** He talked about, 'The country of Zebulun and the country of Naphtali, the road by the sea, the land on the other side of the Jordan River, Galilee where the people are not Jews.' **16** And he said, 'The people who lived in darkness have seen a great Light. Light has come to those who lived in a land covered by the dark shadow of death.'

17 From then on, Jesus began to tell God's word to the people. He said, 'Stop your wrong ways

and turn back to God! The kingdom of heaven is here!'

Jesus calls four fishermen

18 Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee. There he saw two brothers, Simon who later was named Peter, and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a fishing net into the water. Their work was to catch fish. **19** Jesus said to them, 'Come with me. The work I will give you will be to catch people.' **20** Right away they left their nets and went with him.

21 Jesus went on from there and saw two other brothers, James and John. Their father's name was Zebedee. They were in the boat with their father mending their nets. **22** Jesus called them. Right away they left the boat and their father and went with him.

Jesus heals many people

23 Jesus went all around through Galilee. He taught people in their meeting houses and told them the good news about the kingdom of heaven. He healed all the sick and weak people.

24 The people in all the country of Syria heard about him. They brought all who were sick in any way, or had bad spirits in them, and those who could not walk or use their hands. Jesus healed them. **25** Many people went with him. They came from Galilee, the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, Judea, and from the other side of the Jordan river.

CHAPTER 5

The beginning of the message on the hill

When Jesus saw the many people, he went up on a hill. He sat down and his disciples came to him. **2** He began to teach the people.

The blessings of God

3 He said, 'God makes happy those who know that they need him. The kingdom of heaven is for them.

4 'God makes happy those who are sad. They will have comfort.

5 'God makes happy those who quietly trust him and do not try to get their own way. The world will belong to them.

6 'God makes happy those who are hungry and thirsty for what is right and good. They will be filled.

7 'God makes happy those who are kind. He will be kind to them.

8 'God makes happy those who have clean hearts. They will see God.

9 'God makes happy those who make peace between people. They will be called God's sons.

10 'God makes happy those who have trouble for doing what is right. The kingdom of heaven is for them.

11 'God makes you happy when people say wrong things about you, when they trouble you, and when they say all kinds of lies about you. God makes you happy when it is for my sake.

12 Be happy and glad because God will be good to you in heaven. In the same way people troubled the prophets before your time.'

Salt and light

13 'You are like salt in the world. If salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? Salt that has no taste is good for nothing. The only thing to do is to throw it out on the road.

14 'You are like light in the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** So also with a lamp. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket. But they put it on the place for a lamp. Then all the people in the house can see its light. **16** So, let your light shine to all people. Then they will see the good things you do. And they will praise your Father in heaven.'

The old law

17 'Do not think that I have come to take away the law and the writings of the prophets. No, I have not come to take them away. But I have come to do what they say must be done. **18** I tell you the truth. Until the sky and the earth are taken away, not one small part of the law will be taken away, until everything has been done. **19** So anyone who does not obey one of the smallest laws, and teaches other people not to obey it, will have the smallest part in the kingdom of heaven. But anyone who obeys and teaches the law, will have a big part in the kingdom of heaven. **20** I tell you, you must do much better than the scribes and Pharisees. If you do not, then you will never go into the kingdom of heaven.'

Jesus teaches about being angry

21 'You have heard this said to men long ago, "Do not kill. Anyone who kills will be judged in court."

22 'But I tell you this. Anyone who is angry with his brother without having a good reason, will be judged in court. Anyone who says wrong things to his brother will be judged for it in the

big court. Anyone who says "You fool!" will be judged to go into hell fire. **23** Perhaps you are bringing your gift to God at his altar. There you remember that your brother has something against you. **24** If so, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First, go to your brother and make things right with him. Then come and give your gift to God.'

Do not go to court

25 'If someone wants to take you to court, make an agreement with him quickly on the way. If you do not, he will take you to the judge. The judge will give you to the guard, and the guard will put you in prison. **26** I tell you the truth, you will not get out of prison until you have paid every piece of money.'

Jesus teaches about adultery

27 'You have heard that the law says, "Do not commit adultery [have another man or woman who is not your husband or wife]." **28** But I tell you that if a man looks at a woman and he wants her, then he has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

29 'If your right eye makes you do wrong, take it out and throw it away. It is better to lose a part of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. **30** If your right hand makes you do wrong, cut it off and throw it away. It is better to lose a part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell fire.

31 'The law said, "Any man who does not want to keep his wife must give her a paper to tell others she is no longer his wife." **32** But I tell you, no man may send away his wife unless she has committed adultery. If he does send her away, he is making her commit adultery. And if a man marries a woman who has been sent away from her husband, he commits adultery.'

Teaching about making a promise

33 'Also you have heard this said to men long ago "You must not make a promise in God's name and break it." And "You must do for the Lord what you said you would do."

34 'But I tell you, do not make a promise in God's name. Do not use the name of heaven, because that is where God rules. **35** Do not use the name of earth, because that is where God rests his feet. Do not use the name of Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. **36** Do not make a promise by your head, because you cannot make one hair of your head white or black. **37** You must mean "Yes" when

you say "Yes". You must mean "No" when you say "No". To say anything more than that is wrong.'

Paying back wrong ways

38 'You have heard that the law says, "Take an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." **39** But I tell you, do not fight with anyone who does wrong to you. But if someone hits you on one side of your face, turn the other side to him also.

40 'If anyone takes you to court to get your shirt, let him have your coat also. **41** If anyone wants you to help carry a load, go with him twice as far. **42** When someone asks you for something, give it to him. When someone wants to borrow something from you, let him have it.'

Love for enemies

43 'You have heard that the law says, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemy." **44** But I tell you, love your enemies. Ask God to do good to those who trouble you. **45** In that way you will be sons of your Father in heaven. He makes his sun shine on both wrong and good people. He lets the rain fall on people who do right and on people who do wrong. **46** If you love only those who love you, what reward will you get? Even the tax collectors do that.

47 'Do you speak to your brothers only? If so, you are not doing any better than other people. Even people who do not believe in God do that.

48 You must be good in every way, as your Father in heaven is good in every way.'

CHAPTER 6

Jesus teaches about giving to poor people

Do not do good things so that people will see you do them. If you do, you will get no reward from your Father in heaven.

2 'So when you give money to poor people, do not send men in front of you to blow trumpets or horns. Some people do this in the meeting houses and on the streets so that people will praise them. They are not true to themselves. I tell you the truth. They have their pay already.

3 But when you give money to poor people, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. **4** In this way, what you give to the poor will be secret. Your Father sees secret things and he will reward you.'

Jesus teaches about talking to God

5 'When you talk to God, do not be like people who are not true to themselves. They like to

stand and talk to God in the meeting houses and at the street corners, so that people will see them. I tell you the truth. They have their reward already. **6** But when you talk to God, go into your room and shut the door. Then talk to your Father in secret. Your Father sees secret things and he will reward you.

7 'And when you talk to God, do not say words that mean nothing, over and over again. People who do not believe in God do that. They think their god will hear them because they say many words. **8** Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.'

The Lord's Prayer

9 'So talk to your God like this:

"Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. **10** May your kingdom come. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

11 "Give us our food for today.

12 "Forgive us for the wrong things we have done, the way we forgive those who have done wrong things to us.

13 "Do not test us but help us, so that no one will make us do wrong. Deliver us from the evil one. The kingdom and power and praise belong to you for ever. Amen!"

14 'If you forgive others for the wrong things they have done, then your Father in heaven will forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you for the wrong things you have done.'

Jesus teaches about fasting

16 'When you are fasting [not eating food for a time], do not look sad. That is what people do who are not true to themselves. They look sad to show people they are fasting. I tell you the truth. They have their reward already. **17** But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face as you do at other times. **18** Then people will not see that you are fasting. But your Father sees secret things, and he will reward you.'

Storing things to keep in heaven

19 'Do not keep many things for yourself on earth. Insects and rust will spoil them. People will get in and steal them. **20** But keep things for yourself in heaven. Insects and rust will not spoil them there. People will not get in and steal them. **21** The place where you keep things is where your heart will be also.'

The light of the body

22 'The body gets its light through the eyes. If you have good eyes, all your body will have light. **23** But if your eyes are bad, all your body will be in darkness. If the light in you is dark, it will be very dark for you.'

God and money

24 'No man can work for two masters. He will hate one and love the other. Or he will obey one and despise the other. You cannot work for both God and money.'

25 'So, I tell you this. Do not be troubled about what you will eat or drink to keep alive. Do not be troubled about what you will wear on your body. Life itself is worth more than food, and the body is worth more than clothes.'

26 'Look at the birds that fly in the air. They do not plant or cut or keep any food. Yet your Father in heaven feeds them. Are you not worth more than birds? **27** Can any one of you live any longer by troubling yourself about these things?'

28 And why are you troubled about clothes? See how the flowers grow in the fields. They do not work or make cloth. **29** I tell you, King Solomon was a great man. But he was not dressed as fine as one of these flowers. **30** God dresses the grass in the fields so it looks nice. It is in the field one day and the next day it is put on the fire. If God dresses the grass like that, he cares much more that you have clothes to wear. You do not believe in God very much!

31 'So then, do not keep asking, "What shall we eat?" "What shall we drink?" and "What shall we wear?" **32** It is the people who do not believe in God who work for all these things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need them all.'

33 'Work first for God's kingdom and what he calls good. Then you will have all these things also.'

34 'So do not be troubling yourself about tomorrow. Tomorrow will have its own trouble. Today's trouble is enough for today.'

CHAPTER 7

Judging others

Do not judge others, then you will not be judged. **2** The way you judge others, that is the way you will be judged. How much you give to others is how much will be given to you.

3 'Why do you look at the spot of dust in your brother's eye? But you do not see a big stick in your own eye! **4** Why do you say to your

brother, "Let me take the dust out of your eye"? And all the time you have that stick in your own eye! **5** You are not true to yourselves! First take the stick out of your own eye. Then you will be able to see to take the dust out of your brother's eye.'

6 'Do not give what is holy to dogs. Do not throw your fine stones to pigs. They will walk all over them, and then turn and hurt you.'

Ask, look, knock

7 'Ask, and you will get what you ask for. Look, and you will find what you look for. Knock, and the door will be opened for you. **8** Everyone who asks will get. The one who looks will find. And the one who knocks will have the door opened for him.'

9 'If your son asks for bread, will any of you give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will you give him a snake? **11** You are wrong, and yet you know how to give good things to your children. Much more, your Father in heaven will give good things to those who ask him.'

12 'Do to other people what you want them to do to you. That is what the law and the writings of the prophets say.'

The small gate

13 'Go in by the small gate. The gate is big and the road is wide that goes to death. Many people go that way. **14** The gate is small and the road is not wide that goes to life. Not many people find it.'

A tree and its fruit

15 'Take care. There are prophets who are not true. They come to you dressed like sheep, but inside they are like wolves, bad animals that kill sheep. **16** You will know them by the things they do. People do not pick fruit like grapes from thistles. They do not pick fruit like figs from thorn trees. **17** In the same way, every good tree has good fruit. But a bad tree has bad fruit. **18** A good tree cannot have bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot have good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not have good fruit is cut down and thrown into a fire. **20** So you will know them by the things they do, good or bad fruit.'

'I never knew you'

21 'Some people say to me, "Lord, Lord". But not all who say that will go into the kingdom of heaven. Only those who do what my Father in heaven wants, will go in. **22** Many people will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not speak in your name? Did we not drive bad

spirits out of people in your name? Did we not do big works in your name?" **23** Then I will say to them, "I never knew you. Go away from me! What you do is very wrong!"

The two foundations

24 'Everyone who hears what I say and obeys me will be like a man who has good sense. He built his house on a rock. **25** It rained hard. The water in the rivers came up high. The winds were strong and beat on the house. But it did not fall down. It was built on a rock. **26** But everyone who hears what I say and does not obey me, will be like a man who has no sense. He built his house on the sand. **27** It rained hard. The water in the rivers came up high. The winds were strong and beat on the house. It fell down with a loud noise!'

The teaching of Jesus

28 Jesus finished saying all these things. The people were surprised at his teaching. **29** He taught them as if he had the right to teach them. He did not teach like their scribes.

CHAPTER 8

Jesus heals a man with leprosy

When Jesus came down from the hill, many people followed him. **2** A man who had leprosy [a bad skin disease] came and knelt in front of Jesus and worshipped him. He said to Jesus, 'Sir, I know you can heal me if you want to.'

3 Jesus put out his hand and touched him. He said, 'I want to. Be healed.' Right away his leprosy was healed. **4** Jesus said to him, 'Do not tell anyone about this. But go and let the priest look at you. Moses gave a law about the sacrifice you must give when you are healed. Give it, to prove to people you are healed.'

Jesus heals an officer's servant

5 When Jesus came to the town of Capernaum, a Roman army officer came to ask him for help.

6 He said, 'Sir, one of my servants is in bed at my house. He cannot move and has much pain.'

7 Jesus said, 'I will come and heal him.'

8 The officer said, 'Sir, I am not good enough to have you come into my house. Just say the word and my servant will be healed. **9** I myself am a man who takes orders, and I have soldiers who take orders from me. I say to one, "Go," and he goes. I say to another one, "Come," and he comes. I say to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.'

10 Jesus was surprised when he heard this. He said to the people who followed him, 'I tell you the truth. I have not found any Jew who believes as this man does. **11** I tell you, many people will come from the east and from the west. They will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. **12** But those who were born in the kingdom will be put into the darkness outside. There they will cry and make noises with their teeth.' **13** Jesus said to the officer, 'Go home. What you have believed, will be done.' At that very same time the officer's servant was healed.

The mother of Peter's wife is healed

14 Jesus went into Peter's house. There he saw the mother of Peter's wife in bed, sick with fever. **15** Jesus took hold of her hand and the fever left her. She got up and began to do things for Jesus.

Jesus heals many at evening

16 That evening, many people who had bad spirits were brought to Jesus. He spoke to the bad spirits and drove them out. And he healed all the people who were sick. **17** What the prophet Isaiah said came true. He said, 'He took away the things that made us weak. He took away the things that made us sick.'

The cost of going with Jesus

18 Jesus saw many people around him. So he said, 'Let us cross over to the other side of the sea.'

19 A scribe came and said to him, 'Teacher, I will go anywhere you go.'

20 Jesus said, 'Foxes have holes to live in. Birds have nests. But the Son of Man has no place to lie down to rest.'

21 Another man who was a follower of Jesus, said to Jesus, 'Lord, let me go first and bury my father.'

22 But Jesus said to him, 'Come with me. Let those who are dead bury their own dead people.'

Jesus stops the storm

23 Jesus got in the boat and his disciples got in with him. **24** A bad storm came on the sea. The waves were high. Water came into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. **25** The disciples came to Jesus and woke him. 'Lord, save us!' they shouted. 'We will die!'

26 Jesus said to them, 'Why do you fear? You do not believe in God very much!' Then Jesus

got up. He said to the winds and the sea, 'Stop!' Then all was quiet. **27** The disciples were surprised. They said, 'What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him.'

The bad spirits and the pigs

28 Jesus came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarene people. There were graves in that place. Two men came from among the graves to meet him. They had bad spirits in them. They were so bad and strong that people feared to pass that way. **29** They shouted, 'Jesus, Son of God, what do you want to do to us? Have you come here to punish us before it is our time?'

30 Many pigs were eating in a place far from them. **31** The bad spirits begged Jesus, 'If you drive us out of these men, let us go into the pigs.'

32 Jesus said, 'Go!' The spirits came out of the men and went into the pigs. All the pigs ran fast down the steep hill into the sea. They died in the water. **33** The men who cared for the pigs ran to the town. They told everything and what had happened to the men who had the bad spirits. **34** All the people in the town came out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to go away out of their country.

CHAPTER 9

Jesus heals a man who cannot walk

Jesus got in the boat and crossed the sea. He came to his own town. **2** Some men brought a sick man to him. The man could not move his arms or legs. He was lying on a bed. Jesus saw that they believed he would be healed. So he said to the sick man, 'My son, be glad! The wrong things you have done are forgiven.'

3 Some of the scribes were thinking, 'This man is not giving respect to God.'

4 Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said, 'Why do you think these wrong things in your heart? **5** Which is easier, to say, "The wrong things you have done are forgiven," or to say, "Get up and walk"? **6** I want you to know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive wrong things people have done.'

So he said to the sick man, 'Get up. Make up your bed and go home.' **7** The man got up and went home.

8 Many people saw this and were much surprised. They praised God who had given such power to men.

Jesus calls Matthew

9 Jesus went on from there. He saw a man named Matthew. He was sitting at the place where people came to pay taxes. Jesus said to him, 'Come with me.' Matthew stood up and went with him.

10 Jesus was eating in a house. Many tax collectors and bad people came in. They sat down to eat with Jesus and his disciples. **11** The Pharisees saw this. They said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and bad people?'

12 Jesus heard it. He said to them, 'People who are well do not need a doctor. But sick people need him. **13** Go and learn what this means: "I want you to be kind. I do not want a sacrifice." I did not come to call good people. I came to call bad people to stop doing wrong things.'

Jesus talks about fasting

14 Then John's disciples came to Jesus. They said, 'We and the Pharisees fast. Why do your disciples not do the same?'

15 Jesus answered, 'The people at a wedding cannot be sad while the man who is married is with them. But the time will come when he will be taken away from them. Then they will not eat. **16** No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old coat. If he does, the new cloth will tear the old coat. Then the hole is bigger than it was before.

17 'People do not put new wine into old wine skins. If they do, the old skins break. The wine is lost and the skins are spoiled. New wine is put into new skins. And so they are both saved.'

A ruler begs Jesus

18 While Jesus was telling them these things, a ruler came to him. He bowed down in front of Jesus to worship him and said, 'My daughter has just died. But if you will come and put your hand on her, she will live.' **19** Jesus got up and went with the ruler. His disciples went too.

A woman is healed

20 A woman had a sickness for twelve years. She was bleeding all the time. She came behind Jesus and touched his clothes. **21** She said to herself, 'If only I touch his clothes, I will be well.'

22 Jesus turned around. He saw her and said, 'Daughter, be glad. You were healed because you believed.' And right away the woman was healed.

The ruler's daughter is raised from death

23 When Jesus came to the ruler's house, he saw the music players and people making a noise. **24** He said to them, 'Go away. The girl is not dead, but sleeping.' They laughed at him.

25 The people were told to go outside. When they were out, he went in and took the girl's hand. The girl got up.

26 People in all that part of the country heard about it.

Jesus heals two blind men

27 When Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him. They called out, 'Son of David, help us!'

28 When Jesus came into the house, the blind men came to him. Jesus asked them, 'Do you believe that I can do this?'

They said, 'Yes, sir.'

29 Then Jesus touched their eyes. He said, 'As you believed, so will it happen to you.' **30** Then they were able to see.

Jesus said to them, 'Take care, do not tell anyone about this.'

31 But they went away and told everybody in that part of the country about him.

Jesus heals a man who cannot talk

32 As they were leaving, people brought a man to Jesus. This man could not talk. He had a bad spirit in him. **33** Jesus drove the bad spirit out of the man. Then he could talk. The people were very much surprised. They said, 'Nothing like this has ever been seen in the country of Israel.'

34 But the Pharisees said, 'He drives bad spirits out of people by the power of the chief of bad spirits.'

Jesus is sorry for the people

35 Jesus went around to all the cities and towns. He taught people in their meeting houses and told them the good news of the kingdom of heaven. He healed all the sick and weak people.

36 He saw the many people and was sorry for them. They were troubled and they could not help themselves. They were like sheep with no one to care for them.

37 Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'The harvest is much. But there are not many people to gather it. **38** Talk to the Lord of this harvest, and ask him to send out people to his harvest.'

CHAPTER 10**Jesus chooses twelve apostles**

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him. He gave them power over bad spirits so they could drive them out of people. He gave them power to heal people who were sick or weak in any way.

2-4 The names of the twelve apostles are: Simon, whose other name was Peter, and his brother Andrew, James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose other name was Thaddaeus, Simon, the freedom fighter, and Judas Iscariot, the one who gave Jesus over to people who hated him.

Jesus sends out twelve apostles

5 Jesus sent out these twelve. He said to them, 'Do not go to the people who are not Jews. Do not go to any town of the Samaritan people.

6 But go to the people of Israel. They are like lost sheep. **7** As you go, tell people that the kingdom of heaven is here. **8** Heal sick people. Bring dead people to life. Heal people who have leprosy. Drive bad spirits out of people. You got it free, so give it free to others. **9** Do not take gold, silver, or brass money with you. **10** Do not take a bag with you, and do not take two shirts, shoes, or a walking stick. The one who does the work should be given his food. **11** When you come to any city or town, ask who there is able to have you. Then live there until you leave the town. **12** When you go into the house, greet the family with a blessing. **13** If the family is all right, let your blessing stay on it. If it is not all right, take your blessing away. **14** In some places people will not take you in, or listen to what you say. So when you leave that house or town, shake the dust off your feet. **15** I tell you the truth. On the day when people are judged, the people from that city will be punished harder than the people from the country of Sodom and Gomorrah.'

Troubles will come

16 'I am sending you out amongst people. You will be like sheep amongst bad animals like wolves. So be wise like snakes, and harmless like doves. **17** But take care. Men will take you to their courts. They will beat you in their meeting houses. **18** They will bring you to rulers and kings for my sake. Then you will talk about me to them and to those who are not Jews. **19** When men take you to court, do not be troubled about what you will say. What you are

to say will come to your mind at the right time.

20 It is not you who speak. But it is the Spirit of your Father who is speaking through you. **21** A brother will take his brother to be killed. A father will take his child. The children will talk against their father and mother, and have them killed. **22** Everyone will hate you because you are true to me. But the person who keeps on being true to me until the end, will be saved. **23** When they trouble you in one town, go to another. I tell you the truth. You will not go to all the towns in Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24 'The one who learns is not better than his teacher. And the servant is not better than his master. **25** The one who learns should want to be like his teacher. And the servant should want to be like his master. If they say the master belongs to the devil, they will say it all the more about those who work for him.'

Whom to fear

26 'So do not be afraid of people. Everything that is hidden will be seen. Everything that is hidden will be known. **27** What I say to you in the dark, tell it in the light. What you hear in secret, shout to others from the tops of the houses. **28** Do not fear people who can kill the body. They cannot kill the spirit. But fear the one who can destroy both spirit and body in hell. **29** Are not two sparrows worth only a small amount of money? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father knowing about it. **30** Even the number of hairs on your head is known.

31 'So do not fear. You are worth more than many sparrows.'

Telling people you know Christ

32 'If anyone tells people that he knows me, I will also tell the Father in heaven that I know him. **33** But anyone who tells people he does not know me, I will also tell my Father in heaven that I do not know him.'

Not peace but fighting

34 'Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but war. **35** I came to take away peace between a man and his father. I came to take away peace between a daughter and her mother. I came to take away peace between a man's wife and his mother. **36** A man will have people in his own family who make trouble for him. **37** Anyone who loves his father or his mother more than he loves me, is not good enough for me. Anyone

who loves his son or his daughter more than he loves me, is not good enough for me.

38 Anyone who is not willing to carry his cross and suffer with me, is not good enough for me.

39 Anyone who tries to keep his life, will lose it. Anyone who gives up his life for my sake, will find it.'

A man's pay

40 'Anyone who takes you in, takes me in. And anyone who takes me in, takes in the one who sent me. **41** Anyone who takes in a prophet because he is a prophet of God will get a prophet's reward. **42** And if any one as a disciple gives a drink of cold water to one of my children, he will not lose his reward. I tell you the truth.'

CHAPTER 11

Messengers from John the Baptizer

When Jesus finished telling his twelve disciples what to do, he left that place. He went to teach and tell God's word to people in the towns around there.

2 John was in prison. He heard what Christ was doing. So he sent two of his disciples to him.

3 He asked, 'Are you the one who will come? Or shall we wait for another person?'

4 Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see. **5** Blind people see. Lame people walk. People with leprosy are healed. People who could not hear, can hear. Dead people are made alive. Poor people hear the good news. **6** Anyone who is not troubled in his heart about me, will be happy.'

7 When John's disciples went away, Jesus began to talk to people about John. He said, 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? Did you go out to see a tall grass moved by the wind? **8** What did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? People who wear fine clothes live in kings' houses. **9** Why did you go out? To see a prophet of God? Yes, I tell you, and he is much more than a prophet. **10** He is the man the holy writings tell about. "See, I send my messenger ahead of you. He will make the way ready for you."

11 'I tell you the truth. No one has ever been born who is greater than John the Baptizer. And yet the smallest one in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. **12** From the time of John until now, people try hard to break into the kingdom of heaven. And strong people take hold of it. **13** All the prophets and the books of the law

gave God's word until John came. **14** If you will believe it, this man is the Elijah who would come. **15** Everyone who has ears, listen.

16 'What shall I say that the people of today are like? They are like children who sit in the market. They call to the other children. **17** They say, "We played music for you, but you did not dance. We cried, but you did not cry." **18** John came. He does not eat or drink much. People say, "He has a bad spirit in him!" **19** The Son of Man came. He eats and drinks. People say, "This man eats and drinks too much! He is a friend with tax collectors and bad people!" But a man is proved to be wise by what he has done.'

Bad cities will have trouble

20 Then Jesus began to talk about the towns where he had done most of his big works. He said hard things about the people, because they did not stop their wrong ways and turn back to God.

21 He said, 'Chorazin! You will have trouble! Bethsaida! You will have trouble! If the big works I did in you had been done in the cities of Tyre and Sidon, the people there would have stopped their wrong ways long ago. They would wear the clothes people wear to show they are sad. They would sit in ashes. **22** But I tell you, on the day when people are judged, you will be punished harder than the people from the cities of Tyre and Sidon. **23** Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the sky? No, you will go down to death. If the big things I did in you had been done in the city of Sodom, it would be standing now. **24** But I tell you, on the day when people are judged you will be punished harder than the people from Sodom.'

Come to me and rest

25 Then Jesus said, 'Father, you are Lord of heaven and earth. I thank you because you have hidden these things from people who are wise and know many things. But you have shown them to people who are like children.

26 Yes, Father, that was the way you wanted it.'

27 He said, 'My Father has given everything to me. No one knows who the Son is but the Father. No one knows who the Father is but the Son and those to whom the Son wants to show him. **28** All you who work hard! All you who carry heavy loads! Come to me! I will give you rest. **29** Do what I tell you. Learn what I teach you. I am gentle. I am not proud. Then your hearts will rest. **30** What I tell you to do is easy. What I give you to carry is not heavy.'

CHAPTER 12

Picking grain on the Sabbath day

About that time, Jesus was walking through the grain fields on a Sabbath day. His disciples were hungry. They began to pick some of the grain and to eat it. **2** The Pharisees saw them. They said to Jesus, 'Look! Your disciples are doing what is not right on the Sabbath day.'

3 But Jesus said to them, 'Have you not read what David did? He and his men who were with him were hungry. **4** He went into God's house. Some bread was there for God. David's men ate it. David did not have the right to eat it, nor the men who were with him. Only the priests have the right to eat it. But David took the bread and ate it. He also gave some of it to the men who were with him.

5 'Have you never read in the books of the law that the priests in the temple break the Sabbath law on the Sabbath day? They are not punished for it. **6** I tell you, there is someone here who is greater than the temple.

7 'You do not know what this means, "I want you to be kind; I do not want a sacrifice." If you knew, then you would not have said what they did was wrong. What they did was not wrong.

8 The Son of Man rules over the Sabbath day.'

The man with a weak hand

9 Jesus left that place and went into the meeting house. **10** There was a man whose hand was thin and weak. The people asked Jesus, 'Is it right to heal a man on the Sabbath day?' They wanted to find something wrong about Jesus.

11 Jesus said to them, 'If one of you had a sheep and it fell into a hole on the Sabbath day, would you not take hold of it and pull it out?

12 A man is worth much more than a sheep. So it is right to do good things on the Sabbath day.'

13 Then he said to the man, 'Hold out your hand.' The man held out his hand and it was made well like the other hand.

14 Then the Pharisees went out and planned together how to kill Jesus.

15 Jesus knew about their plan, so he went away from there. Many people followed him and he healed them all. **16** He told them not to tell where he was.

The chosen servant

17 So what Isaiah the prophet of God said, came true. **18** He said, 'This is my servant. I

have chosen him. I love him. I am very pleased with him. I will put my Spirit on him. He will judge the people who are not Jews. **19** He will not fight or shout. No one will hear his voice in the streets. **20** He will not break a stick that is already bent. He will not put out a light that burns only a little. What is right will win, because he will make it win. **21** Those who are not Jews will believe in him.'

Jesus uses the power of the Spirit of God

22 Then the people brought a man to Jesus. The man had a bad spirit in him. He was blind and could not talk. Jesus healed him. Then the man could talk and see. **23** All the people were surprised. They said, 'Is he David's son?'

24 The Pharisees heard about it. They said, 'This man drives out bad spirits by the help of Beelzebub, the chief of bad spirits.'

25 Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said to them, 'If one part of any country fights against the other part of the country, that country is broken down. If one part of any city or family fights against the other part of it, it cannot stand. **26** If Satan drives out Satan, he fights against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? **27** If I drive out bad spirits by Beelzebub, how do your own people drive them out? Let them judge you. **28** But if I drive out bad spirits by God's Spirit, then God's kingdom is here with you now.

29 'If anyone wants to go into a strong man's house and steal his things, he must first tie the strong man. Then he can steal his things.

30 Anyone who is not with me, is against me. Anyone who does not work with me is working against me.'

The one thing that cannot be forgiven

31 'That is why I tell you this. All wrong things that people do or say, will be forgiven. But people who say wrong things against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. **32** Anyone who says anything against the Son of Man will be forgiven. But anyone who says anything against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. He will not be forgiven in this world or in the next world.'

A tree and its fruits

33 'Either make a tree good and its fruit good, or make a tree bad and its fruit bad. People know what kind of tree it is by the fruit on it.

34 You family of snakes! How can you say good things? You are wrong! The mouth will say what is in the heart. **35** A good man has stored up

good things in his heart, so he will say good things. A bad man has stored up wrong things in his heart, so he will say wrong things.

36 'I tell you this. On the day when people are judged, they will pay for every empty word they have said. **37** Because of your words, you will be called good. Or because of your words, you will be punished.'

The people want a sign

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to show us a sign.'

39 But Jesus answered them, 'The people today are bad. They have gone away from God. They want a sign. No sign will be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonah. **40** Jonah was inside the big sea animal for three days and three nights. So the Son of Man will be in the ground for three days and three nights. **41** When people are judged, the men of the city of Nineveh will stand up and speak against the people of today. The people of Nineveh stopped their wrong ways when Jonah told them God's word. And the one who is here is greater than Jonah. **42** When people are judged, the Queen of the South will stand up and speak against the people of today. She came a long way to hear the wise talk of Solomon. And the one who is here is greater than Solomon.'

The bad spirit comes back

43 'When a bad spirit has gone out of a man, he goes through dry places. He looks for a place to rest, but he does not find any. **44** Then he says, "I will go back to my house from where I came." When he comes back, he finds it is empty, clean, and all fixed up. **45** Then he goes and brings seven other spirits with him. They are worse than he is. They go in and live there. Now the man is worse than he was at first. That is how it will be for the wrong people of today.'

Jesus' mother and brothers

46 While Jesus was still talking to the people, his mother and brothers stood outside. They wanted to talk to him. **47** Someone told him, 'Your mother and your brothers are standing outside. They want to talk to you.'

48 But to the man who told him, he said, 'Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?' **49** He pointed to his disciples and said, 'These people are my mother and my brothers! **50** Anyone who obeys my Father in heaven is my brother, my sister, and my mother.'

CHAPTER 13**The story of sowing the seed**

That day Jesus left the house and sat down by the sea side. **2** Many people came to where he was. So he got into a boat and sat down. All the people stood on the land by the water.

3 He taught the people many things by telling them stories.

He said, 'Listen, a man went out to sow some seed. **4** As he sowed it, some of the seed fell on the road. Birds came and ate the seed. **5** Some seed fell on the stony ground. Not much earth covered the stones. The seed started to grow right away because it was not deep in the ground. **6** When the sun began to shine, it was too hot for the new plants. They died because they had no roots. **7** Some seed fell among the weeds. The weeds grew up and made the new plants die. **8** But some seed fell on good ground. The seed grew and the plants gave more seed. Some plants gave thirty seeds. Some gave sixty. And some gave a hundred.

9 'Everyone who has ears, listen!'

Why Jesus told the stories

10 The disciples came to Jesus and asked him, 'Why do you tell the people these stories?'

11 Jesus answered them, 'You can learn the secret things about the kingdom of heaven. But they cannot learn them. **12** Anyone who already has something will get more, and he will have plenty. But he who does not have anything, even the little that he has will be taken away from him.

13 'That is why I tell them stories. They look, but they do not see. They listen, but they do not hear or understand. **14** They make what Isaiah the prophet said long ago, come true.

'Isaiah said: "You will listen and listen, but you will not understand. You will look and look, but you will not see.

15 "The hearts of these people have no feeling. They do not hear well with their ears. And they have shut their eyes. They do not want to see with their eyes. They do not want to hear with their ears. They do not want to understand in their hearts. They do not want to turn to me. If they did turn, I would heal them."

16 'God is blessing your eyes because they see. God is blessing your ears because they hear.

17 I tell you the truth. Many prophets and good men wanted to see what you see, but they did

not see them. They wanted to hear what you hear, but they did not hear them.

18 'So listen to hear what the story means, about the man who sowed the seed.'

What the story means

19 'People listen to the message about the kingdom of heaven. If anyone does not understand it, the devil comes along and takes the message out of his heart. That person is like the seed which fell on the road. **20** Some seed fell on the stony ground. That is like a person who hears the message and right away he is glad to hear it. **21** But it does not go down deep in his heart. He believes it for a short time. When trouble or a hard time comes because of the message, he stops believing. **22** Some seed fell among the weeds. That is like the person who hears the message. But he thinks about the things of this world. He wants to get money to be happy. These things push the message out of his heart. No good comes from it. **23** Some seed fell on good ground. That is like a person who hears the message and understands it. Much good comes from it. Some people are like the seed that gave a hundred more seeds. Some people are like the seed that gave sixty. Some people are like the seed that gave thirty.'

The story of weeds in good seed

24 Jesus told the people another story. He said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. A man sowed good seed in his field. **25** While people were sleeping, a bad man came and sowed weeds among the good seed. Then he went away. **26** The good seed grew and the plants gave more seeds. Then the weeds grew too.

27 The servants came and said to the man who owned the field, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How did the weeds get here?"

28 'He answered them, "A bad man has done this." They asked him, "Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?"

29 "No," said the man. "If you pull up the weeds, then the good plants will come up with them. **30** Let them both grow together until the harvest time. When it is time to cut it, I will say to the men who cut it, 'Cut the weeds first. Tie them in bundles to be burned. Then put the grain into my storehouse.'"

The story of the mustard seed

31 Jesus told the people another story.

He said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. A man took a mustard seed and planted it in his

field. **32** A mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds. But the plant that grows from it is bigger than other plants. It is like a tree. It is so big that birds come and live in the branches.'

The story of the yeast

33 Jesus told them another story. He said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. A woman took yeast and mixed it with many cups of flour. The yeast went all through the flour.'

34 Jesus told the people all these things in stories. He did not tell them anything without a story. **35** What the prophet of God said long ago, came true. He said, 'I will use stories. I will tell things that have been secret since the world was made.'

The meaning of the story of weeds

36 Then Jesus left the people and went into the house.

His disciples came to him. They said, 'Tell us the meaning of the story about the weeds in the field.'

37 Jesus answered, 'The person who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. **38** The field is the world. The good seed means the people who belong to the kingdom. The weeds mean those who belong to the bad one. **39** The bad man who planted the weeds is the devil. The harvest time is the end of this world. The men who cut the harvest are angels. **40** The weeds are gathered and burned in a fire. That is the way it will be at the end of the world. **41** The Son of Man will send his angels. They will gather everything that is bad and the people who do bad things. They will take them out of his kingdom. **42** They will put them into the big fire. There they will cry and make a noise with their teeth. **43** Then the people who are right with God will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Everyone who has ears, listen.'

The story of something buried in a field

44 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. Something worth a lot of money is buried in a field. A man found it and covered it again. He was so glad that he went and sold everything he had. Then he bought that field.'

The story of the fine stone

45 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. A trader was looking for fine stones called pearls. **46** He found a pearl that was worth a lot of money. Then he went and sold everything he had and bought it.'

The story of the net

47 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. A fish net was thrown into the sea. It caught all kinds of fish. **48** When it was full, the men pulled it to the land. They sat down and picked out the good fish into baskets. But they threw the bad fish away. **49** That is the way it will be at the end of the world. The angels will come and take the bad people away from the good people. **50** They will put the bad people into the never-ending hell fire. There they will cry and make a noise with their teeth.'

The things new and old

51 Jesus asked, 'Have you understood all these stories?' The disciples said, 'Yes.'

52 Then Jesus said to them, 'So anyone who knows the law and has learned about the kingdom of heaven, is like the headman of a house. He can bring both new things and old things out of what he has stored up.'

Jesus is not honoured at Nazareth

53 When Jesus had finished telling these stories, he went away from there. **54** He went back to his home town and he taught people in their meeting house. They were very much surprised and said, 'Where did he learn all this? Where did he get the power to do these big works? **55** Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not Mary his mother? Are not James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas his brothers? **56** Are not his sisters all here with us? Where did he get all this?' **57** They did not understand Jesus.

Jesus said to them, 'Other people honour a man who is a prophet. But the people in his own country and home do not honour him.' **58** Jesus could not do many big works in that place because the people did not believe in him.

CHAPTER 14

The death of John the Baptizer

At this time Herod the ruler heard of Jesus. **2** He said to his servants, 'This is John the Baptizer. He is risen from death. That is why he is able to do such great work.'

3 Herod had taken John and tied him up. He put him in prison. He did this because of Herodias. She was the wife of his brother Philip. **4** John had said to Herod, 'It is not right for you to have her for your wife.' **5** Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people. They thought John was a prophet, a man of God.

6 On Herod's birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced for the people who were there. She pleased Herod. **7** He was so pleased that he promised to give her anything she asked for.

8 The girl's mother told her what to ask for. So she said, 'Give me here, on a plate, the head of John the Baptizer.' **9** The king was very sorry to do this. But he had made a promise. And all the people who were there had heard him promise. So he gave orders to do it. **10** He sent someone to the prison to cut off John's head. **11** John's head was brought on a plate. It was given to the girl. And she took it to her mother.

12 Then John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. They went and told Jesus.

Jesus feeds five thousand people

13 When Jesus heard this, he went away from there in a boat. He went to a lonely place by himself. The people heard that he went away and they followed him. They walked from the towns around there.

14 When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw many people. He was sorry for them and he healed those who were sick.

15 In the evening the disciples came to him. They said, 'This is a lonely place. And the time is late. Send these people away so they can go to the farms and villages to buy food for themselves.'

16 Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away. You give them food to eat.'

17 They said, 'We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish.'

18 Jesus said, 'Bring them here to me.'

19 Then Jesus told the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and thanked God for them. Then he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples. The disciples gave it to the people. **20** They all ate and had enough. They gathered twelve baskets full of pieces that were left.

21 The number of men who ate was about five thousand, besides some women and children.

Jesus walks on the sea

22 Then Jesus told the disciples, 'You get into the boat right away and go ahead of me to the other side of the sea. And I will send these people away.'

23 After he had sent them away, he went up on the hill by himself to talk with God. Evening came and he was there alone.

24 The boat was far out on the water by this time. The water was beating against the boat and the wind was blowing the wrong way.

25 When it was almost morning, Jesus came to them. He was walking on the water.

26 His disciples saw him walking on the water. They were afraid, and said, 'It is a spirit!' Then they shouted loudly because they were afraid.

27 Then Jesus spoke to them right away. He said, 'Be glad! It is I. Do not fear.'

28 Peter said, 'Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you on the water.'

29 Jesus said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat. He walked on the water and went toward Jesus. **30** He saw what the wind did. Then he was afraid and began to go down in the water. He called out, 'Lord, save me!'

31 Right away Jesus put out his hand and took hold of him. He said, 'You do not believe very much in me! Why did you not believe?' **32** When they got into the boat, the wind stopped blowing.

33 Then the men in the boat bowed down in front of Jesus. They said, 'You really are the Son of God.'

Jesus heals the sick at Gennesaret

34 They crossed over the sea and came to the land at Gennesaret. **35** The men there knew him and sent word to the people in all the country around. They brought all the sick people to him.

36 They begged Jesus to let them touch his clothes. And all the people who touched him were healed.

CHAPTER 15

Laws made by men

Then some Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem came to Jesus. **2** They asked him, 'Why do your disciples break the law our fathers made? They do not wash their hands before they eat.'

3 Jesus asked them, 'Why do you break God's law so that you can keep your own law? **4** God said, "Respect your father and your mother." And God said, "Anyone who says wrong things to his father or his mother will surely die."

5 'But you say, "Tell your father or your mother that you have given to God what you were going to give to them." You say, "If anyone says

that, then he does not need to help his father or mother." **6** You make God's law to mean nothing so you can keep your own laws! **7** You are not true to yourselves! What Isaiah said about you was true. He said, **8** "These people respect me with their mouth but their heart is far from me. **9** They do not mean it in their hearts when they worship me. Their teachings are only the words of men".'

Things that make a person dirty

10 Jesus called the people to him. He said to them, 'Listen to me and understand what I say.'

11 What goes into a person's mouth does not make him dirty. But what comes out of a person's mouth makes him dirty.'

12 Then the disciples came to Jesus. They said, 'The Pharisees were angry when they heard what you said. Did you know that?'

13 Jesus answered, 'Every plant that my Father in heaven did not plant will be pulled out by the roots. **14** Leave them alone. They are blind men who are trying to lead blind men. If a blind man leads a blind man, they will both fall into a hole.'

15 Peter said to Jesus, 'Tell us the meaning of that story.'

16 Jesus said, 'Do you still not understand?'

17 Do you not know this? What goes into the mouth goes into the stomach, and then it goes out of the body. **18** But what comes out of the mouth, comes from the heart. This is what makes a person dirty. **19** Here is what comes from the heart: wrong thoughts, killing people, all kinds of adultery, stealing, lying, and saying wrong things about people. **20** These things make a person dirty. To eat with hands that are not washed does not make him dirty.'

A woman begs Jesus to help her daughter

21 Jesus left that place and went to the country of Tyre and Sidon. **22** A woman of the people of Canaan was in that country. She called out, 'Sir, you are the Son of David. Help me! My daughter is being troubled very much by a bad spirit.'

23 Jesus did not answer her.

His disciples came to him and said, 'Send her away. She keeps calling after us.'

24 He said, 'I was sent only to the people of Israel. They are like lost sheep.'

25 But the woman came and bowed down in front of Jesus and worshipped him. She said, 'Sir, help me.'

26 He said, 'It is not right to take the children's food and give it to the little dogs.'

27 She answered, 'Yes, sir. But even the little dogs eat the food that falls from the tables of their masters.'

28 Then Jesus answered, 'Woman, you believe very much. The thing you want me to do will be done.' And her daughter was healed at that very time.

Jesus heals many people

29 Jesus went on from there along the Sea of Galilee. He went up on a hill and sat down there. **30** Many people came to him. They brought sick people with them. Some were lame. Some were hurt. Some were blind. Some could not talk. And there were many others. They laid them down in front of Jesus. And he healed them. **31** The people were surprised. They saw that people who had not been able to talk were talking. They saw that people who were hurt were made well. They saw that lame people were walking. They saw that blind people could see. And they praised the God of Israel.

Jesus feeds four thousand people

32 Jesus called his disciples to him. He said, 'I share the suffering of the people. They have been with me for three days and they have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry. If they go away hungry, they will get weak and fall on the way.'

33 The disciples said to him, 'Where can we get enough food in this lonely place to feed so many people?'

34 Jesus said to them, 'How many loaves of bread have you?'

They said, 'We have seven, and a few small fish.'

35 He told the people to sit down on the ground. **36** Then he took the seven loaves of bread and the fish. He thanked God for them. Then he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples. The disciples gave it to the people.

37 They all ate and had enough. They gathered seven baskets full of pieces that were left.

38 The number of people who ate was about four thousand men, besides some women and children. **39** Jesus sent the people away.

Then he got in the boat and went to the country around Magadan.

CHAPTER 16**Wanting a sign**

The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus. They wanted to test him, so they asked him to show them a sign from the sky. **2** He answered them, 'In the evening you say, "It will be a nice day tomorrow because the sky is red." **3** In the morning you say, "It will be a stormy day, because the sky is red and there are clouds." You know the meaning of these signs in the sky. But you do not know the meaning of the signs about the time in which we are living. **4** People today are wrong. They have gone away from God. They want a sign. No sign will be given them but the sign of Jonah.' Then Jesus went away and left them.

The yeast of Pharisees and Sadducees

5 When the disciples reached the other side of the sea, they found they had forgotten to bring any bread with them. **6** Jesus said, 'Watch! Do not let the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees spoil you.'

7 The disciples said to each other, 'He said that because we did not bring any bread.'

8 Jesus knew what they were saying. He said to them, 'You don't believe very much in me. Why are you saying to each other, "We have no bread". **9** Do you not yet understand? When there were five thousand people, there were only five loaves of bread. Do you not remember how many baskets full of pieces you gathered up? **10** When there were four thousand people, there were only seven loaves. Do you not remember how many baskets full of pieces you gathered up? **11** Why do you not understand that I was not talking about bread? Take care. Do not let the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees spoil you.'

12 Then they understood that he was not talking about bread. He did not mean that the yeast of bread would spoil them. They understood that he was talking about the things the Pharisees and Sadducees taught.

What Peter said about Jesus

13 Jesus went to the country of Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples, 'I am the Son of Man. Whom do people say I am?'

14 They answered, 'Some people say you are John the Baptizer. Others say you are Elijah. And others say you are Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'

15 Jesus said to them, 'Whom do you say I am?'

16 Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

17 Jesus answered, 'Simon, Jonah's son, God has blessed you. No person on earth has showed you this. But my Father in heaven has showed you. **18** I tell you this. You are Peter. On this rock I will build my church. The power of death will not destroy it. **19** I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What you tie on earth will be tied in heaven. What you set free on earth will be set free in heaven.'

20 Then Jesus said to the disciples, 'Do not tell anyone that I am the Christ.'

Jesus tells about his death

21 From that time on, Jesus began to teach his disciples. He said, 'I must go to Jerusalem. I will have much trouble from the leaders, the chief priests, and the scribes. I will be killed. On the third day, I will be raised from death.'

22 Peter took him to one side and began to talk to him. He said, 'Lord! May God stop it! This must never happen to you.'

23 But Jesus turned to Peter and said, 'Get away from me Satan! You are trying to make me do wrong. You are not thinking the way God thinks, but the way people think.'

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone wants to come with me, he must leave what he himself wants to do. He must be willing to carry his cross and come with me. **25** Anyone who wants to keep his life will lose it. And anyone who gives up his life for my sake will find it.'

26 What good will it do a man if he gets the whole world for himself, but loses his life? What can a person give to get back his life? **27** The Son of Man will come with his angels and will be great like his Father. Then he will pay every man for what he has done. **28** I tell you the truth. Some people are standing here who will not die before they see the Son of Man come in his kingdom.'

CHAPTER 17**Jesus is changed**

Six days after this, Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother John with him. He led them up a hill by themselves. **2** Jesus was changed in front of them. His face was bright like the sun. His clothes were white, like light. **3** Then they saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, this is a good place for us. If you want, we will make three places

here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'

5 While he was saying this, a bright cloud came over them. A voice in the cloud said, 'This is my dear Son. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him.'

6 When the disciples heard it, they bowed their faces to the ground. They were very much afraid. **7** But Jesus came and touched them. He said, 'Get up. Do not fear.' **8** When they looked up, they saw no one but Jesus.

9 When they came down the hill, Jesus said to them, 'Do not tell anyone what you saw. Do not tell it until after the Son of Man has been raised from death.'

10 The disciples asked him, 'Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?'

11 Jesus answered, 'Elijah does come. He will get everything ready. **12** I tell you that Elijah has come already. The people did not know him. And they did to him just what they wanted to do. So also the Son of Man will be troubled by them.' **13** Then the disciples knew that he was talking about John the Baptizer.

Jesus heals a boy with a bad spirit

14 They came to the people. A man came and kneeled in front of Jesus. **15** He said, 'Sir, help my son. A bad spirit is in him and he has much trouble. Often he falls into the fire, and often he falls into the water. **16** I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.'

17 Jesus said, 'You people today do not believe. You have turned away from God. How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.' **18** Jesus talked to the bad spirit and he came out of the boy. The boy was healed.

Praying to God and fasting

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus alone. They asked him, 'Why could we not drive the bad spirit out?'

20 Jesus said to them, 'Because you do not believe enough. I tell you the truth. If your strength to believe were as much as a little mustard seed, you could say to this hill, "Go, move over to that place!" And it would move. Nothing is too hard for you to do. **21** But this kind of bad spirit does not come out of a person unless people ask God and fast [do not eat food for a time].'

Jesus tells again about his death

22 They were travelling in Galilee. Jesus said to his disciples, 'The Son of Man will be given over to men. **23** They will kill him. But he will be raised on the third day.' This troubled the disciples very much.

Paying the temple tax

24 They came to Capernaum. There the men who were collecting the tax for the temple came to Peter. They asked him, 'Does not your teacher pay the tax for the temple?'

25 Peter said, 'Yes, he does.'

When he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him about it first. He said, 'Simon, what do you think? From whom do kings on earth take taxes? Do they take them from their own people or from other people?'

26 Peter said, 'From other people.'

Jesus said, 'Then the sons do not pay a tax.'

27 But we must not make them think something wrong about us. So go to the sea. Throw a fish-hook into the water. Take the first fish you catch. Open its mouth and you will see a piece of money. Take it and pay them the tax for you and me.'

CHAPTER 18

Who is the greatest?

The disciples came to Jesus at that time. They said, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'

2 Jesus called a child to him. He had the child stand in front of them. **3** He said, 'I tell you the truth. If your hearts do not change and become like hearts of children, you will never go into the kingdom of heaven. **4** So anyone who feels himself small like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. **5** If anyone takes in a child like this for my sake, he takes in me.'

How to stop doing wrong

6 'These little children believe in me. If anyone makes one of them do wrong, he will be punished. He will have worse trouble than if a big stone were tied to his neck and he were thrown into the deep sea.

7 'There will be trouble in the world because people make other people do wrong! People will do wrong. But the person who makes another person do wrong will have trouble. **8** If your hand or your foot makes you do wrong, cut it off and throw it away! It is better for you to

enter into life without hands or feet than to have two hands and two feet and be thrown into the fire that burns for ever. **9** If your eye makes you do wrong, pull it out and throw it away! It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into the hell fire.'

The story of the lost sheep

10 'Do not think badly of these little children. I tell you this. They have angels in heaven. And all the time their angels can see the face of my father who is in heaven.

11 'The Son of Man came to save anyone who is lost. **12** What do you think about this? A man has a hundred sheep. One of them is lost. Will he not leave the ninety-nine sheep on the hills and go to look for the one that is lost? Yes, he will. **13** I tell you the truth. When he finds it, he is more happy to see that one than the ninety-nine that were not lost. **14** In the same way, my Father in heaven does not want one of these little children to be lost.'

The brother who does wrong

15 'If your brother does something wrong to you, go to him. Talk alone to him and tell him what he has done. If he listens to you, you have kept your brother as a friend. **16** But if he does not listen to you, take one or two others with you to talk to him. Then two or three people will hear every word and can prove what was said. **17** If he does not listen to them, tell the church. If he does not listen to the church, treat him as one who does not believe in God and as bad as a tax collector.'

To tie and to loosen

18 'I tell you the truth. What you tie on earth will be tied in heaven. What you set free on earth will be set free in heaven. **19** I tell you another thing. If two of you on earth agree together to ask for something, my Father in heaven will do it for them. **20** Where two or three people meet together in my name, I am there with them.'

The servant who did not forgive

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked him, 'Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother when he does wrong things to me? Should I forgive him seven times?'

22 Jesus answered him, 'I say not seven times only, but seventy times seven.

23 'In that way the kingdom of heaven is like this. A king was ready to finish his business with

his servants. **24** The first servant was brought in. He owed the king a very large sum of money. **25** He could not pay it. So his master said, "Go sell him, his wife, his children, and everything he has, and pay me!" **26** So the servant bowed down in front of him. He begged, "Sir, give me time. I will pay everything." **27** His master was sorry for him and let him go. He did not make him pay the money.

28 'That same servant went out and met another servant. This man owed him a much smaller sum of money. He caught him by the throat and said, "Pay me what you owe me!"

29 Then this servant bowed down in front of him. He begged, "Give me time. I will pay you."

30 But he said, "No." He went and put the man in prison until he could pay what he owed him.

31 'The other servants saw what he did. They were very sad. They went and told their master everything that had been done. **32** Then his master called the first servant to him. He said, "You bad man! I let you go. I did not make you pay all you owed me, because you begged me to be kind to you. **33** You should have been kind to the other servant, as I was kind to you."

34 His master was very angry. He turned the servant over to the prison guards until he could pay all he owed him.

35 'That is like what my Father in heaven will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.'

CHAPTER 19

Jesus teaches about divorce

When Jesus had finished this talk, he left Galilee. He went away to the part of Judea that is on the other side of the Jordan River. **2** Many people followed him. He healed them there.

3 The Pharisees came to Jesus to test him. They asked, 'Is it right for a man to send his wife away from him for any reason?'

4 Jesus answered, 'Have you not read this? From the time God first made people, he made them a man and a woman. **5** God said, "A man must leave his father and mother and must stay with his wife. The two of them will be like one person." **6** So they are not two people any more, but they are one person. Man must not separate what God has joined together.'

7 They said to Jesus, 'Then why did Moses make this law? He said that a man may give his wife a paper to show that he does not want her any more. Then he may send her away.'

8 Jesus said to them, 'Moses wrote that law because your hearts are so hard. That is why he let you send your wives away. But in the beginning it was not that way. **9** But I tell you this. No man may send his wife away unless she has committed adultery. If he does, and if he marries another woman, he commits adultery. And if a man marries a woman who has been sent away by her husband, he commits adultery.'

10 The disciples said to him, 'If a man and woman are like that, then it is better not to marry.'

11 Jesus said, 'Not everyone can agree to that. But God has chosen some not to be married.'

12 Some men cannot marry because they were born that way. Some were made that way by men. Others said, "I will not marry, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven."

'Anyone who can do this, should do it.'

Jesus blesses children

13 Then people brought children to Jesus. They wanted him to put his hands on them and ask God to bless them. The disciples tried to stop the people. **14** But Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me. Do not try to stop them. The kingdom of heaven belongs to people like them.'

15 So he put his hands on the children. Then he went away.

The rich young man

16 A man came to Jesus and said, 'Teacher, what good thing must I do so that I will live for ever?'

17 Jesus said, 'Why do you ask me about what is good? Only God is good. If you want to live for ever, you must keep God's laws.'

18 The man said, 'Which laws?' Jesus said, 'Do not kill. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not tell lies. **19** Respect your father and your mother. Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

20 The young man said, 'I have kept all those laws. What more must I do?'

21 Jesus said, 'If you want to be all right, go and sell everything you have. Give the money to poor people. For this you will be rich in heaven. Then come and go with me.' **22** When the young man heard that, he was sad, because he was very rich. So he went away.

23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'I tell you the truth. It is very hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. **24** And I tell you this

also. It is easier for a big animal like a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'

25 When the disciples heard this, they were very much surprised. They said, 'Then who can be saved?'

26 Jesus looked at them and said, 'Men cannot do it, but God can do anything.'

27 Then Peter said, 'See, we have left all things and have come with you. So what will we have?'

28 Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth. In the new world, the Son of Man will be great. He will sit on his throne of glory [big chair of a king] to rule. Then you who have come with me will also sit on twelve thrones. You will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. **29** If anyone has left his house, his brothers, his sisters, his father, his mother, his children, or his farms for my sake, he will receive a hundred times as much as he has left. And he will live for ever. **30** But many people who are first will be last, and those who are last will be first.'

CHAPTER 20

The workers on the farm

The kingdom of heaven is like this. A man owned a farm. Early in the morning he went out to look for men to work on his farm. **2** He agreed to pay them a day's wages and sent them out to his farm.

3 'About nine o'clock he went out again. He saw some men standing around at the market. They were not working. **4** He said to them, "You go out to work on the farm too. I will pay you what is right." And they went to work.

5 'The man went out again at twelve o'clock and at three o'clock. He did the same as he had done before.

6 'About five o'clock he went out again and found other men standing around. He said to them, "Why have you been standing here all day? Why are you not working?" **7** They said, "No man has asked us to work." So he said to them, "You go out to work on the farm too."

8 'When evening came, the man who owned the farm said to his manager, "Call the workmen and pay them. Begin with those who came last and end with those who came first." **9** Each of the men who started work at five o'clock was paid a day's wages. **10** Those who started work first thought they would get more than that. But they also were paid a day's wages. **11** They

took it, but they were angry and talked against the man who owned the farm.

12 'They said, "These men came last, and worked only one hour. Yet you paid them the same as you paid us. We worked all day, when the sun was hot."

13 'But he said to one of them, "My friend, I am not doing any wrong to you. You agreed that I should pay you a day's wages. Did you not?"

14 Take your money and go. I want to give the last man the same pay as I gave you. **15** It is my own money. Can I not do with it as I like? Do you think it is a wrong thing for me to be kind?"

16 'In the same way, people who are last will be first, and those who are first will be last.'

Jesus tells again about his death

17 On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus took the twelve disciples with him, away from the people.

18 He said to them, 'We are going to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and scribes. They will judge him and say he must die. **19** They will give him over to rulers who are not Jews. They will make fun of him. They will beat him and nail him to a cross. On the third day, he will be raised.'

What James and John wanted

20 Then Zebedee's wife came with her sons to Jesus. She bowed down in front of him and asked him to do something for her. **21** Jesus asked, 'What do you want me to do for you?'

The woman said, 'These are my two sons. Promise that in your kingdom one may sit at your right and the other at your left.'

22 But Jesus said, 'You do not know what you are asking for. Can you drink from the cup that I will drink?'

'Yes,' they said. 'We can.'

23 Then Jesus said to them, 'You will drink what I drink. But I cannot choose who will sit at my right or at my left. My Father has planned who will sit there.'

24 When the other ten disciples heard about it, they were angry with the two brothers. **25** But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that those who rule over countries make their people obey them. The great men will tell the others what to do. **26** But that is not the way it is among you. Anyone among you who wants to be great will help the others. **27** Anyone among you who wants to be first will be a servant to the others. **28** The Son of Man did not come to

have others help him. But he came to help others. He came to give his life to make many people free.'

Jesus heals two blind men

29 As Jesus and the disciples left the city of Jericho, many people followed him. **30** Two blind men were sitting by the road. They heard that Jesus was passing that way. So they shouted, 'Sir, you are the Son of David. Help us!'

31 The people said to them, 'Be quiet!'

But they shouted louder, 'Sir, Son of David! Help us!'

32 Jesus stopped and called the men to him. He asked, 'What do you want me to do for you?'

33 They said, 'Sir, we want to see.' **34** Jesus was very sorry for them as he shared in their suffering. He touched their eyes, and right then they were able to see. They went with him.

CHAPTER 21

Jesus goes to Jerusalem

Jesus and his disciples came near to Jerusalem. They came to the village of Bethphage by the hill called the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus sent two of his disciples ahead. **2** He said to them, 'Go into the village in front of you. As soon as you go in, you will find a donkey for riding, and her young one. They are tied there. Untie them and bring them to me. **3** If anyone says anything to you, tell him, "The Lord needs them. He will send them back soon".'

4 This happened, and what the prophet of God said long ago, came true. **5** He said, 'Tell the people of Zion: See, your king is coming to you. He is not proud. He rides a donkey. It is a young animal.'

6 The disciples went and did what Jesus told them to do. **7** They brought the donkey and her young one. They put their coats on them. Then Jesus got on to ride. **8** Many people spread their coats on the road. Others cut leaves from the palm trees and put them on the road. **9** People in front of him and people behind him shouted, 'Praise the Son of David! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! Praise him in heaven!'

10 When Jesus came into Jerusalem, all the people there were very excited. They said, 'Who is this?'

11 The people who were with Jesus said, 'This is Jesus from the town of Nazareth in Galilee. He is a prophet.'

Cleaning out the temple

12 Jesus went into the temple of God. He drove out all the people who were buying and selling in the temple. He threw down the tables of the money changers. He pushed down the seats of those who sold doves. **13** He said to them, 'The holy writings say, "My house shall be called a house where people talk with God." But you have made it a place for people who steal!'

The leaders get angry.

14 Blind people came to Jesus in the temple. People who could not walk came to him. And he healed them. **15** The chief priests and the scribes saw the big works that Jesus did. They saw the children calling out in the temple, 'God save the Son of David!' They were angry.

16 They asked Jesus, 'Do you hear what they are saying?'

Jesus answered, 'Yes. Have you never read this? "You like the praise of children and babies".'

17 Then he left them and went out of the city to Bethany. He stayed there for the night.

The fig tree that died

18 In the morning he went back to the city. On the way he was hungry. **19** Along the road he saw a fig tree. He went to the tree. There was no fruit on it, only leaves. He said to the tree, 'No fruit will ever grow on you again!' Right away the tree died.

20 The disciples saw it and were surprised. They said, 'So soon the fig tree has died!'

21 Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth. Believe God. Do not doubt him. Then you can do what I did to this fig tree. But that is not all. You can even say to this hill, "Go and jump into the sea" and it will be done. **22** When you ask God for anything, believe that you will have it. Then you will have it.'

The question about Jesus' right

23 He came to the temple and went in and taught the people. The chief priests and the leaders of the people came to him. They asked, 'What right have you to do these things? Who gave you the right to do them?' **24** Jesus answered them, 'I will ask you a question also. If you answer me, I will answer you. I will tell you what right I have to do these things. **25** Who gave John the right to baptise people? Did God or did men?'

So they talked it over together. They said, 'If we say, "God gave John the right to do it," he will

say to us, "Then why did you not believe him?"

26 But if we say, "Men gave him the right to do it," we have the people to fear, because all the people say that John was a prophet.'

27 So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.'

Then Jesus said, 'Neither will I tell you what right I have to do these things.'

The story about two sons

28 'What do you think about this? A man had two sons. He went to the first one and said, "Son, go and work today on my farm." **29** The son said, "No, I will not go." But he changed his mind and went. **30** The man went to the second son and said the same thing. The son answered, "Yes, sir, I will go." But he did not go. **31** Which of the two sons did what his father wanted him to do?'

They said, 'The first one.'

Then Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. The tax collectors and women who commit adultery by selling their bodies, are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. **32** John came to you to tell you the right way. But you did not believe him. The tax collectors and women who commit adultery believed him. And even when you saw that, you did not change your minds and believe him.'

A story about a farm and bad men

33 'Listen to another story. A man planted a farm of vines for growing fruit called grapes. He put a fence of small trees around it. He dug a place to press the juice from the fruit. He built a high house from which men could watch over the farm. He let some men pay to use it. Then he went to a country far away.

34 'When it was near the time to cut the fruit, he sent his servants to those men. He wanted to have some of the fruit. **35** The men caught the servants. They beat one of them and killed another one of them. They threw stones at another one. **36** Then the man sent other servants. There were more than the first time. The men did the same to them.

37 'Last of all he sent his son to them. He said, "They will respect my son." **38** When the men saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the one who will have everything when his father dies. Let us kill him and we will have it all." **39** They caught him, dragged him off the farm, and killed him. **40** When the owner of the farm comes, what will he do to those men?'

41 They answered, 'He will kill those bad men, and will give the farm to other men who will give him the fruit when it is time.'

42 Jesus said, 'Have you never read in the holy writings "The stone which the builders would not use is now the chief corner stone. The Lord did this. It looks wonderful to us"?'

43 'So I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you. It will be given to the people who do what they should do in it. **44** If anyone falls on this stone, he will be broken to pieces. But if this stone falls on anyone, it will crush him.'

45 The chief priests and the Pharisees heard the stories Jesus told, and they knew he was talking about them. **46** They wanted to catch him, but they feared the people. The people thought Jesus was a prophet.

CHAPTER 22

The story about the wedding

Jesus told them other stories. **2** He said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like this. A king made a wedding for his son. **3** The king sent his servants to call the people who had been asked to the wedding. But they would not come.

4 'He sent other servants to call them. He said, "Tell those who were asked to the wedding that my dinner is cooked. The cows and bullocks have been killed. Everything is ready. Come now to the wedding."

5 'The people did not listen, but went away. One went to his farm. One went to his business.

6 The others caught his servants, treated them very badly, and killed them.

7 'The king was very angry. He sent his soldiers to kill the men who had killed his servants. And he burned their city. **8** Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready. But those who were asked to come were not good enough.

9 Go out on the roads. Call all the people you find to come to the wedding."

10 'So those servants went out on the roads. They brought all the people they could find, both bad and good people. Then the room was full of people for the wedding.

11 'The king came in to look at the people. He saw one man there who was not wearing the right clothes for a wedding. **12** The king said to him, "My friend, why did you come here without putting on the right clothes for a wedding?" The man did not answer. **13** Then the king said to his servants, "Tie his hands and his feet. Put

him in a dark place outside. People there will cry and grind [make a noise with] their teeth."

14 'Many people are asked to come, but only a few are chosen.'

Paying taxes to Caesar

15 Then the Pharisees went away. They planned how to make Jesus say something wrong. **16** They sent their disciples to him with some of Herod's people. They said, 'Teacher, we know that you are true. We know that you teach the true way of God. You do not fear any person, or care how great he is. **17** So tell us. What do you think? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or is it not?'

18 Jesus knew they were trying to get him into trouble. So he said to them, 'Why are you trying to get me to do wrong? You are not true to yourselves! **19** Show me a piece of money used for tax.'

They brought him a piece of money. **20** 'Whose picture and name is this?' he asked.

21 They said, 'Caesar's'.

Then he said to them, 'Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. And give to God what belongs to God.'

22 When they heard that, they were surprised. They left him and went away.

The matter of rising from death

23 The same day some of the Sadducees came to Jesus. They say that people do not rise from death.

24 They came to ask him a question. They said, 'Teacher, Moses gave us this law: "If a man dies and has no children, then his brother must marry the wife and raise a family for his brother." **25** There were seven brothers among us. The first one married. He died and left no children. So his brother married the wife.

26 The same thing happened to the second brother, and the third one, and all seven of them. **27** Last of all, the woman died. **28** Now then, when people rise from death, which of the seven brothers will have her for his wife? They all married her.'

29 Jesus answered, 'You are wrong! You do not know what the holy writings say. And you do not know what power God has. **30** When people rise from death, men and women do not marry. But they are like angels in heaven. **31** People do rise from death! Have you never read what God said to you? **32** He said, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of

Jacob." He is not the God of dead people, but of living people.'

33 When the people heard this, they were surprised at his teaching.

The greatest law

34 The Pharisees heard that the Sadducees could not answer Jesus. So they got together.

35 One of them was a man who taught God's law. He asked Jesus a question to try him out.

36 'Teacher,' he said, 'which law is the greatest law of all?'

37 Jesus said, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart. Love him with all your soul, and love him with all your mind.'" **38** This is the first and greatest law.

39 'The second law of God is like it. "Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'" **40** All that is written in the books of the law and the books of the prophets is about these two laws.'

The matter of David's son

41 While the Pharisees were still there, Jesus asked them a question. **42** He said, 'What do you think about Christ? Whose son is he?'

They said, 'He is David's son.'

43 Jesus asked, 'Then how can David call him "Lord"? He said, by the Spirit, **44** "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit beside me until I make you master over your enemies'.'" **45** David calls Christ his Lord. How can Christ be David's son?'

46 No one could answer him a word. And after that day, everyone feared to ask him any more questions.

CHAPTER 23

The wrong ways of the scribes and Pharisees

Then Jesus talked to the people and to his disciples. **2** He said, 'The scribes and Pharisees have taken Moses' place. **3** So obey and do everything they tell you to do. But do not do what they do. They say what should be done, but they do it not. **4** They make heavy loads and put them on people's backs. But they themselves will not put up even one finger to help carry the loads. **5** They do all their work to be seen by people. They wear bigger and bigger boxes with God's word in. And they make wider and wider borders on their gowns. **6** They want to sit in the best places at the feasts. They want to have the front seats in the meeting houses. **7** They want people to greet them in the market, and to call them "Teacher". **8** But

people should not call you "Teacher". You have one Teacher. And you are all brothers.

9 'Do not call anyone on earth your "Father". You have one Father. He is in heaven.

10 People should not call you "Master". You have one Master. He is the Christ.

11 'The person who is greatest among you will help the others. **12** Anyone who puts himself up will be brought down. And anyone who puts himself down will be brought up.

13 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You are not true to yourselves! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven so people cannot go in. You yourselves do not go in, and you stop those who were going in.

14 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You who are not true to yourselves! You take away the homes of women whose husbands are dead. You cover up your wrong ways by talking big to God for a long time. Because of that, you will be punished harder.

15 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You who are not true to yourselves! You travel over sea and land to win one person to believe what you believe. And when he believes, you make him twice as fit for hell as you are.

16 'You blind leaders will have trouble. You say that if anyone makes a promise in the name of the temple, he does not have to keep that promise. But if anyone makes a promise in the name of the gold on the temple, he must keep that promise.

17 'You fools and blind men! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy? **18** And you say that if anyone makes a promise in the name of God's altar, he does not have to keep that promise. But if anyone makes a promise in the name of the sacrifice, he must keep that promise.

19 'You fools and blind people! Which is greater, the sacrifice or the place that makes the sacrifice holy? **20** So if anyone makes a promise by God's altar, he makes his promise by it and by all that is on it. **21** If anyone makes a promise by the temple, he makes his promise by the temple and by God who lives in the temple. **22** If anyone makes a promise by heaven, he makes his promise by God's big chair called a throne and by God who sits on the throne.

23 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You who are not true to yourselves! You give God a tenth part of small garden plants. But you have not done those bigger matters of the law.

You have not judged in the right way. You have not been kind. You have not believed God. You should be doing these things and the other things too. **24** You blind leaders! You take a fly out of your cup, but you drink down a big animal like a camel!

25 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You who are not true to yourselves! You wash the outside of a cup and a dish clean. But inside they are full of greed and wrong ways! **26** You blind Pharisees! First clean the inside of the cup and the dish so that the outside will be clean too.

27 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You who are not true to yourselves! You are like graves that have been painted white. Outside they look very nice. But inside they are full of dead men's bones and all kinds of dirt. **28** So it is with you. You look right on the outside. But inside you are full of lies and wrong ways.

29 'You scribes and Pharisees will have trouble. You who are not true to yourselves! You build places to bury the prophets and fix up graves of good men. **30** You say, "If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have helped to kill the prophets of God." **31** So you prove that you are the sons of the men who killed the prophets. **32** Finish doing what your fathers started to do.

33 'You snakes - a whole family of snakes! You cannot get away! You will be judged and sent to hell. **34** That is why I send you prophets, wise men, and teachers. You will kill some of them and nail them to a cross. And you will beat some of them in your meeting houses and trouble them from one town to another. **35** So you will be punished for all the blood of every good man that is on the ground. I mean all the blood from the time of Abel, who was a good man, to Zechariah, the son of Barachiah. You killed him between the temple and God's altar. **36** I tell you the truth. The people who are still living now will be punished for all these things.'

Jesus cries for Jerusalem

37 'Jerusalem! Jerusalem! You kill the prophets. You throw stones to kill the men who are sent to you! How often I have wanted to gather your people together, as a mother hen gathers her little ones under her wings. But you would not come! **38** Now you are left alone in your house. **39** I tell you this. You will not see me again until the time when you say, "God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord".'

CHAPTER 24

Jesus tells what will happen to the temple

Jesus left the temple and was going away. His disciples came to him. They wanted to show him the different buildings that were a part of the temple. **2** But Jesus answered them, 'Do you see these buildings? I tell you the truth. Not one stone here will be left on top of another stone. They will all be thrown down!'

Troubles begin

3 Jesus was sitting on the hill called the Mount of Olives. The disciples came to him alone. They said, 'Tell us, when will this happen? What will be the sign to show you are coming and that it is the end of this world?'

4 Jesus answered them, 'Take care. Do not let anyone fool you. **5** Many men will come in my name. They will say, "I am the Christ". They will fool many people. **6** You will hear about wars. You will hear that war is coming. But do not fear. These things must happen, but that is not yet the end. **7** One tribe will fight against another tribe. And one country will fight against another country. The people will have no food to eat. Many people will be sick. The earth will shake in many different places. **8** All these troubles are only the beginning of troubles that will come.

9 'Then people will trouble you and kill you. All nations will hate you because you are true to me. **10** Then many people will stop believing. They will give one another over to trouble. They will hate one another. **11** Many people will come and say they are prophets of God. But they will not be true. They will fool many people. **12** People will do more and more wrong things and many people will stop loving me. **13** But the person who keeps on being true to me until the end, that one will be saved. **14** This good news about the kingdom will be told in all the world. The people in all countries must know about it. And then the end will come.'

The time of big trouble

15 'Daniel the prophet said that people would put something very bad in the temple.' (Let the one who reads this understand it.) **16** 'When that happens, the people in Judea must go quickly to the hills. **17** A person who is on the top of a house must not go down into the house to get things from the house. **18** A person who is working in the fields must not go back home to get his coat. **19** In those days it will be very

hard for women who are to have a child. It will be very hard for mothers who have a baby. **20** Ask God that you may not have to go in the cold time of the year or on the Sabbath day. **21** The trouble then will be bigger than any other trouble since God made the world. And there never will be any trouble as big as that. **22** No person would be saved if the Lord did not cut the time of trouble shorter. He will cut it shorter for the sake of his chosen people.

23 'If anyone says to you then, "Look, here is the Christ!" or "There he is!" do not believe it. **24** People will come and say they are the Christ. People will come and say they are prophets. But they are not true. They will show big signs and do wonderful things to fool people. They will fool God's chosen people if they can. **25** Watch! I have told you these things before they happen. **26** So if people say to you, "He is in the wilderness," do not go there. If they say, "He is hiding somewhere," do not believe it. **27** When lightning shines in the east, it can be seen in the west. It will be like that when the Son of Man comes. **28** The big birds that eat meat will all go to the place where the dead body is.'

The coming of the Son of Man

29 'Right after that time of trouble, the sun will be dark. The moon will not shine. The stars will fall from the sky. And the powers in the sky will be shaken. **30** Then people will see the sign of the Son of Man in the sky. Then all the people of the earth will cry. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds in the sky. He will have much power and will be very great. **31** He will send his angels to call with a loud trumpet or horn. They will gather his chosen people from everywhere all over the earth.'

The lesson of the fig tree

32 'Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its branches begin to grow and the leaves come, then you know it will soon be the warm time of the year. **33** It is the same when you see all these things. You will know that the time is very near, right at the door. **34** I tell you the truth. The people who are living then, will not die before all these things happen. **35** The sky and the earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

No man knows the day and hour

36 'But no one knows the day and the hour when the Son of Man will come. Even the angels in heaven and the Son do not know. Only the

Father knows. **37** When the Son of Man comes, it will be as it was in the time of Noah.

38 'In the days before the water covered the earth, people ate and drank. They married and gave their daughters to be married. Then one day Noah went into his house built on a boat. **39** The people did not know until much water came and killed them all. When the Son of Man comes, it will be like that. **40** Two men will be working together in the field. One will be taken and the other will be left. **41** Two women will be making flour together. One woman will be taken away and one woman will be left.

42 'So watch! You do not know what day your Lord will come. **43** And remember this. The owner of the house does not know at what time of the night a man will come to steal something. If he knew, he would watch and not let the man break into his house. **44** So, be ready! The Son of Man will come at a time when you are not looking for him.'

The servant - to be trusted or not

45 'Who is like a wise servant who can be trusted? His master will put him in charge of his other servants. He gives them their food at the right time. **46** The servant who is doing this when his master comes, will be blessed. **47** I tell you the truth. His master will put him in charge of all that he has.

48 'But if the servant is bad, he will say to himself, "My master will not come just now." **49** Then he will begin to beat the other servants. He will eat and drink with men who are drunk. **50** The master of that servant will come on a day the servant is not looking for him. He will not know the time he is coming home. **51** The master will punish him and lock him in with people who are not true. People there will cry and grind [make a noise with] their teeth.'

CHAPTER 25

The story of the ten young women

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet a man who was being married. **2** Five of them were foolish and five of them were wise. **3** The five foolish women took their lamps but took no oil with them. **4** The wise ones took bottles of oil with their lamps.

5 'It was a long time before the man came, so they all went to sleep. **6** At midnight there was a call, "Here comes the man who is to be married!

Come out to meet him." **7** Then all the young women woke up. They cleaned their lamps. **8** The foolish ones said to the wise ones, "Give us some of your oil. The light in our lamps is dying." **9** But the wise ones answered, "There may not be enough oil for us all. Go to the market and buy some for yourselves."

10 'While they went away to buy oil, the man came. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. Then the door was shut.

11 After that, the other women also came. They called, "Sir, sir, open the door for us." **12** But he said, "I tell you the truth. I do not know you."

13 So watch! You do not know the day or the hour.'

The story of the money bags

14 'The kingdom of heaven will be like the time a man went to a country far away. He called his servants and put them in charge of his money.

15 He gave five bags of money to one servant. He gave two bags of money to another servant. He gave one bag of money to another servant. He gave to each one what he was able to be in charge of. Then he went away.

16 'Right away the servant who had five bags of money began to buy and sell things with it. He made five bags of money more than he had at first.

17 'The servant who had two bags of money did the same thing as the one who had five bags. He also made two bags of money more than he had at first. **18** But the man who had only one bag of money dug a hole in the ground. And he hid his master's money in the ground.

19 'After a long time, the master of those servants came home. He asked what they had done with his money. **20** The servant who had been given five bags of money brought five bags more to his master. He said, "Sir, you gave me five bags of money. See, I have made five bags more money."

21 'His master said, "You have done well. You are a good servant. I can trust you. You have taken good care of a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come, have a good time with your master."

22 'The servant who had been given two bags of money came and said to his master, "Sir, you gave me two bags of money. I have made two bags more money." **23** His master said, "You have done well. You are a good servant. I can trust you. You have taken good care of a few

things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come, have a good time with your master."

24 'The servant who had been given one bag of money came and said, "Sir, I knew that you were a hard man. You cut grain where you did not plant. You pick fruit where you put nothing in. **25** I was afraid. So I went and hid your money in the ground. Here is your money."

26 'His master answered him, "You are a bad and lazy servant. You knew that I cut grain where I did not plant. You knew that I pick fruit where I put nothing in. **27** You should have put my money in the bank. Then when I came home, I would have had my money with interest on it. **28** So take the money away from him. Give it to the one who has ten bags. **29** Anyone who has some will get more, and he will have plenty. But he who does not get anything, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. **30** Take this good-for-nothing servant! Put him out in the dark place outside. People there will cry and make a noise with their teeth".'

Judging the nations

31 'The Son of Man will be great and will come with all his holy angels. Then he will sit on his throne like a king. **32** All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He will put them in two groups like a man who takes care of sheep. He puts the sheep on one side of him and he puts the goats on the other side of him.

33 'The Son of Man will put people who are like the sheep at his right side. He will put people who are like the goats at his left side. **34** Then the King will say to those who are at his right side, "Come! My Father has blessed you. The kingdom was made ready for you when the world was first made. Come into it now. **35** I was hungry. You gave me food. I was thirsty. You gave me a drink. I was a stranger. You took me in. **36** I needed clothes. You gave me clothes. I was sick. You came to visit me. I was in prison. You came to see me."

37 'Then the good people will ask him, "Lord when did we see you hungry and give you food? When did we see you thirsty and give you a drink? **38** When did we see you a stranger and take you in? When did we see you needing clothes and give you clothes? **39** When did we see you sick or in prison and come to see you?"

40 'The King will answer them, "I tell you the truth. What you did for even the smallest of these people you did for me. They are my brothers."

41 'Then he will say to those at the left side "Go away from me. You are cursed. Go into the fire that burns for ever. That fire has been made ready for the devil and his angels. **42** I was hungry. You did not give me food. I was thirsty. You did not give me a drink. **43** I was a stranger. You did not take me in. I needed clothes. You did not give me any clothes. I was sick and in prison. You did not come to see me."

44 'Then they will also ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or needing clothes, or sick, or in prison, and did not help you?"

45 'Then the King will answer them, "I tell you the truth. What you did not do for even the smallest of these, you did not do for me."

46 And they will go away to be punished for ever. But the good people will go away to live for ever.'

CHAPTER 26

The leaders plan to have Jesus killed

When Jesus had finished telling all these things, he talked to his disciples. **2** He said, 'You know that after two days it will be time for the Passover Feast. The Son of Man will be given over to his enemies to be nailed to a cross.'

3 Then at that time the chief priests and the leaders of the people met together in the house of the high priest. His name was Caiaphas.

4 They planned how to catch Jesus by some trick and have him killed. **5** But they said, 'Let us not do it on the day of the feast. We do not want the people to start fighting about it.'

Jesus at Bethany

6 When Jesus was in the town of Bethany, he was in the house of Simon, a man who had leprosy, a bad skin disease. **7** While Jesus sat at the table, a woman came to him. She had a bottle of oil. It smelled very nice and cost much money. She put the oil on Jesus' head. **8** When the disciples saw this, they were angry. They said, 'Why was the oil wasted like that? **9** The oil might have been sold for much money. Then the money could have been given to poor people.'

10 When Jesus heard it, he said to them, 'Why do you trouble the woman? She has done a good thing to me. **11** You will always have poor people with you. But I will not always be with you. **12** She has put oil on my body to make me ready to be buried. **13** I tell you the truth. Any place in the whole world where people tell the

good news, people will also tell what she has done. People will remember her because of it.'

Judas agrees to help catch Jesus

14 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the chief priests. **15** He said, 'What will you give me if I help you catch Jesus?' They gave him thirty pieces of silver money. **16** And from then on, Judas watched for a good way to help them catch Jesus.

Jesus eats the Passover Feast with his disciples: the Last Supper

17 It was the first day of the feast with bread that has no yeast in it. The disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Where do you want us to make ready for you to eat the Passover Feast?'

18 He said, 'Go into the city to a certain man. Say to him, "The Teacher says, 'My time is near. I will come to your house with my disciples to eat the Passover Feast.'"' **19** The disciples did what Jesus told them. They made the Passover food ready.

20 When evening came, Jesus sat down to eat with the twelve disciples. **21** As they were eating, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. One of you will give me over to people who hate me.'

22 They were very sad and troubled. One after the other they began to say to him, 'Lord, is it I?'

23 Jesus answered them, 'The man who is putting his hand in the dish with me is the one who will give me over. **24** The Son of Man will go away just as the holy writings tell about him. But the man who gives him over will have trouble. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born!'

25 Judas was the one who would give Jesus over to the people who hated him. He said, 'Master, is it I?'

Jesus said, 'Yes, it is.'

The bread and cup of Jesus

26 As they were eating, Jesus took some bread. He thanked God for it and broke it. He gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take this bread and eat it. It is my body.' **27** He also took a cup. He thanked God for it. Then he gave it to the disciples and said, 'All of you drink from this.'

28 This is my blood. My blood is the blood of the new agreement. It is given so that many people will be forgiven for the wrong things they did. **29** I tell you this. I will not drink any of the juice of the fruit of the vine again, until I drink

some of it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

30 They sang a song and then went out to the hill called the Mount of Olives.

Jesus tells what Peter will say

31 Then Jesus said to them, 'All of you will leave me this night. The holy writings say, "I will kill the one who takes care of the sheep. And the sheep will run away." **32** But after I am raised from death, I will go to Galilee to meet you.'

33 Peter said, 'Even if all the others leave you, I will never leave you.'

34 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. This night, before the cock calls, you will say three times that you do not know me.'

35 Peter said, 'Even if I must die with you, I will never say I do not know you!' All the disciples said the same thing.

Jesus talks with God

36 Then Jesus came to a place called Gethsemane. He said to his disciples, 'Sit down here. I will go over there and talk with God.'

37 He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons with him. Jesus began to be sad and troubled. **38** He said to them, 'My heart is very sad. I am almost dying! Stay here and watch with me.'

39 Jesus went on a little further. He bowed down with his face to the ground. He talked to God and said, 'My Father, if it can be, let this cup of trouble pass by me. But do not do what I want. May what you want be done.' **40** Jesus went back to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, 'What? Could you not watch with me for one hour? **41** Watch and talk with God, so that you will not do wrong. A person's heart can want to do it, but his body is weak.'

42 Jesus went away again. He talked to God and said, 'My Father, if you do not want this cup to pass by me, but you want me to drink it, I will do what you want.'

43 Jesus went back again and found the disciples sleeping. They could not keep their eyes open.

44 He left them and went away again. He talked with God the third time and said the same words. **45** Then he went back to his disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? The time has come now. The Son of Man is given over to bad people. **46** Get up. Let us go. Look, here comes the one who will give me over to people who hate me!'

The people catch Jesus

47 As Jesus was saying this, Judas came. He was one of the twelve disciples. Many people came with him. They had long knives or swords and big sticks. The chief priests and the leaders of the people had sent them. **48** The man who was going to help them catch Jesus had told them that he would give them a sign. He said, 'The man that I kiss is the one. Catch him and hold him.' **49** Right then he went to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Master!' And he kissed him.

50 Jesus said to him, 'Friend, why have you come?' Then the men came and caught Jesus and held him.

51 One of the men who was with Jesus took his sword in his hand. He hit the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. **52** Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back in its place. All people who fight with a sword will be killed by a sword. **53** Do you think that I cannot talk to my Father, and he would send me right now more than twelve armies of angels? **54** But then, how would God's word come true? The holy writings say that this is the way it must be.'

55 At that same time Jesus said to the people, 'Have you come to take me with swords and sticks as you would a man who steals? Every day I sat with you in the temple and taught. But you did not try to catch me then. **56** All this happened so that what the prophets said in the holy writings would come true.'

Then all the disciples left Jesus and ran away.

Jesus is taken to the high priest

57 The men who caught Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest. The scribes and the leaders had met at his house. **58** Peter followed Jesus a long way behind. He went as far as the yard of the high priest's house. He sat down with the people who worked for the high priest. He wanted to see how this would end. **59** The chief priests and all the judges of the court tried to find men to say Jesus had done something wrong so they could kill him. **60** But they found nothing. Many people came and said things that were not true.

At last two men came. **61** They said, 'This man said, "I can break down God's temple and build it again in three days".'

62 The high priest stood up. He said to Jesus, 'Have you no answer? What do you have to say about this? They have said something against you.'

63 But Jesus said nothing at all. Then the high priest said to him, 'I ask you in the name of the living God. Tell us. Are you the Christ, the Son of God?'

64 Jesus answered him, 'Yes, I am. Also I tell you that after this you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the One who has all power. You will see him coming on the clouds in the sky!'

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'What he has said is wrong! We do not need any more proof against him. You have heard the wrong thing he said. **66** What do you think?'

They said, 'He should be killed.' **67** Then they spat on Jesus' face and hit him. Others slapped him with their hands. **68** They said, 'Christ, tell us, if you know who hit you!'

What Peter says about Jesus

69 Peter sat out in the yard. A servant girl came to him and said, 'You were also with Jesus of Galilee.'

70 But Peter said in front of them all, 'I do not know what you are talking about.'

71 Peter went out to the gate. There, another servant-girl saw him. She said to the others around there, 'This man was also with Jesus of Nazareth.'

72 Peter said some bad words and then said, 'I do not know the man.'

73 A little later, those standing around came to Peter and said, 'Surely you are one of them also. We know it by the way you talk.'

74 Then Peter began to say even more bad words. He said, 'I do not know the man!'

Right then, a cock called. **75** Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said, 'Before the cock calls, you will say three times that you do not know me.' Then Peter went out and cried very much.

CHAPTER 27

Jesus in Pilate's court

When it was morning, all the chief priests and the leaders of the people made a plan against Jesus. They wanted to kill him. **2** They tied him and took him away. They took him to Pilate, the ruler.

The death of Judas

3 Judas was the man who helped them take Jesus. He saw that they had judged Jesus and

were going to kill him. He was sorry for what he had done, so he brought the thirty pieces of silver money back to the chief priests and leaders.

4 He said, 'I have done wrong. I have helped you take a good man who should not be killed.'

They said, 'What do we care? You look after that!' **5** Judas threw the silver money into the temple. He went away and hanged himself.

6 The chief priests took the money. They said, 'It is not right to put this money in the money box of the temple. It has been used to buy a man's death.' **7** They talked the matter over and bought a field that belonged to a man who made pots. They bought it for a place in which to bury strangers. **8** That is why that field has been called 'The field of blood' until now.

9 What Jeremiah the prophet said long ago, then came true at that time. He said, 'They took thirty pieces of silver money. That is what the people of Israel said he was worth. **10** They paid for the potter's field. That is what the Lord told me to do.'

Pilate questions Jesus

11 Jesus stood before the ruler. The ruler asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

Jesus said, 'Yes, I am.' **12** When the chief priests and leaders brought their complaints, Jesus said nothing.

13 Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear what these people say against you?' **14** But Jesus did not answer him, not even one word. Pilate was very much surprised about this.

The people say Jesus must die

15 At the feast Pilate used to let one prisoner free. He let the people choose the man they wanted to go free. **16** In the prison at that time was a very bad man named Barabbas. **17** So while the people were there Pilate asked them, 'Which one do you want me to let free for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?'

18 Pilate knew that the chief priests did not like Jesus. He knew that was why they had brought Jesus to him.

19 While Pilate was sitting in the court to judge the case, his wife sent a message to him. She said, 'Do nothing to that good man. I have been troubled very much in a dream about him today.'

20 The chief priests and leaders talked to the people. They told them to ask Pilate to let Barabbas go free, but to kill Jesus. **21** The ruler

said to the people, 'Which of these two do you want me to let go free for you?'

They said, 'Barabbas.'

22 Pilate said to them, 'Then what shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?'

They all said, 'Nail him to a cross!'

23 The ruler said, 'What wrong thing has he done?'

But they shouted even more, 'Nail him to a cross!'

24 Pilate saw that he was not doing any good. And the people were making a lot of loud noise. So he washed his hands in water in front of the people. Then he said, 'I will not say this man must be killed. You must do that.'

25 Then all the people answered, 'We and our children will do that.' **26** Then Pilate let Barabbas go free. He told the soldiers to beat Jesus and nail him to a cross.

The soldiers make fun of Jesus

27 Then Pilate's soldiers took Jesus to a room. They called all the soldiers together. **28** They took off his clothes, and they put a red gown on him. **29** They made a big ring of thorns like a crown and put it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand. Then they kneeled down in front of him and made fun of him. They shouted, 'Greetings, King of the Jews!' **30** They spat on him. And they took the stick and hit him on the head with it. **31** After they had made fun of him, they took off the red gown. They put his own clothes on him. Then they took him away to nail him to a cross.

Jesus is nailed to a cross

32 As they were going, they met a man named Simon. He was born in the country of Cyrene. They made him carry Jesus' cross. **33** They came to a place called Golgotha. That means, 'The place of a head bone.' **34** They wanted Jesus to drink wine mixed with something bitter. Jesus tasted it but he would not drink it.

35 Then they nailed him to a cross.

They gambled to see how they should divide Jesus' clothes. **36** Then the soldiers sat down on the ground and watched him there. **37** They put the complaint against Jesus above his head. These words were written there: 'This is Jesus the King of the Jews.'

38 Two bad men were also nailed to crosses. They had stolen money. One man was put on

the right side of Jesus and one was put on the left side of him.

39 The people who passed by said bad things about him. They shook their heads. **40** They said, 'You are the man who said you could break down the temple and build it again in three days. Save yourself! If you are really God's Son, come down from the cross.'

41 The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders also made fun of him. **42** They said, 'He saved other people but he cannot save himself! If he is the King of the people of Israel, he should come down from the cross now. Then we will believe in him. **43** He trusted in God. If God wants him, he can save him now. He said, "I am God's Son".'

44 The bad men who were also nailed to crosses with him said the same things to him.

The death of Jesus

45 About midday, the whole land became dark and stayed dark for three hours. **46** About three o'clock, Jesus called out loud, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' That means, 'My God, my God, why have you left me alone?'

47 Some of the people standing there heard what Jesus said. They said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' **48** Right away, one of them ran to get something called a sponge. He made it wet with sour wine and put it on the end of a stick. With it he gave Jesus a drink. **49** The other people said, 'Wait. We will see if Elijah will come and save him.'

50 Jesus called out loud again. Then he died.

51 At that time the thick cloth that hung in the temple was torn into two pieces. It was torn from the top down to the bottom. The earth shook and big rocks broke. **52** The graves opened. Many of God's people who had died rose from death. **53** They came out of their graves after Jesus rose from death. They went into Jerusalem. Many people saw them there.

54 The Roman captain and some of his soldiers were guarding Jesus on the cross. When they saw the earth shake and the other things happen, they were very much afraid. They said, 'Surely this man was God's Son.'

55 Many women were there watching from far away. They had come with Jesus from Galilee and had helped him. **56** Among these women were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Jesus' body is put in the grave

57 In the evening, a rich man came. He was Joseph from the town of Arimathea. He also believed in Jesus. **58** He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate said that it should be given to him. **59** Joseph took the body and wrapped a clean linen cloth around it. **60** He put the body in his own new grave which had been cut in a rock. He rolled a very big stone to close the grave. Then he went away. **61** Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there. They sat where they could see the grave. **62** The next day was the Sabbath day. The chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate together. **63** They said, 'Sir, that man fooled people. We remember what he said when he was still living. He said that he would rise after three days. **64** So give orders that the grave must be guarded for three days. Then his disciples cannot come in the night to carry away his body, and tell people he rose from death. This last trick would be worse than the first.' **65** Pilate said to them, 'Take soldiers. Go and guard the grave as well as you can.' **66** So they went and shut the grave tight. They put a government mark on the big stone. And the soldiers stayed to guard it. This was to make sure the grave would stay shut.

CHAPTER 28

Jesus rises from death

The Sabbath day was past. Morning light was beginning to shine on the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the grave.

2 The earth shook very much because an angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He came and rolled the big stone away from the grave and sat on it. **3** His face shone like lightning. His clothes were as white as snow. **4** The soldiers who were guarding the grave saw him and shook with fear. They fell down like dead men. **5** The angel talked to the women. He said, 'Do not fear. I know you are looking for Jesus, who

was nailed to a cross. **6** He is not here. He has risen, as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. **7** Go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from death. He is going to Galilee before you. You will see him there." Now, I have told you.' **8** The women went quickly away. They left the grave with fear and they were very happy. They ran to tell his disciples.

9 As they were going, Jesus met them. He said, 'Greetings!' The women bowed down in front of him and put their hands on his feet. **10** Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not fear. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee. They will see me there.'

What the soldiers at the grave said about Jesus

11 While the women were going, some of the soldiers who had guarded the grave came into the city. They told the chief priests all that had happened. **12** The chief priests had a meeting with the leaders of the people and talked the matter over. They gave much money to the soldiers. **13** They said, 'Tell the people, "His disciples came by night and took away the body while we were sleeping." **14** If the ruler hears about this, then we will talk to him so that he will not punish you.' **15** The soldiers took the money. They did as they were told to do. And even to this day, many of the Jewish leaders say this is what happened to Jesus.

Jesus tells the eleven disciples what to do

16 The eleven disciples went to Galilee. They went to the hill where Jesus had told them to meet him. **17** When they saw him, they bowed down in front of him. But some people were not sure. **18** Jesus came and talked to them. He said, 'All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** So go and make disciples in all countries. Baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **20** Teach them to do all the things I have told you to do. I am with you always, even to the end of time.'

THE GOOD NEWS AS TOLD BY MARK

This is the second of four books about the life of Jesus Christ. It was written by a follower named Mark. These things took place in Judea and Galilee, now called Israel. The book tells about what Jesus said and also what he did to make people well. And it tells us a lot about the last week before Jesus was nailed to a cross to die. It ends where Jesus comes to life again and goes back to heaven to be one with his Father God. The Good News is that God loves us, and sent his son, Jesus, to die for us. It means that all people everywhere who believe in God and follow Jesus will have everlasting life with him.

CHAPTER 1

John the Baptizer

This is the beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, God's Son.

2 The men of God, called prophets, long ago wrote about it this way: God said, 'See, I send my man ahead of you to tell about you. He will make the way ready for you. **3** A man is calling out in the desert, "Make the way ready for the Lord. Make the road straight for him".' **4** John baptised people in the desert. He told them to stop doing wrong things and be baptised, and God would forgive them for the wrong things they did. **5** People from all the land of Judea and all the city of Jerusalem went out to John. He baptised them in the Jordan River when they told about the wrong things they did. **6** John wore clothes made of camel's hair and a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild honey.

7 He told the people, 'Another person is coming. He is greater than I am. I am not good enough to bend down and untie his shoe strings. **8** I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

Jesus is baptized

9 At that time Jesus came from the town of Nazareth in the country of Galilee. John baptised him in the Jordan River. **10** As soon as he came up out of the water, Jesus saw the sky open. He saw God's Holy Spirit come down on him like a bird called a dove. **11** A voice from the sky said, 'You are my dear Son. I am very pleased with you.'

Satan tries to make Jesus do wrong

12 Right away, the Spirit made Jesus go into the desert. **13** Jesus was in the desert for forty days. All that time Satan tried to make Jesus do wrong. Jesus was with wild animals. Angels came and took care of him.

Jesus begins his work in Galilee

14 John was put in prison. Then Jesus went to Galilee. He told people the good news of God's kingdom. **15** 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God is here. Stop your wrong ways, turn back to God and believe the good news.'

Jesus calls four fishermen

16 Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. There he saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a fishing net into the water. Their work was to catch fish. **17** Jesus said to them, 'Come with me. The work I give you will be to catch people.' **18** Right away they left their nets and went with him. **19** Jesus went on from there and saw James and his brother John. Their father's name was Zebedee. They were in a boat mending their nets. **20** Jesus called them. Right away they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the workmen and went with Jesus.

A man with a bad spirit is healed

21 They went to the town of Capernaum. As soon as it was the Sabbath day, Jesus went into their meeting house and taught the people.

22 They were very much surprised at his teaching because he taught them as if he had the right to teach them. He did not teach them like their teachers called scribes.

23 A man who had a bad spirit in him was in the meeting house at that time. **24** He called out, 'Jesus of Nazareth, what do you want to do to us? Have you come to kill us? I know who you are. You are the Holy One of God.'

25 Jesus said to the spirit, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!'

26 The bad spirit threw the man around. It called out loud and then it came out of the man.

27 The people were all surprised. They said one to another, 'What is this? Is not this a new teaching? He tells the bad spirits what to do and

even they obey him'. **28** The people all around Galilee heard right away about Jesus.

The mother of Simon's wife healed

29 As soon as they came out of the meeting house, they went to the home of Simon and Andrew. James and John went also. **30** Simon's wife's mother was sick and was lying down. She had a fever. Right away they told Jesus about her. **31** Jesus went to her. He took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her right away, and she began to do things to help them.

Many are healed

32 That evening when the sun went down, people brought to Jesus all the sick people and those who had bad spirits. **33** All the people in the city crowded around the door. **34** He healed many sick people. He drove the bad spirits out of people. And he did not let them speak because they knew who he was.

Jesus goes out to talk with God

35 The next morning Jesus got up long before daylight. He went out to a place by himself. There he talked with God. **36** Simon and his friends went out after Jesus. **37** When they found him they said, 'Everyone is looking for you.'

38 Jesus said, 'We must go to the next towns. I must tell the good news to the people there too. That is why I came here.' **39** Then Jesus talked to the people in all the meeting houses in all the country of Galilee. He also made the bad spirits come out of people.

Jesus heals a man who has leprosy

40 A man who was sick with leprosy [a bad skin disease] came to him. He knelt down and begged Jesus saying, 'I know you can heal me if you want to.'

41 Jesus was very sorry for him. He put out his hand and touched him. He said, 'I want to. Be healed.' **42** As soon as he said this, the disease left the man and he was healed.

43 Jesus talked strongly to him and sent him away. **44** He said, 'Do not tell anyone about this. But go and let the priest look at you. Moses gave a law about the gift you must give to God when you are healed. Give it to prove to people that you are healed.'

45 But the man went out and told everyone everywhere what had happened to him. Because he did this, Jesus could not go into any large town freely. He stayed in places where

only a few people were. There people came to him from everywhere.

CHAPTER 2

Jesus heals a man who could not walk

After a few days he came back to Capernaum. People soon heard that he was at home. **2** Many came together right away. The house was full. There was no more room, not even outside near the door. Jesus was telling them God's message.

3 Four men brought a sick man to Jesus. The man could not move his arms or legs. **4** But they could not get in the house where Jesus was, because there were so many people. So they went up on the roof. They made a hole in the roof. Then they let down the mat with the sick man on it.

5 Jesus saw that they believed he would be healed. So he said to the sick man, 'Son, the wrong things you have done are forgiven.'

6 Some of the scribes were sitting there. **7** They were thinking, 'Why does this man say such wrong things against God? He is not giving God respect! Who can forgive the wrong things people do? No one but God can do that.'

8 Jesus understood in his spirit what the scribes were thinking. He said right away, 'Why do you think these wrong things in your hearts?'

9 Which is easier, to say to the sick man, "The wrong things you have done are forgiven," or to say, "Get up. Take up your mat and walk"? **10** I want you to know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive the wrong things people do.' So he said to the sick man, **11** 'I tell you, get up! Take up your mat and go home.'

12 Right away the man stood up in front of them. He took up his mat and went home.

They were all very much surprised, and they praised God. They said, 'We have never seen anything like this before.'

Jesus calls Levi

13 Jesus went out again by the seaside. Many people came to him. So he taught them. **14** As he went along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus. He was sitting at the place where people come to pay taxes. Jesus said to him, 'Come with me.' Levi stood up and went with him.

15 Jesus was eating in Levi's house. Many tax collectors and bad people also came. They sat down to eat with Jesus and his disciples. There were many who went with him. **16** The scribes

and Pharisees saw that Jesus ate with these people. They said to the disciples, 'Why does he eat and drink with bad people?'

17 Jesus heard it. He said to them, 'People who are well do not need a doctor. But sick people need him. I did not come to call good people. I came to call bad people to stop doing wrong things.'

Jesus talks about fasting

18 John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples were fasting [not eating food for a time]. Some people came to Jesus and said, 'The disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast. Why do your disciples not do the same?'

19 Jesus answered them, 'The people at a wedding cannot be sad while the man who is married is with them. **20** But the time will come when he will be taken away from them. Then they will fast. **21** No person sews a piece of new cloth on an old coat. If he does, the new cloth will tear the old coat. Then the hole is bigger than it was before. **22** No person puts new wine into old wine skins. If he does, the new wine will break the skins. Then the wine will be lost and the skins will be spoiled. New wine is put into new skins.'

Picking grain on the Sabbath day

23 Jesus was walking through the grainfields **23** Jesus was walking through the grainfields on the Sabbath day. His disciples began to pick some of the seed (to eat) as they went along. **24** The Pharisees said to Jesus, 'Why do your disciples do what is not right on the Sabbath day?'

25 Jesus answered them, 'Have you not read what David did? He and his men who were with him were hungry. **26** He went into God's house when Abiathar was the high priest. Some bread was there for God. It was not right for them to eat it. Only the priests have the right to eat it. But David took the bread and ate it. He also gave some of it to the people who were with him.' **27** Jesus went on to say, 'The Sabbath was made for the good of man. Man was not made for the Sabbath. **28** So the Son of Man rules over the Sabbath day.'

CHAPTER 3

The man with a weak hand

Jesus went into the meeting house again. A man was there whose right hand was thin and weak.

2 The Pharisees watched Jesus to see if he

would heal the man on the Sabbath day. They wanted to find something wrong about Jesus. **3** He spoke to the man whose hand was thin and weak. He said, 'Stand here.'

4 Then he spoke to the Pharisees. He said, 'Is it right to do good things on the Sabbath day or to do wrong things? Is it right to heal people so they will live, or to let them die?' But the Pharisees said nothing. **5** Jesus was angry as he looked at them. And he was sad that their hearts were so hard. Then he said to the man, 'Hold out your hand.' The man did so, and it was made well like the other hand.

6 The Pharisees went out. Right away they and the servants of King Herod planned together how to kill Jesus.

Many people go with Jesus

7-8 Jesus and his disciples went away to the sea of Galilee. Many people went with Jesus. They came from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and from the other side of the Jordan River. And many more people came also, a great many from around the cities of Tyre and Sidon. They also had heard about the great works that Jesus had done. **9** Jesus saw that the crowd was very big. He told the disciples to have a small boat ready for him so that he would have more room.

10 He did this because he healed many people. All who were sick tried to touch him. **11** When the bad spirits saw Jesus, they bowed down before him. They shouted, 'You are God's Son!' **12** He told them they must not tell anyone who he was.

Jesus chooses twelve disciples

13 Then Jesus went up on the hill. He wanted some of the people to come with him. So he called them and they came. **14** He chose twelve disciples to stay with him. He wanted to send them out to other places to tell people God's word. **15** He gave them power to heal people and to drive bad spirits out of people. **16** One of the twelve was Simon, whom Jesus called Peter. **17** He also chose James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee, whom he named Boanerges, which means 'Men of Thunder.' **18-19** He also chose Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon of Canan, and Judas Iscariot, the one who gave Jesus over to people who hated him.

Saying wrong things against the Holy Spirit

Then Jesus and his disciples went home. **20** So many people came again that they could not even eat. **21** When Jesus' family heard about this, they came to take him away. They said, 'He is crazy.'

22 The scribes who came from Jerusalem also talked about Jesus. They said, 'Beelzebub, the chief of bad spirits, is in this man. He drives out bad spirits by the help of Beelzebub.'

23 Jesus called the people and talked to them in stories.

He asked, 'How can Satan drive out Satan? **24** If one part of a country fights against another part of the country, that country cannot be strong. **25** If one part of a family fights against the other part of the family, it cannot stand. **26** If Satan fights against himself and the bad spirits fight against each other, he cannot stand. It will be the end of him. **27** If anyone wants to go into a strong man's house and steal his things, he must first tie the strong man. Then he can steal his things.

28 'I tell you the truth. All wrong things that people do and say about anyone will be forgiven. **29** But people who say wrong things against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. A person who does that will be punished for ever.'

30 Jesus said all this because the scribes said, 'A bad spirit is in him.'

Jesus' mother and brothers

31 Jesus' mother and brothers came to him. They stood outside. They sent someone to him.

32 Many people were sitting around him. They said, 'See, your mother and your brothers are outside. They want you.'

33 Jesus asked them, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' **34** Then he looked at the people who sat around him. He said, 'These people are my mother and my brothers! **35** Anyone who obeys God is my brother, my sister, and my mother.'

CHAPTER 4

The story of sowing the seed

Jesus began to teach people by the sea again. Many people came to him. So he got in a boat on the sea and sat down. The people were by the sea on the land. **2** He told the people stories and taught them many things.

3 He said, 'Listen. A man went out to sow some seed. **4** As he sowed it, some of the seed fell on the road. Birds came and ate the seed. **5** Some seed fell on the stony ground. Not much ground covered the stones. The seed started to grow right away because it was not deep in the ground. **6** When the sun began to shine, it was too hot for the new plants. They died because they had no roots. **7** Some seed fell among the weeds. The weeds grew up and made the new plants die. So no seeds grew on them. **8** But some seed fell on good ground. That seed grew and the plants gave more seed. Some plants gave thirty seeds. Some gave sixty. And some gave a hundred.'

9 Jesus said to them, 'Everyone who has ears to hear, listen!'

10 Later, Jesus was alone. Then the twelve disciples and the other people who were there asked him about the stories. **11** He said to them, 'You can learn the secret things about the kingdom of God. But we must use stories to tell the other people.

12 'They may look and look, but they will not see. They may listen and listen, but they will not understand. If they did understand, they would turn back to God and he would forgive them for the wrong things they have done.'

What the story means

13 Jesus said also, 'Do you not understand this story? How then are you going to understand all the stories? **14** The man who sows the seed tells God's message. **15** Those beside the road are like people who hear the message. But as soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes it out of their hearts. **16** The seed that fell on the stony ground is the same. It is like people who hear the message and as soon as they hear it they are very glad. **17** They believe it for a short time. When trouble or a hard time comes because of the message, they stop believing. **18** The seed that fell among the weeds is like people who hear the message. **19** But they think about the things of this world. They want to get money and other things to be happy. These things push the message out of their hearts. No good comes from it. **20** But some seed fell on good ground. That is like people who hear the message and understand it. Much good comes from it. Some people are like the seed that made thirty seeds. Some people are like the seed that gave sixty. Some people are like the seed that gave a hundred.'

The light

21 Then Jesus said to them, 'People do not bring a light and put it under a basket or under a bed. But they put it on the place for a lamp.

22 Everything that is hidden will be seen. Everything that is secret will be known and come out to be seen. **23** Everyone who has ears to hear, listen!'

24 And Jesus said, 'Take care how you listen. How much you give to others is how much will be given to you. You who obey God will get more than you give. **25** Anyone who has some will get more. But he who does not have anything, even the little that he has will be taken away from him.'

The growing seed

26 And Jesus said, 'The kingdom of God is like this. A man sows some seed in the ground.

27 Then he goes on just as he did before. He sleeps at night and wakes up in the morning. The seed begins to grow but he doesn't know what makes it grow. **28** The ground itself makes the seed grow. First the plant comes up. Then it begins to have seed of its own. After a while the harvest is ready. **29** When the harvest is really ready, he cuts it right away because the harvest time has come.'

The mustard seed

30 And Jesus said, 'What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I say it is like? **31** It is like this. A mustard seed is the smallest seed that is ever planted in the earth. **32** But the plant that grows from that seed is bigger than any other plant. It puts out very big branches. The birds come and live in its branches.'

33 Jesus told the people many stories like this. He told them as much of God's words as they were able to understand. **34** He did not tell them anything without a story. When he was alone with his disciples, he told them the meaning of the stories.

Jesus stops the storm

35 In the evening of that day, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side of the sea.' **36** The disciples left the people and took Jesus away in the boat he was in. Other little boats were with him. **37** A very strong wind began to blow. Water came in the boat. It began to fill up with water. **38** Jesus was in the back end of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The disciples woke him up. 'Master,' they shouted. 'We will die! Do you not care?'

39 Then Jesus got up. He said to the wind and the sea, 'Stop!' The wind stopped. Then all was quiet. **40** Then he said to the disciples, 'Why do you fear? Do you not believe in God?'

41 The disciples were surprised. They said to each other, 'What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

CHAPTER 5

The bad spirit and the pigs

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarene people. **2** There were graves in that place. As soon as Jesus came out of the boat, a man came from among the graves to meet him. The man had a bad spirit in him.

3 The man lived among the graves. No person could tie him, not even with chains. **4** Many times people had tied him with strong ropes and chains. But he broke the chains and tore the ropes into many pieces. No person was strong enough to hold the man. **5** All the time he stayed in the hills where the graves were. He screamed day and night and cut himself with sharp stones.

6 Jesus was still far from him, but when he saw Jesus he ran to him. He kneeled down in front of Jesus and worshipped him. **7** He called out loud, 'Jesus, Son of the High God, what are you going to do to me? I beg you not to hurt me.'

8 He said this because Jesus had said to him, 'You bad spirit, come out of the man.' **9** Jesus asked, 'What is your name?'

He answered, 'My name is An Army, for we are many.' **10** He begged Jesus saying, 'Do not send us out of the country.'

11 Many pigs were feeding on the hill there.

12 The bad spirits begged Jesus saying, 'Send us to the pigs so that we can go into them.'

13 Jesus let them go right away. The bad spirits came out of the man and went into the pigs. The pigs ran fast down the steep hill into the sea. They died in the water. The number of pigs was about two thousand.

14 Then the men who cared for the pigs ran away. They told the people in the city and all around the country about it. The people went out to see what had happened. **15** They came to Jesus. They saw the man who had the many bad spirits in him. He was sitting with clothes on and was not crazy any more. The people were afraid. **16** Those who had seen it told them what had happened to the man who used to have many bad spirits. And they told about the

pigs. **17** Then the people began to beg Jesus to go away out of their country.

18 So Jesus got into the boat again. The man who used to have the bad spirits in him begged to go with him.

19 But Jesus did not let him. He said, 'Go home. Tell your friends what the Lord has done for you. Tell them that he has helped you.' **20** So the man went away and told people in the Ten Towns what Jesus had done for him. All the people were surprised.

Jairus begs Jesus

21 Jesus crossed over the sea again to the other side. Many people came to him while he was near the water. **22** One of the rulers of the meeting house came to him. His name was Jairus. When he saw Jesus, he knelt down before him. **23** He said, 'My little daughter is dying. I beg you, come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.' **24** So Jesus went with Jairus.

A woman is healed

Many people went with Jesus and pushed against him. **25** A woman among them had a sickness for twelve years. She was bleeding all the time. **26** Many doctors tried to heal her. She spent all the money she had to pay them. She was not better, but was getting worse. **27** When she heard of Jesus, she came among the people behind him. Then she reached out and touched his clothes. **28** She said to herself, 'If only I touch his clothes, I will be well.' **29** The bleeding stopped right away. She could feel that she was healed of her trouble.

30 Jesus knew right away that power to heal went out from him. He turned around among the people and said, 'Who touched my clothes?'

31 But his disciples said to him, 'You see all these people pushing around you. Why do you ask, "Who touched me?"' **32** He looked around to see who had done it. **33** The woman was afraid and trembled. She knew what had happened to her. She knelt down in front of Jesus and told him the truth about herself.

34 He said to her, 'Daughter, you were healed because you believed. Go and do not be troubled. You are healed.'

Jairus' daughter raised from death

35 While Jesus was still talking, some people came from the ruler's house. They said, 'Your daughter has died. Why trouble the Teacher anymore?'

36 Jesus heard it. He said to the ruler, 'Do not fear. Only believe.'

37 Jesus did not let anyone go with him only Peter, James, and his brother John. **38** They came to the ruler's house. Jesus saw that there was trouble. People were crying and making much noise because the ruler's daughter had died. **39** When he came into the house, he said to them, 'Why do you make so much noise and cry? The girl is not dead, but is sleeping.'

40 They laughed at him. So he sent them all outside. Then he took the girl's father and mother and the three disciples into the room where the girl was lying. **41** He took her hand and said, 'Talitha cumi!' That means, 'Little girl, I tell you, get up!'

42 The girl got up right away and walked around. She was twelve years old. The people were very much surprised. **43** Jesus said, 'Do not tell anyone about this. Give the girl something to eat.'

CHAPTER 6

Jesus teaches at Nazareth

Jesus left that place and went back to his home town. His disciples went with him. **2** On the Sabbath day he began to teach in the meeting house again. Many people who heard him were very much surprised and said, 'Where did he learn all this? Where did he get the power to do these big works? **3** Is he not the carpenter? Is not Mary his mother? Are not James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon his brothers? Are not his sisters here with us?' The people did not understand Jesus.

4 Jesus said to them, 'Other people honour a man who is a prophet of God. But the people in his own country, his own home, and his family, do not honour him.' **5** Jesus could not do any big works in that place. But he put his hands on a few sick people and healed them. **6** He was surprised that the people did not believe him.

Jesus sends out twelve disciples

He went out to the villages, teaching the people.

7 He called the twelve disciples to him and sent them out two by two. He gave them power to drive bad spirits out of people. **8** He said, 'Take only a walking stick with you when you go. Do not take anything else. Do not take any food, or a bag, or money. **9** Wear shoes, but do not take extra clothing with you. **10** When you go into a certain house, live there until you leave the town. **11** In some places the people will not

take you in. They will not listen to what you say. When you leave such a town, shake the dust off your feet. That will be a warning to them. I tell you the truth. On the day when people are judged, the people in that town will be punished harder than the people in the country of Sodom and Gomorrah.'

12 The disciples went out and told the people that they should stop doing wrong things.

13 They drove bad spirits out of many people. They also put oil on many sick people and healed them.

The death of John the Baptizer

14 King Herod heard about these things. People were talking about Jesus everywhere. Herod said, 'John the Baptizer is risen from death. That is why he is able to do such great works.'

15 Other people said, 'It is Elijah.' Others said, 'He is a prophet like the prophets of God who lived long ago.'

16 Herod heard what other people said, so he said, 'I cut off John's head. He is alive again.'

17 Herod had sent his people to catch John. They tied him and put him in prison to please Herodias. Herod had married her, but she was his brother Philip's wife.

18 John had told Herod, 'It is wrong for you to have your brother's wife.'

19-20 So Herodias hated John. She wanted to kill him. But she could not because Herod liked John. He knew that John did what was right and was a good man. So he kept John safe. When he heard John speak he was troubled in his heart, and yet he was glad to hear him.

21 Herod made a feast on his birthday. He called all his rulers and the captains and the leaders of Galilee to come to the feast. **22** The daughter of Herodias came in and danced for them. This pleased Herod and the people at the feast.

Then the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for anything you want and I will give it to you.'

23 He made a promise which he would not break. He said, 'Anything that you ask me for I will give you, even if you ask me for half of my kingdom.'

24 The girl went to her mother and said, 'What shall I ask for?'

Her mother said, 'Ask for the head of John the Baptizer.'

25 The girl came quickly to the king and said, 'I want you to give me the head of John the Baptizer on a plate. Give it to me right away.'

26 The king was very sorry. But he had made a promise and all the people at the feast had heard him promise. He wanted to do what he promised her. **27** Right away he sent one of the soldiers who was standing on guard. He told him to bring John's head. The soldier went to the prison and cut off John's head. **28** He brought the head on a plate and gave it to the girl. She gave it to her mother. **29** When John's disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and buried it.

The twelve apostles come back

30 The apostles came back to Jesus. They told him all they had done and taught. **31** Jesus said to them, 'Come away with me. Let us go alone to a quiet place and rest for a while.' Many people were coming and going. They could not even eat.

32 So they went away in a boat to a lonely place by themselves. **33** The people saw them going. Many people knew them. The people ran from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

34 When the boat got there, Jesus saw the many people. He was very sorry for them because they were like sheep with no one to care for them. He began to teach them many things.

Jesus feeds five thousand people

35 When it was late in the day, his disciples came to him. They said, 'This is a lonely place and the time is late. **36** Send these people away to farms and villages to buy food for themselves. They have nothing to eat.'

37 Jesus said, 'You give them food to eat.' They said, 'Shall we go and buy a lot of bread and give them to eat?'

38 He said, 'Go and see how much bread you have.'

When they knew, they told him, 'We have five loaves of bread and two fish.'

39 Jesus told the disciples to make all the people sit on the green grass in groups. **40** The people sat down in groups. Some groups were a hundred people and some were fifty people.

41 Jesus took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and thanked God for them. Then he broke them in pieces. He gave them to the disciples to give to the people. Then he divided the two fish among them all.

42 They all ate and had enough. **43** Then they gathered twelve baskets full of pieces that were left. **44** The number of men who ate was about five thousand.

Jesus walks on the water

45 Then Jesus said to the disciples, 'You get into the boat right away and go over to Bethsaida. I will send the people away.'

46 When he had sent the people away, he went up on the hill to talk with God. **47** In the evening the boat was far out on the water. Jesus was alone on the land. **48** He saw the disciples working hard rowing the boat. The wind was blowing the wrong way. When it was almost morning, Jesus came to the disciples. He was walking on the water. He was going to pass by them. **49** But when they saw him walking on the water, they thought it was a spirit. They shouted loudly. **50** They all saw him and were very much afraid. He spoke to them right away. He said, 'Be glad! It is I. Do not fear.' **51** Then he got in the boat with them. The wind stopped. They were very much surprised and did not know what to say. **52** They did not understand the lesson about the bread because their minds were too slow.

53 They crossed over the sea and came to the land at Gennesaret. They came to shore. **54** As soon as he got out of the boat, the people knew him. **55** They went quickly to all the country around. They brought sick people in their beds to the place where they heard Jesus was. **56** They laid sick people by the road in villages, towns, and farms and every place he went. They begged him to let them touch his clothes. And all the people who touched him were healed.

CHAPTER 7

Laws made by men

Then some Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem came to Jesus. **2** They saw some of the disciples eating food. They had not washed their hands before they ate. The Pharisees said that was wrong. **3** They and all the Jews keep the laws made by men. God did not give them those laws. They do not eat until they wash their hands very well. **4** When they come from the market, they do not eat until they have washed themselves. They also keep many other laws such as washing cups, pots, brass pans, and beds.

5 The Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, 'Why do your disciples not keep the law our fathers made? Why do they eat with hands that are not clean?'

6-7 Jesus said to them, 'Isaiah spoke the truth about you people! You are not true to yourselves! He wrote about you this way: "These people respect me with their mouths. But their hearts are far from me. They do not mean it in their hearts when they worship me. Their teachings are only words of men."

8 'You do not keep the law of God, but you keep the laws made by people. Those laws are about washing pots and cups. You do many other things like that also.

9 'You break God's law so that you can keep your own law. **10** Moses said, "Respect your father and your mother. Anyone who says wrong things to his father or his mother will die." **11** You say, "Tell your father or your mother that what you were going to give to them is Corban." (That means a gift to God.) **12** So you stop him from doing anything for his father and mother. **13** You make God's law to mean nothing so that you can keep your own laws. You do many other things like that also.'

Things that make a person dirty

14 Then Jesus called the people to him again. He said, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand what I say. **15** What goes into a person's mouth does not make him dirty. But what comes out of a person's mouth makes him dirty. **16** Everyone who has ears to hear, listen!'

17 Jesus left the people and went into a house. His disciples asked him the meaning of the story. **18** He said, 'Do you still not understand? Do you not know this? What goes into a person from the outside cannot make a person dirty. **19** It does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and then it goes out of the body.' By saying this, Jesus meant that food does not make a person dirty.

20 But he said, 'What comes out of a person makes him dirty. **21-22** Here is what comes from the heart: wrong thoughts, all kinds of adultery, stealing, killing, wanting things that other people have, doing very wrong things, fooling people, breaking the law, jealousy, saying wrong things about people, being proud, being foolish. **23** All these wrong things come from a person's heart and make him dirty.'

A woman begs Jesus to help her daughter

24 Then Jesus went away to the country of Tyre and Sidon. He went into a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. But he could not hide from the people.

25 Right away a woman heard of him. She came and knelt down before him. Her daughter had a bad spirit in her. **26** The woman was not a Jew and had been born in the country of Phoenicia in Syria. She begged Jesus to drive the bad spirit out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said to her, 'We will give the children all they want to eat first. It is not right to take the children's food and give it to the little dogs.'

28 She answered, 'Yes, Sir. But even the little dogs under the table eat food that falls from the children's table.'

29 Jesus said to her, 'Because you have said this, you may go home. The bad spirit has gone out of your daughter.' **30** When she came to her house, she found that the bad spirit had left. Her daughter was lying on the bed.

A man who could not hear or talk is healed

31 Jesus went away from Tyre and Sidon and came to the sea of Galilee. He passed through the country of the Ten Towns. **32** The people brought a man to Jesus who could not hear and could not talk well. They begged Jesus to put his hand on him. **33** So Jesus took him away alone. He put his fingers in the man's ears. Then he spat and touched the man's tongue.

34 He looked up to heaven and sighed. He said, 'Ephphatha!' That means, 'Be opened!' **35** Right away the man's ears were opened and his tongue was made free. He could talk well.

36 Jesus said, 'Do not tell anyone.' But the more he told them not to tell, the more they told it everywhere. **37** The people were very much surprised. They said, 'He has done everything well. The people who could not hear can hear. The people who could not talk can talk.'

CHAPTER 8

Jesus feeds four thousand people

Again at that time many, many people came together. They had nothing to eat. Jesus called his disciples. He said, **2** 'I share the suffering of the people. They have been with me for three days and they have nothing to eat. **3** If I send them home hungry, they will get weak and fall

on the way. Some of them have come a long way.'

4 His disciples answered, 'Where can anyone get enough food in this lonely place to feed so many people?'

5 Jesus asked them, 'How many loaves of bread have you?'

They said, 'Seven.' **6** He told the people to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves of bread and thanked God for them. Then he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples. They gave it to the people. **7** They had a few small fish. Jesus told the disciples to divide the fish among the people also. **8** The people ate and had enough. They gathered seven baskets full of pieces that were left. **9** The number of men who ate was about four thousand.

10 Jesus sent them away. Then right away he got in the boat with his disciples and went to the country around Dalmanutha.

The yeast of the Pharisees

11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with Jesus. They wanted to test him. So they asked him to show them a sign from the sky. **12** He sighed deeply in his spirit and said, 'Why do people today want a sign? I tell you the truth. No sign will be given to them.' **13** He left them and went to the other side in a boat.

14 The disciples forgot to take food. They had only one loaf of bread with them in the boat.

15 Jesus said, 'Watch! Take care. Do not let the bread yeast of the Pharisees and Herod spoil you.'

16 The disciples talked to one another about the matter. They said, 'He says that because we have no bread.'

17 Jesus knew what they were saying. He asked, 'Why are you saying, "We have no bread"? Do you not yet understand? Are your minds so slow? **18** Can you not see with your eyes or hear with your ears? Do you not remember? **19** When I broke five loaves for five thousand people, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you gather?' They said, 'Twelve.'

20 He said, 'When I broke seven loaves for four thousand people, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you gather?'

They said, 'Seven.'

21 He said to them, 'How is it that you do not yet understand?'

Making the blind man to see

22 Then they came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to Jesus. They begged him to touch the man. **23** Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. He spat on his eyes and put his hands on him. Then he asked, 'Do you see anything?'

24 The man looked up and said, 'I see men, but they look like trees that are walking.' **25** Jesus put his hands on him again. He made him look up. Then he was healed and could see everybody clearly. **26** Jesus sent the man away to his home. 'Do not go into the village and do not tell it to anyone,' he said.

What Peter said about Jesus

27 Jesus went with his disciples to the villages in Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?'

28 They answered, 'People say that you are John the Baptizer. Others say that you are Elijah. And others say that you are one of the prophets from long ago.' **29** Then he asked them, 'But who do you say I am?'

Peter answered, 'You are the Christ.'

30 Jesus said to them, 'Do not tell anyone about me.'

Jesus talks about his death

31 Then he began to teach them. He said, 'The Son of Man will have much trouble. The leaders, the chief priests, and the scribes will not believe him. He will be killed. After three days he will rise.' **32** Jesus said this very plainly. Peter took him to one side and began to tell him not to say such things. **33** Jesus turned around and saw the disciples. Then he talked to Peter. He said, 'Get away from me, Satan! You are not thinking the way God thinks, but the way people think.'

34 Jesus called the people and the disciples to him. He said, 'If anyone wants to come with me he must leave what he himself wants to do. He must be ready to carry his own cross and come with me. **35** Anyone who tries to keep his life will lose it. And anyone who gives up his life for my sake and for the sake of the good news will find it. **36** What good will it do a man if he gets the whole world for himself but loses his soul? **37-38** What can a person give to get back his soul? People have gone away from God and are full of wrong ways. If anyone in this time is ashamed of me and the things I say, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of that person when

he comes. The Son of Man will come with his holy angels, and be great like his Father.'

CHAPTER 9

Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth. Some people are standing here who will not die before they see the kingdom of God come with power.'

Jesus is changed

2 Six days after this, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him. He led them up a hill by themselves. Jesus was changed in front of them. **3** His clothes were white like light. No person on earth could make them so white.

4 Then they saw Elijah and Moses talking with Jesus.

5 Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, this is a good place for us. We will make three places, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'

6 Peter did not know what to say because they were very much afraid.

7 Then a cloud came over them. A voice in the cloud said, 'This is my dear Son. Listen to him.'

8 They quickly looked around but they saw no one except Jesus there with them. **9** When they came down the hill, Jesus said to them, 'Do not tell anyone what you saw. Do not tell it until after the Son of Man has been raised from death.' **10** So they kept these things to themselves, asking each other what he meant about rising from death.

11 Then they asked Jesus, 'Why do the scribes [who know all about the holy writings] say that first Elijah must come?'

12 He said, 'Elijah does come first. He will get everything ready. But why do the holy writings say that the Son of Man must have much trouble? They say, "He will have much trouble and the people will not respect him." **13** I tell you that Elijah has come. The people did to him just what they wanted to do. They did just as it is written about him.'

Jesus heals a boy with a bad spirit

14 When they came to the disciples, they saw many people around them. Some scribes were talking with the disciples. **15** The people were all very much surprised when they saw Jesus. They ran to him and greeted him.

16 Jesus asked his disciples, 'What are you talking about with them?'

17 One of the people said, 'Teacher, I brought my son to you. A bad spirit is in him so he cannot talk. **18** Wherever it takes hold of him, it

throws him around. It makes him foam at his mouth. It makes him make noises with his teeth. He is getting weak and thin. I asked your disciples to drive the bad spirit out, but they could not do it.'

19 Jesus said, 'You people today do not believe. How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.'

20 So they brought the boy to him. As soon as the bad spirit saw him, he threw the boy around. The boy fell on the ground and rolled around. Foam was coming from his mouth.

21 Jesus asked the father, 'How long has he had this spirit?' He answered, 'Since he was a child.'

22 Often it has thrown him in the fire and in the water. It has tried to kill him. If you can do anything for him, show us that you share our suffering by helping us.'

23 Jesus said to him, 'You say, "If you can." Anything can be done for the person who believes.'

24 Right away the father of the child, with tears in his eyes, said loudly, 'I do believe! Help me to believe more!'

25 Jesus saw many people come running together. He talked to the bad spirit: 'You bad spirit who stops the boy from hearing and talking! I tell you, come out of him and do not go into him again!' **26** The bad spirit screamed and threw the boy around. Then it came out of him and left him like a dead person. Many of the people even said, 'The boy is dead.' **27** But Jesus took his hand and helped him to get up. The boy stood up.

Praying and fasting

28 Jesus went into the house. His disciples were alone with him. They asked him, 'Why could we not drive out the bad spirit?' **29** Jesus said to them, 'This kind of bad spirit does not come out unless people talk to God and fast.'

Jesus talks again about his death

30 Then they left that place and went through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know it.

31 He taught his disciples. He said to them, 'The Son of Man will be given over to men. They will kill him. When he is killed, he will rise after three days.' **32** The disciples did not understand what he said and they were afraid to ask him.

Who is greatest?

33 They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked the disciples, 'What were you talking about on the way coming?' **34** But

they said nothing, because on the road they had been talking among themselves about who was the greatest person.

35 He sat down and called the twelve disciples to him. He said, 'The way to be first is to put yourself last and be a servant to the others.'

36 Jesus took a child and had him stand in front of them. Then he took the child in his arms and said, **37** 'If anyone takes in a child like this for my sake, he takes in me. If anyone takes in me, he takes in the One who sent me.'

He that is not against you is on your side

38 John said to him, 'Master, we saw a man driving bad spirits out of people. He was using your name, but he is not one of us. So we told him to stop because he is not one of us.'

39 Jesus said, 'Do not stop him. Anyone who can do a great work in my name will not be quick to say wrong things about me. **40** He that is not against us is on our side.

41 'I tell you the truth. If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, he will not lose his reward'

How to stop doing wrong

42 'These little children believe in me. If anyone makes one of them do wrong, he will be punished. He will have worse trouble than if a big stone were tied to his neck and he were thrown into the deep sea. **43** If your hand makes you do wrong, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life with one hand than to have two hands and go into hell. Hell fire never dies.

44 In hell their worm will not die and the fire will not stop burning. **45** If your foot makes you do wrong, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life with one foot than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. Hell fire never dies. **46** In hell their worm will not die and the fire will not stop burning. **47** If your eye makes you do wrong, take it out. It is better for you to go into God's kingdom with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell. **48** In hell their worm will not die and the fire will not stop burning.

49 Everyone must be tested by fire. Every sacrifice must have salt on it. **50** Salt is good. But if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? You must have salt in yourselves and live in peace with one another.'

CHAPTER 10**Jesus teaches about sending away a wife**

Jesus left that place and went through the country of Judea on the other side of the Jordan river. Many people came to him there again. He taught them as he always did.

2 The Pharisees came to him and asked, 'Is it right for a man to send his wife away from him?' They asked this to test Jesus.

3 Jesus answered, 'What law did Moses give you?'

4 They said, 'Moses allowed a man to write a paper to show that he does not want her any more. Then he may send her away.'

5 Jesus said to them, 'Moses wrote that law because your hearts are so hard. **6** From the time God first made people, he made them man and woman. **7** That is why a man must leave his father and mother and stay with his wife. **8** The two of them will be like one person. So they are not two people any more, but they are one person. **9** Man must not separate what God has joined together.'

10 When they were in the house, the disciples asked Jesus about this matter. **11** So Jesus said, 'If any man sends away his wife and marries another woman, he commits adultery against her. [He takes another woman who is not his wife.] **12** If a woman sends away her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.'

Jesus blesses children

13 They brought children to Jesus. They wanted him to put his hands on them. The disciples tried to stop the people. **14** When Jesus saw what the disciples did, he did not like it. He said, 'Let the children come to me. Do not try to stop them. **15** I tell you the truth. If anyone does not believe in the kingdom of God like a child, he will never go in.' **16** Jesus took the children up in his arms. He put his hands on them and blessed them.

The rich young man

17 Jesus started on the way again. A man came running and knelt down before him. He said, 'Good Teacher, what must I do so that I will live for ever?'

18 Jesus said, 'Why do you call me good? Only God is good. **19** You know the laws: "Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do

not tell lies. Do not cheat. Respect your father and your mother".'

20 The man answered Jesus. He said, 'Teacher, I have kept all those laws since I was a boy.'

21 Jesus looked at him. He loved him. He said, 'You need one thing more. Go home. Sell everything you have. Give the money to the poor people. You will be rich in heaven. So be ready to carry your own cross and come with me.' **22** When the young man heard that, he was sad, because he was very rich. So he went away.

23 Then Jesus looked around at his disciples and said to them, 'It is very hard for rich people to enter the kingdom of God.' **24** The disciples were surprised at his words. But Jesus said again, 'Children, it is very hard for people who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God.'

25 It is easier for a big animal to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'

26 They were very much surprised. They said, 'Then who can be saved?'

27 Jesus looked at them and said, 'Men cannot do it but God can, because God can do anything.'

28 Peter began to speak and said to him, 'See, we have left all things and have come with you.'

29-30 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. If any man has left his house, or his brothers, or his sisters, his mother, or his father, or his children, or farms, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, he will receive his pay in this life. He will have a hundred times as many houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and farms. He will have trouble also. But in the next world he will live for ever. **31** But many people who are first will be last, and those who are last will be first.'

Jesus talks again about his death

32 Jesus and his disciples were on the road to Jerusalem. Jesus was walking in front of them. The disciples were surprised. And the people who came behind were afraid. He took the twelve disciples and began to tell them what was going to happen to him. **33** He said, 'We are going to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will judge him and say he must die. They will give him over to rulers who are not Jews. **34** They will make fun of him. They will spit on him. They will beat him and kill him. After three days, he will rise again.'

What James and John wanted

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said, 'Master, we want you to do for us anything we ask you.'

36 Jesus said, 'What do you want me to do for you?'

37 They said, 'Let one of us sit at your right side and one at your left side when you rule.'

38 But Jesus said, 'You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink from the cup that I will drink from? Can you go through the big trouble that I will go through?'

39 'Yes,' they said. 'We can.'

Then Jesus said to them, 'You will drink what I drink and you will have trouble the way I will have. **40** But I cannot choose who will sit at my right hand or at my left. It has been planned who will sit there.'

41 When the other ten disciples heard about it, they were angry with James and John. **42** Jesus called them and said, 'You know the people who rule over countries make their people obey them. The great will tell the others what to do.'

43 But that is not the way it is among you. Anyone among you who wants to be great must help the others. **44** Anyone among you who wants to be first shall be a servant to the others. **45** The Son of Man did not come to have others help him. But he came to help others. He came to give his life to make many people free.'

Jesus makes the blind man to see

46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples left Jericho, many people followed him. A blind man named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. He was begging for money. **47** He heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing. So he shouted, 'Jesus, Son of David! Help me!'

48 Many people said, 'Be quiet!' But he shouted louder, 'Son of David! Help me!'

49 Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.'

They called the blind man and said to him, 'Be glad! Come, get up! He is calling you.' **50** The man threw off his coat, jumped up, and went to Jesus.

51 Jesus said, 'What do you want me to do for you?'

The blind man said to him, 'Teacher, I want to see.'

52 Jesus said, 'Go home. Because you believe in me, your faith has made you well.' Right then he was able to see. He followed Jesus on the road.

CHAPTER 11

Jesus goes to Jerusalem

They came to Bethphage and Bethany, near Jerusalem by the hill called Olives. Then he sent two of his disciples ahead. **2** He said, 'Go into the village in front of you. As soon as you go in, you will find an animal tied. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it to me. **3** If anyone asks you, "Why are you doing this?" tell him, "The Lord needs it. He will send it back soon".'

4 The disciples went. They found the animal tied outside a door in the street. They untied it.

5 People standing there said, 'What are you doing, untying the animal?' **6** The disciples said what Jesus had told them to say. So they let them go. **7** They brought it to Jesus and laid their coats on it. He got on it. **8** Many people spread their coats on the road. Others cut leaves and branches from the fields and put them on the road. **9** People in front of him and people behind him shouted,

'Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! **10** God bless the kingdom of our father David which is coming. Praise him in heaven!'

11 And so Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. He looked at everything. Then he went out with the twelve disciples to Bethany. It was late already.

The fig tree with no fruit

12 In the morning when they were on the way out of Bethany, Jesus was hungry. **13** He saw a fig tree a little way off with leaves on it. So he went to see if it had figs. He came to the tree. There was no fruit on it, only leaves. It was not the time for figs. **14** Jesus said to the tree, 'No one will ever eat a fig from you again!' His disciples heard what he said.

Cleaning out the temple

15 They reached Jerusalem. Jesus went into the temple. He began to drive out the people who were buying and selling in the temple. He threw down the tables of the money changers. He pushed down the seats of those who sold doves.

16 He would not let anyone carry anything through the temple. **17** He taught the people, saying, 'The holy writings say, "My house shall be called a house for all tribes and nations,

where people talk with God." But you have made it a place for people who steal!'

18 The chief priests and scribes heard what he said. They wanted to find some way to kill him. They feared Jesus because all the people were surprised at his teaching.

19 In the evening Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

The fig tree that died

20 The next morning they passed the fig tree again. They saw that it had died from the roots.

21 Peter remembered about it. He said, 'Look Master, you cursed the fig tree and it has died.'

22 Jesus said, 'Believe in God. **23** I tell you the truth. Anyone may say to this hill, "Go and jump into the sea." He must not doubt in his heart, but he must believe that he will have the things he asks for and he will have them.

24 'So I tell you, when you ask God for anything believe that you will get it and you will have it.

25 When you stand and talk with God, forgive others for the wrong things they have done to you. Then your Father in heaven will also forgive you for the wrong things you have done.

26 But if you do not forgive others, your Father in heaven will not forgive you for the wrong things you have done.'

The question about Jesus' right

27 They came to Jerusalem again. Jesus walked in the temple.

The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders came to him. **28** They said, 'What right have you to do these things? Who gave you the right to do them?'

29 Jesus said, 'I will ask you a question. If you answer me, I will answer you and tell you what right I have to do these things. **30** Who gave John the right to baptise people? Did God or did men? Answer me!'

31 So they talked it over together. They said, 'If we say, "God gave John the right," he will say, "Then why did you not believe him?" **32** But what if we say, "Men gave him the right to do it"?' They feared the people because they all believed that John was a prophet of God. **33** So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.'

Then Jesus said, 'Neither will I tell you what right I have to do these things.'

CHAPTER 12

The farm and the bad men

Jesus then began to speak to the disciples in stories. 'A man planted a farm of vines for growing fruit called grapes. He put a fence of small trees around it. He dug a place to press the juice from the fruit. He built a high house from which men could watch over the farm. Then he let some men pay to use it and went to a country far away. **2** At harvest time the owner sent one his servants to get some of the fruit from the farm. **3** The men took the servant and beat him. They sent him away without any fruit. **4** He sent another servant. They hurt this one also, and cut his head. The things they did to him were very wrong. **5** So he sent another servant. The men killed him. He sent many others, and the men beat some and killed others. **6** There was one left. He was his own son. He sent him last. He said, "They will respect my son." **7** But the men said to each other, "This is the one who will have everything when his father dies. Let us kill him. Then everything will belong to us." **8** They killed him and threw his body outside the farm.

9 'What will the man who owned the farm do to them? He will come back and kill the men in the farm. And he will give the farm to other men to use. **10-11** Have you not read this writing: "The stone which the builders would not use is now the chief stone of the corner. The Lord did this. It looks wonderful to us."?'

12 They tried to catch Jesus but they feared the people. They knew that Jesus had spoken this against them. So they left him and went away.

Paying taxes to Caesar

13 They sent some Pharisees and some of Herod's people to Jesus. They planned how to make Jesus say something wrong. **14** They came and said to him, 'Teacher, we know that you are true. You do not fear any person or care how great he is. But you teach the true way of God. Tell us, is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or is it not? **15** Should we pay taxes or not?'

Jesus knew they were trying to get him into trouble. So he said to them, 'Why are you trying to get me to do wrong? Bring me a piece of money. Let me look at it.' **16** They brought one to him.

He asked, 'Whose picture and name is this?'

They answered, 'Caesar's.'

17 So he said, 'Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God.' The Pharisees and Herod's people were much surprised at Jesus.

The matter of rising from the dead

18 Some of the Sadducees came to Jesus. They say that people do not rise from death. They asked Jesus a question. **19** 'Teacher,' they said, 'Moses gave us this law: if a man dies and leaves a wife but no children, then his brother must marry the wife and raise a family for his brother. **20** There were seven brothers. The first one married. He died and left no child. **21** The second brother married the wife. He also died and left no child. It was the same with the third one. **22** All seven brothers married her. They all had no children. Last of all the woman died also. **23** Now then, when people rise from death, whose wife will she be? All seven of them had married her.'

24 Jesus said to them, 'You are wrong! You do not know what the holy writings say. And you do not know what power God has. **25** When people rise from death, men and women do not marry. But they are like angels in heaven. **26** People do rise from death! Have you never read what Moses wrote? It is in the place where we read about the small tree which burned. Moses tells how God said to him, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." **27** He is not the God of dead people, but of living people. The way you look at things is wrong altogether.'

The greatest law

28 One of the scribes heard them talking. He saw that Jesus gave them a good answer. Then he came and asked, 'Which law is the greatest law of all?'

29 Jesus answered, 'The greatest one is, "Hear, O Israel. The Lord our God is one Lord. **30** Love the Lord your God with all your heart. Love him with all your soul. Love him with all your mind. And love him with all your strength." **31** The second law is this: "Love your neighbour as you love yourself." No law is greater than these laws.'

32 Then the scribe answered Jesus, 'Teacher, what you say is right. There is one God. There are no other gods. **33** Love God with all your heart. Love him with all your understanding. Love him with all your strength. That is much better than to burn offerings and make sacrifices. Love your neighbour as you love

yourself. That is better than any of these offerings and sacrifices.'

34 Jesus saw that the scribe was wise. So he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' After that everyone feared to ask him any more questions.

The matter of David's son

35 Jesus was teaching people in the temple. He said, 'How can the scribes say that Christ is David's son? **36** The Holy Spirit spoke through David and he himself said: "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit beside me until I make you master over your enemies'."

37 'So David calls Christ his Lord. How can Christ be David's son?' Most of the people were glad to hear Jesus' teaching.

The wrong ways of the scribes

38 Jesus went on to teach them. He said, 'Take care. Do not let the scribes fool you by the way they do things. They like to walk about with long gowns. They want people to greet them in the market. **39** They want to sit in the front seats in the meeting houses. They want to sit in the best places at feasts. **40** They take away the homes of women whose husbands are dead. They cover up the wrong things they do by talking to God a long time. They will be punished more!'

What the poor woman gave

41 Jesus sat down in the temple near the place where people put in their money. He saw how the people put in money. Many rich people put in much money. **42** A poor woman, whose husband was dead, came. She put in two small pieces of money. **43** Jesus called his disciples. He said, 'I tell you the truth. This poor woman has given more money than all the other people. **44** All these people had plenty of money and they gave only a part of it. She was poor and she gave everything she had. She has nothing left to live on.'

CHAPTER 13

Signs before the end

When Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said, 'Look Master, see those big stones and the wonderful houses!'

2 Jesus said, 'You see these big houses? I tell you, not one stone here will be left on top of another. They will all be thrown down!'

3 Afterwards, he was sitting on the hill called the Mount of Olives, near the temple. Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to him alone.

4 They said, 'Tell us, when will this happen? What will be the sign when these things are going to be done?'

5 Then Jesus began to talk to them. He said, 'Take care. Do not let anyone fool you. **6** Many men will come in my name. They will say, "I am Christ." They will fool many people. **7** You will hear about wars. You will hear that war is coming. But do not fear. These things must happen, but that is not yet the end. **8** One tribe will fight against another tribe. And one country will fight against another country. The earth will shake in many different places. People will have no food to eat. These troubles are only the beginning of the troubles that will come.

9 'But you must take care. Men will take you to court. They will beat you in their meeting houses. They will take you to rulers and kings because you are true to me. You will talk to them about me. **10** The good news must first be told to all people.

11 'When men take you to court, do not be troubled about what you will say. Say whatever comes to your mind at that time. It is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. **12** A brother will take his brother to be killed. A father will take his child. The children will talk against their father and mother and have them killed. **13** All people will hate you because you are true to me. But the person who keeps on being true to me until the end will be saved.

14 'Daniel the Man of God said that people would put something very bad in the temple.' (Let the one who reads this understand it.) 'When that happens, the people in Judea must go quickly to the hills. **15** A person who is on the top of a house must not go down into the house to get things. **16** Those who are working in the fields must not go back to get their coats.

17 In those days it will be very hard for women who are to have a child. It will be very hard for mothers who have babies. **18** Ask God that you may not have the trouble in the cold time of the year. **19** The trouble then will be bigger than any trouble since God made the world. And there never will be any trouble as big as that. **20** No person would be saved if the Lord did not make the time of trouble shorter. He will make it shorter for the sake of his chosen people.

21 'If anyone says to you then, "Look, here is the Christ!" or, "There he is!" do not believe it.

22 People will come and say they are the Christ. People will come and say they are prophets of God. But they are not true to themselves. They will show big signs and do wonderful things that will fool people. They will fool God's chosen people if they can. **23** Watch! I have told you all these things before they happen.

24 'In that time of trouble, the sun will be dark. The moon will not shine. **25** The stars will fall from the sky. And the powers in the sky will be shaken. **26** Then people will see the sign of the Son of Man in the clouds. He will have much power and be very great. **27** He will send out the angels to gather his chosen people. They will gather them from everywhere all over the earth.

28 'Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its branches begin to grow and the leaves come, then you know it will soon be the warm time of the year.

29 'It is the same when you see all these things. You will know that the time is very near, right at the door. **30** I tell you the truth. The people who are living then will not die before all these things happen. **31** The sky and the earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 'But no one knows the day or the hour when the Son of Man will come. Even the angels in heaven and the Son do not know. Only the Father knows. **33** So watch! Stay awake and talk with God. You do not know when the time will be. **34** It is like a man who went to a country far away. He left his home and told each one of his servants what work he must do. Then he told the man who guards the door to watch. **35** So watch! You do not know when the master of the house will come. You do not know if he will come in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock calls, or in the morning. **36** Watch, so that you will not be sleeping if he comes quickly. **37** What I say to you I say to everybody, and this is "Watch".'

CHAPTER 14

The plan to catch Jesus

The Passover Feast and the feast with bread that has no yeast in it was two days later. The chief priests and the scribes planned how to catch Jesus by some trick. They wanted to kill him. **2** But they said, 'Let us not do it on the day of the feast. We do not want the people to start fighting about it.'

Jesus at Bethany

3 When Jesus was in the town of Bethany, he was in Simon's house. Simon had leprosy. While Jesus sat at the table, a woman came to him. She had a bottle of oil. It smelled very nice and cost much money. She broke the bottle and poured the oil on Jesus' head. **4** Some people there were angry. They said, 'Why was this oil wasted like that?' **5** The oil might have been sold for a lot of money. Then the money could have been given to poor people.' They said to the woman, 'You should not have done this!'

6 But Jesus said, 'Leave the woman alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good thing to me. **7** You will always have poor people with you. Any time you want to, you can do good to them. But I will not always be with you. **8** She has done what she could. She has put oil on my body to make me ready to be buried. **9** I tell you the truth. Any place in the whole world where people tell the good news, people will also tell what she has done. People will remember her because of it.'

10 Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the chief priests. He told them how he could help them catch Jesus. **11** They were glad when they heard that. They promised to give him money. So he watched for a good way to help them catch Jesus.

Jesus eats the Passover Feast with his disciples

12 It was the first day of the feast with bread that has no yeast in it. The sheep had to be killed for the Passover Feast. His disciples asked Jesus, 'Where do you want us to make ready for you to eat the Passover Feast?'

13 He sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the city. There you will meet a man who is carrying a pot of water. Follow him. **14** When he goes into a house, talk to the master of the house. Say to him, "The Teacher says, "Where is my room where I can eat the Passover Feast with my disciples?"' **15** The man will show you a large room upstairs. It will be all fixed up and ready. Get the Passover food ready for us there.'

16 The disciples went to the city. They found everything just as he had said. There they made the Passover food ready.

17 In the evening he came with the twelve disciples. **18** While they were sitting at the table eating, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. One of you who is eating with me will give me over to people who hate me.'

19 They were sad and troubled. One after the other began to say to him, 'Lord, is it I?'

20 Jesus answered them, 'It is one of you twelve. It is the one who puts his hand in the same dish with me. **21** The Son of Man will go just as the holy writings tell about him. But the man who gives him over will have trouble. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born!'

22 As they were eating, Jesus took some bread. He thanked God for it and broke it. Then he gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take this bread and eat it. It is my body.'

23 He also took a cup. He thanked God for it. Then he gave it to them. They all drank some of it. **24** Then he said to them, 'This is my blood. It is given for many people. It makes the agreement strong. **25** I tell you the truth. I will not drink any of the fruit of the vine again until I drink some of it new in the kingdom of God.'

26 They sang a song and then went out to the hill called Olives. **27** Jesus said to them, 'All of you will leave me this night. the holy writings say, "I will kill the one who takes care of the sheep. And the sheep will run away." **28** But after I am raised from death, I will go to Galilee to meet you.'

29 Peter said, 'Even if all the others leave you, I will never leave you.'

30 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. This very night, before the cock calls two times, you will say three times that you do not know me.'

31 Peter said, 'Even if I must die with you, I will never say I do not know you!' They all said the same thing.

Jesus talks with God

32 Then they came to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to his disciples, 'Sit here. I will go and talk with God.'

33 He took Peter, James, and John along with him. Jesus began to be sad and troubled. **34** He said to them, 'My heart is very sad. I am almost dying! Stay here and watch.'

35 Jesus went on a little farther. He fell on the ground and asked God that, if it could be so, this big trouble might pass by him. **36** He said, 'Oh, my Father, you can do all things. Take this cup away from me. But do not do what I want, but what you want.'

37 Jesus went back and found the disciples sleeping. He said to Peter, 'Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?' **38** All

of you must watch and talk with God so that you will not do wrong. A person's heart can want to do it, but his body is weak.'

39 Jesus went away again and said the same words to God again. **40** Jesus went back again and found the disciples sleeping. They could not keep their eyes open. They did not know what to say to Jesus.

41 Then he went back the third time. He said, 'Are you still sleeping and resting?. It is enough. The time has come now. The Son of Man is given over to bad people. **42** Get up. Let us go. Look, here comes the one who will give me over to people who hate me!'

The people catch Jesus

43 While he was saying this, Judas came. He was one of the twelve disciples. Many people came with him. They had long knives or swords and big sticks. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders had sent them. **44** The man who was going to help them catch Jesus had told them that he would give them a sign. He said, 'The man that I kiss is the one. Catch him and take him away safely.' **45** So when he came, he went to Jesus right away. He said, 'Master!' And he kissed him.

46 Then they caught Jesus and held him.

47 One of the men standing by took his sword. He cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.

48 Jesus said, 'Have you come to take me with knives and sticks the way you would take a man who steals? **49** Every day I was with you in the temple and taught. You did not catch me then. But what the holy writings say will come true.'

50 Then all of the disciples left Jesus and ran away.

51 A young man went with Jesus. He had a piece of cloth about him. The people caught him. **52** But he left the cloth behind and ran away without any clothes on.

Jesus is taken to the high priest

53 The people took Jesus away to the high priest. All the chief priests, the leaders, and the scribes met there.

54 Peter followed far behind Jesus. He went into the yard of the high priest's house. He sat down with the people who worked for the high priest. He warmed himself by the fire.

55 The chief priests, and all the judges of the court tried to find men to say Jesus had done something wrong so they could kill him. But they found none. **56** Many people came and

said things that were not true. But one said this thing and the other said that thing.

57 Then some stood up to talk against Jesus.

58 They said, 'We heard him say, "I will break down this temple which people have built with hands. In three days I will build another temple but not with hands".'

59 Others said, 'No, that is not what he said.'

60 The high priest stood up among the people and asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer? What do you have to say about this? They have said something against you.' **61** But Jesus said nothing at all.

Then the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?'

62 Jesus answered, 'Yes, I am. You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the One who has all power. You will see him coming on the clouds of the sky!'

63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'We do not need any more proof against him. **64** What he has said is wrong! What do you think?'

They all said, 'He should be killed.'

65 Some people began to spit on him. They covered his face and hit him. They laughed at him and said, 'Tell us if you know who hit you!' The guards took him away and hit him as they went.

What Peter says about Jesus

66 Peter sat out in the yard. A servant girl who worked for the high priest came. **67** She saw Peter warming himself by the fire. She looked at him and said, 'You were also with Jesus of Nazareth.'

68 But Peter said, 'I do not know or understand what you are talking about.' Peter went out to the gate. Then a cock called.

69 A girl saw Peter there and said to the other people standing by, 'This man is one of them.'

70 But again Peter said he was not.

A little while after, those standing around said to Peter, 'Surely you are one of them also. You come from Galilee.'

71 Then Peter began to curse and say bad words. He said, 'I do not know this man you are talking about!'

72 Right then the cock called a second time and Peter remembered that Jesus had said, 'Before the cock calls two times, you will say three times

that you do not know me.' Then he broke down and cried.

CHAPTER 15

Jesus in Pilate's court

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, leaders, and the scribes talked together. They tied Jesus and took him before Pilate to be judged.

2 Pilate asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

Jesus answered, 'Yes, I am.'

3 The chief priests brought many complaints against Jesus.

4 Then Pilate asked him, 'Have you nothing to say? These people are bringing many complaints against you!' **5** But Jesus said nothing. Pilate was very much surprised about this.

6 At the feast Pilate used to let one prisoner free. He let the people choose the man they wanted to go free. **7** In the prison was a man named Barabbas. He had led some people who had been fighting in the city. He had killed a man. **8** The people started shouting. They asked Pilate to let one prisoner free, as he used to do.

9 Then Pilate asked, 'Do you want me to let the King of the Jews go free?' **10** He knew that the chief priests did not like Jesus. He knew that was why they brought Jesus to him. **11** But the chief priests talked to the people. They told them to ask Pilate to let Barabbas go free.

12 Pilate asked them, 'Then what shall I do with the man whom you call King of the Jews?'

13 They shouted back, 'Nail him to a cross!'

14 Pilate then asked, 'Why, what wrong thing has he done?'

But they shouted even more, 'Nail him to a cross!' **15** Pilate wanted to please the people, so he let Barabbas go free. He told the soldiers to beat Jesus and nail him to a cross.

The soldiers make fun of Jesus

16 The soldiers took Jesus to a room. They called all the soldiers together. **17** They put a red gown on Jesus. They made a big ring of thorns like a crown and put it on his head.

18 Then they began to speak to him as if he were a king. They shouted, 'Greetings, King of the Jews!' **19** They hit him on the head with a stick and spat on him. They kneeled down before him as if to give him great respect.

20 When they had made fun of him, they took

off the red gown and put his own clothes on him again. Then they took Jesus out of the city to nail him to a cross.

Jesus is nailed to a cross

21 A man was coming in from the farms. His name was Simon. He was born in the country of Cyrene. Alexander and Rufus were his sons. The soldiers caught Simon and made him carry Jesus' cross. **22** They took Jesus to Golgotha. That means the place of a head bone. **23** They wanted Jesus to drink wine mixed with something bitter. But Jesus would not drink it.

24 Then they nailed him to a cross.

They gambled to see how they should divide Jesus' clothes. **25** It was nine o'clock in the morning when they nailed him on the cross.

26 They put the complaint they had against him above Jesus' head. It was, 'The King of the Jews.' **27** They also nailed two bad men on crosses there. One was put on the right side of Jesus and one was put on the left side of Jesus.

28 The holy writings say, 'He was counted as one of the bad people.' It came true.

29 The people who passed by said wrong things about him. They shook their heads and said, 'Ha, ha! You are the man who said you could break down the temple and build it again in three days. **30** Save yourself and come down from the cross.'

31 The chief priests and the scribes also made fun of him. 'He saved other people, but he cannot save himself! **32** If he is the Christ, the king of the people of Israel, he should come down from the cross now. We want to see it and believe!' The bad men who were also nailed to crosses said the same things to him.

The death of Jesus

33 About midday the whole land became dark and stayed dark for three hours. **34** About three o'clock, Jesus called out loud, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' That means, 'My God, my God, why have you left me alone?'

35 Some of the people standing there heard what Jesus said. They said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah!'

36 One man ran to get something called a sponge. He made it wet with sour wine and put it on the end of a stick. With it he gave Jesus a drink. He said, 'We will see if Elijah will come and take him down!'

37 Then Jesus called out loud. Then he died.

38 The big cloth that hung in the temple was

torn into two pieces. It was torn from the top down to the bottom. **39** The captain who stood in front of Jesus saw that he died. He said, 'Surely, this man was God's Son.'

The women who followed Jesus

40 Some women were watching from far away. Among these women were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and Joses, and Salome. **41** When Jesus was in Galilee, they came with him and helped him. Some other women who had come to Jerusalem with Jesus were also watching.

Jesus' body is put in the grave

42 It was now evening of the day before the Sabbath. **43** Joseph of Arimathaea was a member of the court. He was a good man. He also was looking for the kingdom of God. He was not afraid, but went to Pilate and asked him for Jesus' body.

44 Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was dead already. He called the captain and asked him if Jesus was dead. **45** The captain told him that he was. Then Pilate let Joseph take the body.

46 Joseph went to buy some cloth. Then he took Jesus down and wrapped him in the cloth. He laid him in a grave that had been cut in a rock. Then he rolled a very big stone to close the grave.

47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where they laid Jesus.

CHAPTER 16

Jesus rises from death

The Sabbath day was past. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome came to the grave. They brought spices that smelled very nice to put on the body of Jesus. **2** They came to the grave on the first day of the week. It was very early in the morning. The sun was beginning to shine. **3** One woman said to the other, 'Who will roll away the big stone from the grave for us?'

4 The stone was very big. When they looked up they saw that the stone was rolled away. **5** So they went in the grave. They saw a young man

dressed in a white gown. He sat at the right side. They were very much surprised.

6 He said, 'Do not be surprised. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth who was nailed to a cross. He is risen. He is not here. Look, here is where they laid him. **7** Go and tell his disciples and Peter. Tell them he is going to Galilee before you. You will see him there as he said to you.'

8 Then they left the grave quickly. They were trembling and afraid. They did not talk to anyone about it because they were afraid.

9 Jesus rose early on the first day of the week. He showed himself first to Mary Magdalene. Jesus had driven seven bad spirits out of her.

10 She went and told the disciples that she had seen him. They were still crying because Jesus was dead. **11** Mary told them that he was living. She had seen him. But they would not believe it.

12 After this, Jesus came to two disciples. He looked like a different person. They were walking out in the country. **13** They went back and told the rest of the disciples, but they would not believe them either. **14** Then after that Jesus showed himself to the eleven disciples while they were eating. He said it was very bad for them not to believe and for their minds to be slow. He said they should have believed those who saw him after he rose from death.

Jesus tells the disciples what to do.

15 Then Jesus said to them, 'Go into every part of the world. Tell the good news to everyone.'

16 The one who believes the good news and is baptised will be saved. But he who does not believe will be judged and punished. **17** These signs will be with those who believe. They will drive bad spirits out of people by using my name. They will speak new languages. **18** They will take up snakes. If they drink poison, it will not make them sick. They will put their hands on sick people and sick people will get well again.'

19 So after the Lord Jesus had talked to them, he went up into heaven and sat down beside God. **20** Then the disciples went and told the good news everywhere. The Lord worked with them. He made their words come true by the signs that happened after they talked.

THE GOOD NEWS AS TOLD BY LUKE

This is the third true story about the life and work of Jesus Christ. It is written by Luke who was a Greek doctor. He was a follower of Jesus and became a friend of Paul. (Luke also wrote the book of Acts.) This book of the Good News is full of the things that Luke examined and studied about Jesus. He reported them very carefully in this book. It tells about the birth and the death of Jesus and also how he came back from death to life. It gives the words Jesus said about God. It also tells about the sick people Jesus made well. This book says how God loves us even though we are wrong (sinful) people. It tells how to become right with God by believing and following Jesus. Luke tells us how Jesus talked to God and how we can do the same. This Good News brings joy and hope of living for ever with Jesus in heaven.

CHAPTER 1

The story written to Theophilus

Many people have tried already to write down the things that have happened among us. **2** These things were told us by men who saw them happen from the time they began to happen. And these men helped tell the good news. **3** I have tried to find out all that has happened from the beginning. And so, Theophilus, great ruler, I myself will write you the whole story. **4** Then you will know that the things people have told you are true.

An angel tells that John will be born

5 When Herod was king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah. He was one of a group of priests, and Abijah was their leader. Zechariah's wife Elizabeth came from the family of Aaron. **6** Both of them were good people as God saw them. They obeyed all the laws and the things that the Lord said they should do. **7** But they had no children. Elizabeth was not able to have a baby and they were both very old.

8 Zechariah was doing his work one day as a priest to God. It was time for his group to do the work in the temple. **9** The priests had a certain way of dividing their work. This day it was Zechariah's turn to go into the temple of the Lord and burn the incense [that smells sweet when it is burned]. **10** All the people were talking to God outside the temple at this time.

11 An angel of the Lord came to Zechariah. He was standing on the right side of the incense table.

12 When Zechariah saw him, he was surprised and afraid. **13** But the angel said, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah. You have been talking to God. He has heard you. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son. Name him John.'

14 'You will be glad and happy. Many people will be glad when he is born. **15** He will be great in the way the Lord calls people great. He must not drink wine or any strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he is born. **16** He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. **17** He will go ahead of the Lord. He will have the spirit and power of Elijah. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children. And he will bring back the people who do not obey, so that they will want to do what good people do. He will make people ready for the Lord.'

18 Then Zechariah said to the angel, 'How can I know that this will happen? I am an old man and my wife is also old.'

19 The angel answered him, 'I am Gabriel and I stand before God. I have been sent to talk to you and to bring you this good news. **20** Now listen. You will be silent and not be able to talk until the day that all this has happened. This is because you did not believe what I told you. At the right time all that I said will come true.'

21 The people were waiting for Zechariah to come out of the temple. They were surprised that he stayed in so long. **22** When he came out, he could not talk to them. They knew that he had seen something in the temple. He made signs to them with his hands and did not talk.

23 When his time for doing the work of a priest was finished, Zechariah went home.

24 After that, his wife Elizabeth found she was going to have a baby. For five months she stayed away from people.

25 She said to herself, 'The Lord has done this for me. At this time he has remembered me so that I need not be ashamed among people anymore.'

An angel tells that Jesus will be born

26 Elizabeth was now in her sixth month. God sent the angel Gabriel to the town of Nazareth in Galilee. **27** The angel was sent to a young woman there. Her name was Mary. She was promised to a man named Joseph, to be his wife. He was of David's family line. **28** The angel went into the house and said to her, 'Be happy! God has blessed you more than other women. The Lord is with you!'

29 What the angel said troubled Mary. She wondered what this greeting meant.

30 The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary. God has blessed you. **31** You will have a baby son. Name him Jesus. **32** He will be a great man. He will be called the Son of the Highest One [a name for God]. The Lord God will make him king where his father David was king. **33** He will be king over the people of Israel for ever. He will never stop being king.'

34 Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this happen? I have no husband.'

35 The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come to you. The power of the Highest One will be over you. That is why the holy child who is to be born will be called the Son of God.'

36 'Your cousin Elizabeth is also going to have a baby son, though she is an old woman. This is the sixth month for her. She is one whom people said would not have a baby. **37** But God can do anything.'

38 Mary said, 'I am the Lord's servant. Let it be as you have said.'

Then the angel left her.

Mary visits Elizabeth

39 At that time, Mary got ready and went as quickly as she could to the hill country. She went to a town in Judah. **40** She went into the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her moved. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. **42** She said in a loud voice, 'God has made you happy and blessed you more than all other women. He has blessed your baby.'

43 Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me? **44** Listen! When I heard your greeting, the baby inside me moved because he was glad. **45** She who has believed what was told her is blessed. What the Lord said to her will come true.'

Mary's song of praise

46 Mary said, 'My heart is praising the Lord.'

47 And my spirit is happy because God has saved me. **48** He has remembered his servant even though she is not a great person. From now on all people of all times will say God has blessed me. **49** He who has all power has done a big work for me. His name is holy.

50 'He is kind to people of all times who respect him. **51** He has shown how strong he is with his arm. He has taken away people who were proud in their hearts. **52** He has moved big rulers from power, and those that were not great he has made great. **53** He has given hungry people good things to eat, and sent away the rich people with nothing. **54** He has helped his servant Israel. **55** He has remembered to be kind just as he said to our fathers of long ago. He promised to be kind to Abraham and his children's children for ever.'

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. Then she went home.

John is born

57 The time had now come for Elizabeth's child to be born. She had a son. **58** When her neighbours and family heard that the Lord had been so kind to her, they were glad, too.

59 On the eighth day people came to circumcise [make a special mark on] the child. They were going to name him Zechariah like his father. **60** But his mother said, 'No, his name is to be John.'

61 They said to her, 'But no one in your family has that name.' **62** They made signs to the father to find out what name he wanted the child to have. **63** He asked for something to write on. He wrote, 'His name is John.' They were all surprised.

64 Right then he opened his mouth and his tongue was free. He began to speak and to praise God.

65 Everyone who lived around there began to wonder at these things. And everywhere in the hill country of Judea, all these things were talked about. **66** All those who heard them thought much about them. They said, 'What will this child be some day?' They said this because the power of the Lord was with him.

Zechariah praises God

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke words from God. **68** He said, 'Praise the Lord God of Israel! He has

remembered his people, and set them free.

69 He has chosen one from the family of his servant David. He has given him power to save us. **70** That is what he promised through his holy prophets of God long ago. **71** He said he would save us from our enemies and set us free from those who hate us.

72 'He said he would be kind to our fathers. He said he would remember his agreement with them.

73-75 'That was what he promised our father Abraham he would surely do. He promised to set us free from our enemies. He promised that we should be without fear. He promised that we would worship him and be holy and good before him as long as we live.

76 'You, my child, will be called the prophet or messenger of the Highest One. You will go ahead of the Lord to make his way ready.

77 You will tell his people how to be saved by being forgiven for their wrong ways.

78 'Our God is kind. A light from heaven will shine. **79** That light will shine on those who are in darkness, and are going to die. That light will show us how to walk in peace.'

80 The child grew. He became strong in spirit. He lived in the desert until the day when he came to the people of Israel.

CHAPTER 2

The birth of Jesus Christ

About that time, Augustus the Roman ruler made a law. All the people in the world must have their names written down in a book. **2** This was the first time names were written in a book in this way. Quirinius was the ruler of Syria at that time. **3** Everyone went to his home town to have his name written in the book.

4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. This was David's town, and Joseph came from David's family line. **5** He went to have his name written in the book.

Joseph took Mary with him. She was promised to Joseph to be his wife. She was going to have a baby.

6 While they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. **7** This was her first child, a son. She wrapped him in a cloth and laid him in a box where cows feed. There was no room for them in the house for strangers.

The angels bring the good news

8 In the same part of the country, men were taking care of sheep. They were in the field watching their sheep at night. **9** An angel of the Lord came to them and a bright light from the Lord shone all around them. They were very much afraid.

10 The angel said to them, 'Fear not! Listen, I bring you good news! This news will make you very glad. It is for all people. **11** A saviour has been born for you today in David's town. He is Christ the Lord. **12** This is the way you will know him. You will find a baby wrapped in a cloth, lying in a box where cows feed.'

13 All at once a great number of angels from heaven were with the angel. They were praising God. **14** They said, 'Praise God in the highest heaven! Peace on earth and loving mercy towards all people!'

15 The angels left them and went back to heaven. The men who were taking care of the sheep said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see what has happened. It is the Lord who has told us about it.'

16 They went quickly. They found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the box where cows feed. **17** When they saw the child, they told what the angel had said to them about him.

18 All those who heard them were surprised at what the shepherds had told them. **19** Mary remembered all these things and kept thinking about them.

20 Then the men who were taking care of the sheep went back. They praised and thanked God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as they had been told it would be.

The circumcision of Jesus

21 When the child was eight days old, it was time to circumcise him. They named him Jesus. That was the name the angel gave him before the baby began to grow inside Mary.

Jesus is brought to the Lord in the temple

22 The time came when Mary was no longer unclean by the law of Moses. Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Jerusalem to bring him to the Lord. **23** This is what is written in the law of the Lord: 'Every boy who is the first child of his mother will be holy for the Lord.' **24** They also came to make a sacrifice as an offering to God. The law of the Lord said, 'A pair of doves or two young pigeons.'

25 A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He was a good man and he loved God. He was watching and waiting for the one who would save Israel. The Holy Spirit was on him. **26** The Holy Spirit had shown him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 He came into the temple, led by the Spirit. The parents brought in the child Jesus to do what the law said they should do about him.

28 Then Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. **29** He said, 'Lord, now you are letting your servant go in peace, just as you said. **30** I have seen with my own eyes the one you have sent to save people. **31** You have made this way for all peoples to be saved. **32** He is a light which will shine for those who do not know God. He is the one who will bring praise to your people Israel.'

33 Joseph and Mary were surprised at the things Simeon said about Jesus. **34** Simeon blessed them. He said to Mary, the mother of Jesus, 'He will be a sign that people do not believe in. He will make many people in Israel fall and rise. **35** (Yes, a long knife will cut your heart too.) What people think will be made known.'

36 Anna, a woman prophet of God, was there too. Her father's name was Phanuel. She was of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. She had been married and lived with her husband for seven years. **37** Then her husband died. Now she had been alone for eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple, but worshipped day and night. She talked with God and fasted [did not eat food for a time].

38 While Simeon was talking to Mary, Anna also came along and thanked God. She talked about Jesus to all the people who were waiting for the one who would set Jerusalem free.

Going back to Nazareth

39 The parents did everything that the law of the Lord said they should do. Then they went back to Galilee to their own town, Nazareth.

40 The child grew. He became strong and very wise. And God blessed him.

41 Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast [a special time to thank God]. **42** When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to Jerusalem for the feast as they always did.

43 After the days of the feast were finished, they started home. But the boy Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it. **44** They

thought he was coming with the rest of the people. They travelled one day. Then they looked for him among their family and friends.

45 But they did not find him. So they went back to Jerusalem and looked for him.

46 On the third day they found him in the temple. He was sitting in front of the teachers of the law. He was listening to them and asking them questions. **47** All who heard him were surprised at what he knew and his answers.

48 His parents were surprised when they saw him. His mother said to him, 'Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you. We have been very troubled.'

49 He said to them, 'Why did you look for me? Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house?' **50** They did not understand what he meant.

51 He went with them back to Nazareth and obeyed them. But his mother remembered all these things.

52 Jesus grew and became wiser and taller. He pleased God and also people.

CHAPTER 3

John the Baptist tells God's word

Tiberius Caesar had been king for fifteen years. Pontius Pilate was the ruler of Judea. Herod was the ruler of Galilee. Herod's brother Philip was the ruler of Iturea and Trachonitis. Lysanias was the ruler of Abilene. **2** Annas and Caiaphas were high priests.

At that time God spoke to John in the desert. John was the son of Zechariah. **3** Then John went to all the country around the Jordan River. He told the people to stop doing wrong things, turn back to God and be baptised. And God would forgive them for the wrong things they did.

4 Isaiah, the prophet of God, wrote about him long ago in his book: 'A man is calling out in the desert: "Make the way ready for the Lord. Make the road straight for him. **5** Every valley will be filled. Every big hill and every small hill will be cut down flat. Crooked roads will be made into straight roads. Bad roads will be made into good roads. **6** And all people will see that God can save".'

7 Many people came out to John to be baptised. He said to them, 'You family of snakes! Who told you to run away from God's anger that is coming? **8** Do good things that will show you have stopped your wrong ways! Do not begin to

say to yourselves, "We are Abraham's children." I tell you, God can make children for Abraham from these stones. **9** The axe is ready to cut down the trees. Every tree that does not have good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

10 The people asked John, 'What shall we do?'

11 John answered them, 'Any man who has two shirts should give one to a man who has none. Any man who has food should do the same.'

12 Tax collectors also came to be baptised. They asked John, 'Sir, what shall we do?' **13** He said to them, 'Do not make people pay more money than you are told to.'

14 Some soldiers also asked him, 'What shall we do?'

He answered them 'Do not force people. Do not tell lies about people. Do not want more pay than you get.'

15 The people were waiting to see what would happen. They were all asking about John. They thought that he might be the Christ, the great king promised by God long ago. **16** John said to them all, 'I baptise you with water. But another person is coming. He is greater than I am. I am not good enough to untie his shoe strings. He will baptise you with the Holy spirit and with fire. **17** He has a cleaning fan in his hand and will fan his grain very clean. He will put the grain into his storehouse. But he will burn the chaff in the fire that never goes out.' **18** By these words and many other ways, he told the people the good news.

19 John told Herod the ruler that he had done wrong things. He told him he should not have his brother's wife, Herodias. He also told him about all the other wrong things he had done.

20 Later on Herod did another wrong thing after all those wrong things. He put John in prison.

Jesus is baptised by John

21 When all the other people had been baptised, Jesus was also baptised. While he was talking with God, the sky opened. **22** The Holy Spirit came down upon him like a dove. And a voice from the sky said, 'You are my dear Son. I am very pleased with you.'

The family line of Jesus Christ

23-38 Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. The people thought he was Joseph's son. Here are the names of Jesus' family line: Joseph, Heli, Matthat, Levi, Melchi, Janna, Joseph, Mattathiah, Amos, Nahum, Esli, Naggai, Maath, Mattathiah, Semei, Joseph,

Judah, Joannas, Rhesa, Zerubbabel, Shealtiel, Neri, Melchi, Addi, Cosam, Elmodam, Er, Jose, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Jonan, Eliakim, Melea, Menen, Mattathah, Nathan, David, Jesse, Obed, Boaz, Salmon, Nahshon, Amminadab, Ram, Hezron, Perez, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Terah, Nahor, Serug, Reu, Peleg, Eber, Shelah, Cainan, Arphaxad, Shem, Noah, Lamech, Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalalel, Cainan, Enosh, Seth, Adam. Adam came from God.

CHAPTER 4

The devil tries to make Jesus do wrong

Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. He left the Jordan River, and the Spirit led him into the desert for forty days. **2** The devil tried to make him do wrong.

Jesus did not eat in those forty days. Then he was very hungry. **3** The devil said to him, 'If you are God's Son, tell this stone to be changed into bread.'

4 Jesus answered him, 'The holy writings say, "Man cannot live on bread only".'

5 The devil took Jesus to a high place where he could see all the countries of the world at one time. **6** He said to Jesus, 'I will give you the right to rule over all these countries. They will make you great. All this has been given to me. I can give it to anyone I want. **7** So, if you worship and give honour to me, all will be yours.'

8 Jesus answered him, 'The holy writings say, "You must worship the Lord your God and he is the only one you are to worship".'

9 The devil took Jesus to Jerusalem. He put him on a high part of the temple. He said to him, 'If you are God's Son, jump down. **10** The holy writings say, "God will tell his angels to take care of you." **11** And "They will hold you up in their hands so that you will not knock your foot on a stone".'

12 Jesus answered him, 'The holy writings say, "You must not test the Lord your God".'

13 When the devil finished all his testing, he left him for a while.

Jesus begins his work in Galilee

14 Jesus had the power of the Spirit when he went back to Galilee. People talked about him in all that part of the country. **15** He taught them in their meeting houses. All the people praised him.

Jesus is not welcomed at Nazareth

16 He went to Nazareth where he had grown up. He went to the meeting house as he always did on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read.

17 A man gave him the book that Isaiah the prophet of God wrote long ago. He opened the book and found the place where it says, **18** 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he chose me to tell the good news to poor people. He has sent me to tell the prisoners they can go free, and to tell the blind people they can see. He has sent me to set free those who have been wrongly held down, **19** and to tell people that the year when the Lord will help them has come.'

20 Then Jesus closed the book and gave it back to the man. He sat down. Everyone in the meeting house was watching him. **21** He began to talk to them. He said, 'You have heard what the holy writings say. They have come true today.'

22 They all began to talk about him. They were surprised to hear him say such good words. They asked, 'Is not this Joseph's son?'

23 Then Jesus said, 'I know that you will say this to me "Doctor, heal yourself. We have heard what you did in Capernaum. Do the same things here in your own country".'

24 And he went on to say, 'I tell you the truth. No prophet of God is accepted by the people in his own country.'

25 'I tell you the truth. At the time of Elijah, there were many women in Israel whose husbands were dead. There was no rain for three years and six months. All over the country there was great trouble because there was no food. **26** But Elijah was not sent to any of these widowed women in Israel. He was sent to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon.'

27 'Also while Elisha was the prophet of God, many people in Israel had leprosy [a bad skin disease]. None of them was healed. The only one who was healed was Naaman from the country of Syria.'

28 When they heard this, all the people in the meeting house were very angry. **29** They jumped to their feet and put Jesus out of the town. Their town was built on a hill. They took Jesus out to the top and wanted to throw him down the hill. **30** But Jesus walked out between them and went away.

The man with a bad spirit

31 Jesus went to the town of Capernaum in Galilee. He taught the people there on the Sabbath day. **32** They were surprised at his teaching because he taught them as if he had the right to teach them.

33 A man who had a bad spirit in him was in the meeting house. He called in a loud voice. **34** He said, 'Jesus from Nazareth! What do you want to do to us? Have you come to kill us? I know who you are. You are God's Holy Man.'

35 Jesus said to him, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!' The bad spirit threw the man down in front of them. He came out of the man and did not hurt him.

36 All the people were very much surprised. They said to each other, 'What kind of talk is this? He can make bad spirits obey him. He tells them to come out and they come out.' **37** The people in all the places around Capernaum heard about him.

The mother of Simon's wife is healed

38 Jesus left the meeting house and went to Simon's house. The mother of Simon's wife was sick with a bad fever. They asked Jesus to help her. **39** He went and stood beside her. He told the fever to leave her. It left. She got up right away and began to do things for them.

Jesus heals many people in the evening

40 When the sun went down, the people brought to Jesus all who were sick in any way. He put his hands on every one of them and healed them. **41** The bad spirits also came out of many people. They called out, 'You are the Son of God!' But he stopped them. He would not let them talk because they knew that he was the Christ.

42 The next morning Jesus went away to a place by himself. The people went to look for him. When they found him, they did not want him to leave them. **43** But he said to them, 'I must tell the good news to the people in other towns also. It is the news of God's kingdom. I was sent to tell this.' **44** So he told God's word in the meeting houses in the Galilee area.

CHAPTER 5

They catch many fish.

The people came close around Jesus to hear God's word. He was standing by Lake Gennesaret [the Sea of Galilee]. **2** He saw two boats by the water. The fishermen were not in

their boats. They were washing their nets. **3** Jesus got into one of the boats. It was Simon's boat. Jesus asked him to put the boat out into the water a little way from the land. Then he sat down in the boat and taught the people.

4 When he stopped talking, he said to Simon, 'Put the boat out into deep water and let down your nets to catch some fish.'

5 Simon answered, 'Master, we worked hard all night and did not catch anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.' **6** When they did this, they caught many fish. Their nets were so full they were breaking. **7** They called their friends in the other boat to come and help them. They came. They filled both boats with so much fish, they began to go down.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he knelt down in front of Jesus. He said, 'Lord, leave me because I am a bad man!' **9** He was very much surprised to see how many fish they had caught. All those who were with him were surprised too. **10** James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were helping Simon. They were surprised also.

Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not fear. From now on your work will be to catch men.'

11 They brought their boats to the land. Then they left everything and went with Jesus.

Jesus heals a man with leprosy

12 Jesus was in one of the cities and a man was there who had leprosy, a bad skin disease. When he saw Jesus, he bowed his face to the ground. He begged Jesus saying, 'Sir, I know you can heal me if you want to.'

13 Jesus put out his hand and touched the man. He said, 'I want you to be healed.' Right away the man was free from leprosy.

14 Jesus said to him, 'Do not tell anyone about this. But go and let the priest look at you. Moses gave a law about the sacrifice you must give when you are healed. Give it to prove to the people that you are healed.' **15** But more people heard about Jesus than before. And many people gathered to hear him, and so be healed. **16** Many times Jesus went away to the desert and talked with God.

Jesus heals a man who could not walk

17 One day Jesus was teaching people. Pharisees and other Jewish teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every town in Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem. Jesus had the power of the Lord to heal the

sick. **18** Some men brought a sick man on his bed. The man could not move his arms or legs. They tried to bring him in and put him in front of Jesus. **19** But they could not get in the house where Jesus was, because there were so many people. So they went up on the roof. Then through a hole in the roof they let down the bed with the sick man on it, until he was in front of Jesus.

20 Jesus saw that they believed he would be healed. So he said to him, 'Man, the wrong things you have done are forgiven.'

21 The scribes and Pharisees began to talk about this. They said, 'Who is this man that is not giving respect to God? No one but God can forgive anyone for the wrong things they have done.'

22 Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said, 'Why do you think these wrong things in your hearts? **23** Which is easier, to say, "The wrong things you have done are forgiven," or to say, "Get up and walk"? **24** I want you to know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive wrong things people have done.' So he said to the sick man, 'I tell you, get up. Take up your bed and go home.'

25 Right away the man stood up in front of them. He took up his bed and went home praising God. **26** The people were all surprised and they praised God. They did not know what to think. They said, 'We have seen things today that are hard to believe.'

Jesus calls Levi

27 After this, Jesus went out. He saw a tax collector named Levi. Levi was sitting at the place where people came to pay taxes. Jesus said to him 'Come with me.' **28** Levi left everything. He stood up and went with Jesus.

29 Levi made a big dinner at his house for Jesus. Many tax collectors and other people were sitting at the table with them. **30** The Pharisees and their scribes did not like what Jesus' disciples did. They said, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and bad people?'

31 Jesus answered them, 'People who are well do not need a doctor. But sick people need him.'

32 I did not come to call good people. I came to call bad people to stop doing wrong things.'

Jesus talks about fasting

33 They said to him, 'The disciples or followers of John are often fasting [not eating for a time], and they talk with God. The disciples of the

Pharisees do the same. But your disciples eat and drink.'

34 Then Jesus said to them, 'The people at a wedding cannot be sad while the man who is married is with them. **35** But the time will come when he will be taken away from them. Then they will be fasting at that time.'

36 Jesus told them a short story. He said, 'No one takes a piece from a new coat and sews it on an old coat. If he does, the new coat will have a hole. And the new piece will not be like the old coat. **37** No one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will break the skins. The wine will be lost and the skins will be spoiled. **38** New wine must be put into new skins. **39** No one wants to drink new wine after he has had old wine. He says, "The old is better".'

CHAPTER 6

Picking grain on the Sabbath day

Jesus was walking through the grain fields on a Sabbath day. His disciples picked some of the grain as they went along. They cleaned it by rubbing it in their hands, and ate it.

2 Some of the Pharisees said, 'Why do your disciples do what is not right on the Sabbath day?'

3 Jesus answered them, 'Have you not read what David did? He and his men were hungry.

4 He went into God's house. Some bread was there for God. But David took the bread and ate it. He also gave some of it to the men who were with him. Only the priests have the right to eat that bread.'

5 Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man rules over the Sabbath day.'

The man with a weak hand

6 On another Sabbath day, Jesus went into the meeting house and taught. A man was there whose right hand was thin and weak. **7** The scribes and Pharisees watched Jesus to see if he would heal the man on the Sabbath day. They wanted to find something wrong about Jesus.

8 But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He spoke to the man whose hand was thin and weak. He said, 'Come and stand here in front' The man stood up.

9 Jesus said to them, 'I ask you, is it right to do good things on the Sabbath day, or to do wrong things? Is it right to heal people so that they will live, or to let them die?' **10** He looked around at

them all. Then he said to the man, 'Hold out your hand.' The man did so and it was made well like the other hand. **11** The Pharisees were very angry and they talked together about what they could do to Jesus.

Jesus chooses twelve apostles

12 About that time Jesus went out of the city on the hill to talk with God. He talked with God all night.

13 In the morning he called his disciples to him. He chose twelve of them and called them apostles [special messengers]. **14-16** They were Simon, whom Jesus called Peter, and his brother Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the freedom fighter, Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, the one who gave Jesus over to people who hated him.

Jesus helps many people

17 Then Jesus came down the hill with them and stood on the flat ground. Many people came. There were many of his disciples. And there were many people from all parts of Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from the seaside of Tyre and Sidon. They came to hear him and to be healed because they were sick. **18** Some were troubled by bad spirits, and they were healed. **19** All the people wanted to touch Jesus. Power came from him and he healed them all.

Blessings and troubles

20 Jesus looked at his disciples and said, 'God will make happy you who are poor. The kingdom of God is for you.

21 'God will make happy you who are hungry now. You will be filled.

'God will make happy you who cry now. You will laugh.

22 'God will make you happy when people hate you, when they will not let you belong to their group, when they say wrong things about you and make your name bad. God blesses you when it is for the sake of the Son of Man. **23** Be very happy on that day and dance for joy. God will be good to you in heaven. The fathers of these people did the same things to the prophets of God long ago.

24 'But you who are rich will have trouble. You have already had your good times.

25 'You who have all you want now will have trouble! You will be hungry.

'You who laugh now will have trouble. You will be sad and cry.

26 'When all the people praise you, you will have trouble! The fathers of these people did the same things to those who were not true prophets of God.'

Love those who do not love you

27 'But I say to you who hear, love your enemies. Do good things to those who hate you.

28 Bless those who use bad words about you. Ask God to do good to those who trouble you.

29 'If someone hits you on one side of your face, turn the other side also.

'If someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt also.

30 'Give to everyone who begs you for something.

31 'Do to other people what you want them to do to you. **32** If you love those who love you, what good is there in that? Even bad people love those who love them. **33** If you do good things to those who do good things to you, what good is there in that? Bad people do the same.

34 If you lend to those who will give to you, what good is there in that? Even bad people lend to bad people, if they think they will get the same from them.

35 'Love your enemies. Do good things. Lend to people and do not look to get anything back. You will be paid well. You will be sons of the Highest One. He is kind to those who do not thank him and to those who are bad. **36** So be kind like your Father.'

Judging others

37 'Do not judge others and you will not be judged. Do not punish others, and you will not be punished. Let others go free and God will let you go free. **38** Give to people and they will give to you. They will fill your cup, press it down, shake it, and let it run over. That is what they will give to you. How much you give to others is how much God will give to you.'

39 Jesus also told the people a story. He said, 'A blind man cannot lead a blind man. They will both fall into a hole. **40** The one who learns is not better than his teacher. But everyone who learns will be like his teacher when his teacher has finished teaching him.

41 'Why do you look at the small piece of dust in your brother's eye? And you do not see the big stick in your own eye. **42** How can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take the dust

out of your eye"? But you do not see the stick in your own eye. You are not true to yourselves! First take the stick out of your own eye. Then you will be able to see to take the dust out of your brother's eye.'

A tree and its fruit

43 'A good tree does not have bad fruit. And also, a bad tree does not have good fruit.

44 Every kind of tree is known by its fruit. People do not pick fruit like figs from thorn trees. And they do not pick grapes from bramble bushes. **45** A good man has stored up good things in his heart, so he says good things. A bad man has stored up wrong things in his heart, so he will say wrong things. The mouth will say what is in the heart.'

The two foundations

46 'Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," but you do not do what I tell you?

47 'A person comes to me. He hears what I say and obeys me. I will show you who he is like.

48 He is like a man who built a house. He dug down deep in the ground and made it stand on a rock. The water in the river came up high. The water beat hard against the house. But the house did not move, because it was built on a rock. **49** A man hears what I say but does not obey me. He is like a man who built his house on top of the ground. He did not dig down deep. The water beat hard against it and it fell with a loud noise!'

CHAPTER 7

Jesus heals an officer's servant

Jesus finished saying all these things for the people to hear. Then he went to Capernaum.

2 An army officer had a servant whom he loved. The servant was sick and almost dying. **3** The officer heard of Jesus. So he sent some of the leaders of the Jews to him. He asked him to come and heal his servant.

4 They came to Jesus and begged him very much. They said, 'He is a good man. You should come and do this for him. **5** He loves our people and he built the meeting house for us.'

6 Jesus went with them. When he came near the house, the officer sent some friends to meet him and to say, 'Sir, do not trouble yourself to come further. I am not good enough to have you come into my house. **7** And I did not think I was good enough to come to you. Just say the word and my servant will be healed. **8** I myself

am a man who takes orders, and I have soldiers who take orders from me. I say to one, "Go," and he goes. I say to another, "Come," and he comes. I say to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.'

9 Jesus was surprised when he heard this. He turned to the people who followed him. He said, 'I tell you, I have not found a Jew who believes as this man does.' **10** The men who had been sent to Jesus went back into the house. They found that the servant who had been sick was well.

Jesus raises a dead man to life

11 Soon after that, Jesus went to the town of Nain. His disciples and many other people went with him. **12** He came near the gate of the town. There he met people carrying out a man who had died. He was the only son of his mother. And her husband was dead too. Many people from the city were with her.

13 The Lord saw her. He shared in her sorrows and troubles. He said to her, 'Do not cry.'

14 Jesus came and touched the thing on which the body lay. The men who were carrying it stopped walking. Jesus said, 'Young man, I tell you, get up!' **15** The dead man sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave him to his mother.

16 Everyone was very much surprised. They praised God. They said, 'A great prophet of God has come to us. God has remembered his people.' **17** The people all over Judea and all the country around it heard what Jesus had done.

Messengers from John the Baptizer

18 John also heard about all these things from his disciples. **19** He called two of them and sent them to Jesus. He asked, 'Are you the One who is to come? Or shall we wait for another person?' **20** When the men came to Jesus, they said, 'John the Baptizer sent us to you. He asks, "Are you the One who is to come? Or shall we wait for another person?"'

21 At that time Jesus healed many people who were sick or had troubles or bad spirits. He made many blind people able to see. **22** He answered John's disciples, 'Go tell John what you have seen and heard. Blind people see. The lame people walk. People with leprosy are healed. People who could not hear can hear. Dead people are alive again. Poor people hear the good news. **23** Happy is the person who is not troubled in his heart about me.'

24 When John's messengers had gone away, Jesus began to talk to the people about John.

He said, 'What did you go out into the desert to see? Did you go out to see a tall grass moving in the wind? **25** What did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? People who wear fine clothes and have nice things live in kings' houses. **26** What did you go out to see? A prophet of God? Yes, I tell you, and he is much more than a prophet. **27** He is the one the holy writings tell about: "See, I send my messenger ahead of you. He will make the way ready for you." **28** I tell you, no one has ever been born who is greater than John. And yet, the smallest one in the kingdom of God is greater than he.'

29 All the people and the tax collectors praised God when they heard that. They had been baptised by John. **30** But the Pharisees and teachers of the law would not follow God's way and they were not baptised by John.

31 Jesus asked, 'What will I say that the people of today are like? What are they like? **32** They are like children who sit in the market. They call to other children. They say, "We played music for you, but you did not dance. We cried, but you did not cry." **33** John the Baptizer came. He does not eat bread or drink wine. You say, "He has a bad spirit in him." **34** The Son of Man came. He eats and drinks. You say, "This man eats and drinks too much! He is a friend of tax collectors and bad people!" **35** A man is proved wise by what he has done.'

Jesus at the home of Simon the Pharisee

36 One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to come and eat with him. So Jesus went into the Pharisee's house and sat down to eat. **37** In that city was a bad woman. When she knew that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she came and brought a bottle of oil. It was oil that smelled very sweet and cost much money.

38 She stood behind Jesus by his feet, and she was crying. She began to wash his feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Then she kissed his feet and put oil on them. **39** The Pharisee who had asked Jesus to his house saw this. He said to himself, 'If this man were a prophet of God, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She is a bad woman.'

40 Jesus said to him, 'Simon, I have something to say to you.' And he said, 'Teacher, say it.'

41 Jesus said, 'There was a man who used to lend money to people. Two people owed him money. One man owed him five hundred pieces of silver money. The other owed him fifty pieces. **42** They could not pay the money, so he let them both free. Now which one of them will

love him more?' **43** Simon answered, 'I would say the one he let off the most.' Jesus said, 'You are right.'

44 Then he turned towards the woman. He said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me water to wash my feet. But she has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45** You did not kiss me. But since she came in, she has kissed my feet again and again. **46** You did not put oil on my head. But she has put sweet smelling oil on my feet. **47** So I tell you, she has done many wrong things, but she has been forgiven because she loved me so much. But one who has been forgiven a little loves me only a little' **48** Jesus said to the woman, 'The wrong things you have done are forgiven.'

49 Then those who were at the table with him began to say to themselves, 'Who is this man? He even forgives people for the wrong things they have done.'

50 Jesus said to the woman, 'You are saved because you believed. Go in peace.'

CHAPTER 8

Some women help Jesus

Soon after this, Jesus went through the cities and towns. He told the people God's word about the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve disciples were with him. **2** Some women were also with him. They had bad spirits and had been sick. But they had been healed. One was Mary, called Magdalene. Seven bad spirits had gone out of her. **3** Another one was Joanna, the wife of Chuza, who worked for Herod. Another one was Susanna. And there were many others who gave what they could to help him.

The story of sowing the seed

4 Many people came to him from many towns. Then he told them a story. **5** He said, 'A man went out to sow his seed. As he sowed it, some seed fell on the road. People stepped on the seed. Birds ate it. **6** Some seed fell on the stony ground. It grew but soon died because the place was too dry. **7** Some seed fell among the weeds. The weeds grew up and made the new plants die. **8** But some seed fell on good ground and it grew well. Those plants gave a hundred times as much grain as the man sowed.'

When Jesus had said this, he called out, 'Everyone who has ears to hear, listen!'

Why Jesus used stories

9 His disciples asked Jesus what this story meant. **10** He said to them, 'You can learn the secret things about the kingdom of God. But other people must have stories. They will look, but they will not see. They will hear, but they will not understand.'

What the story means

11 'Now here is what the story means. The seed is God's word. **12** Some seeds fell on the road. They are like the people who hear the word of God. Then the devil comes and takes the word out of their hearts. He does not want them to believe and be saved. **13** Some seeds fell on the stones. They are like people who are glad when they hear the word. But it does not go down deep into their hearts. They believe for a short time. But when they have trouble they stop believing. **14** Some seeds fell among the weeds. They are like people who hear the word. But they think about the things of this world. They want to get money and things to be happy in this life. As they go on in life, these things push the message out of their hearts and no good comes from them. **15** Some seeds fell on good ground. They are like people who hear the word and remember it. Their hearts are honest and good. These people keep on believing, and much good comes from them.'

A lamp that is covered

16 'No person lights a lamp and covers it with a basket or puts it under a bed. But he puts it on the place for a lamp. Then people who come in can see the light. **17** Everything that is hidden will be seen. Everything that is secret will be known and come out to be seen. **18** So take care how you listen. Anyone who has something will get more. But he who does not have anything, even the little that he has will be taken away from him.'

The mother and brothers of Jesus

19 The mother of Jesus and his brothers came to him. They could not reach him because there were so many people around him. **20** Someone told him, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside. They want to talk to you.' **21** But he said to them, 'These people who hear the word of God and do it, they are my mother and my brothers.'

Jesus stops the storm

22 One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples. He said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side of the sea.' So they started out.

23 While they were going, Jesus was sleeping. A bad storm came on the sea. Water was coming into the boat, and they were in trouble. **24** The disciples came to Jesus and woke him. They shouted, 'Master! Master! We will die!' Jesus woke and said to the wind and the water, 'Stop!' They stopped. Then all was quiet. **25** He said to the disciples, 'Why do you not believe God?' They were afraid and surprised. They said to each other, 'What kind of man is this? He tells the wind and the sea what to do and they obey him.'

The bad spirits and the pigs

26 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarene people. Their country is on the other side of the sea from Galilee. **27** As Jesus got out of the boat a man met him from the town. He had bad spirits in him. He had not worn clothes for a long time. He did not live in a house, but among the graves.

28 When he saw Jesus, he screamed loudly and bowed down in front of him. He called out loud, 'Jesus, Son of the Highest One! What do you want to do to me? I beg you, do not hurt me.'

29 He said this because Jesus had told the bad spirit to come out of the man. Many times the spirit had taken hold of the man. People had guarded him. They had tied him with chains and strong ropes. But he broke the chains and ropes. The bad spirit drove him into the desert.

30 Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' He answered, 'My name is An Army.' He said this because many bad spirits had gone into him.

31 The spirits begged Jesus not to send them away to the big hole that has no bottom.

32 Many pigs were feeding on the hill there. The spirits begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs. Jesus let them. **33** The spirits came out of the man and went into the pigs. They ran fast down the steep hill into the sea. They died in the water.

34 The men who cared for the pigs saw what happened. They ran and told it to the people in the town and in the country. **35** The people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus. They saw the man from whom the bad spirits had gone. He was sitting near the feet of Jesus. He had clothes on and was not crazy any

more. The people were afraid. **36** Those who had seen it told the people how the man had been saved from the bad spirits. **37** All the people in the country around the Gadarenes asked Jesus to go away from them to some other place. They were very much afraid. So Jesus got into a boat and went back.

38 The man from whom the bad spirits had gone begged to go with him. But Jesus sent him away. **39** He said, 'Go home and tell the people what God has done for you.' So the man went away and told the people all through the town what Jesus had done for him.

Jairus begs Jesus

40 When Jesus came back, the people were very glad to see him. They were all waiting for him. **41** A man named Jairus came to him. He was a ruler in the meeting house. He bowed down in front of Jesus and begged him to come to his house. **42** He had only one daughter. She was about twelve years old. And she was dying.

A woman is healed

Many people went with Jesus and pushed against him. **43** A woman among them had a sickness for twelve years. She was bleeding all the time. She had given all her money to the doctors, but no one had been able to heal her.

44 She came behind Jesus and touched his clothes. The bleeding stopped right away.

45 Jesus said, 'Who touched me?' Everyone said, 'Not I!' Peter said, 'Master, the people are all around you and push you.' **46** But Jesus said, 'Someone touched me. I know that power to heal went out from me.'

47 The woman saw that he knew about her. So she came trembling and bowed down in front of him. She told him in front of all the people why she had touched him. She told him that she had been healed right away. **48** Jesus said to her, 'Daughter, you were healed because you believed. Go and do not be troubled.'

Jairus' daughter raised from death

49 While he was still talking, a man came from the ruler's house. He said, 'Your daughter has died. Do not trouble the Teacher anymore.'

50 Jesus heard it. He said, 'Do not fear. Only believe and she will be healed.'

51 When Jesus came to the house, he did not let the people go in with him. The only people he let go in were Peter, John and James, and the girl's father and mother.

52 All the people were crying and making a lot of noise because she had died. But he said, 'Do not cry. She is not dead, but sleeping.' **53** They laughed at him because they knew she was dead. **54** He took her hand and called out, 'Little girl, get up.' **55** Her life came back and she got up right away. He told them to give her something to eat.

56 Her parents were very much surprised. Jesus said, 'Do not tell anyone what has happened.'

CHAPTER 9

Jesus sends out twelve disciples

Jesus called his twelve disciples together. He gave them power over all the bad spirits, and power to heal sick people. **2** He sent them out to tell people about the kingdom of God and to heal sick people. **3** He said, 'Take nothing with you for your trip. Do not take a walking stick, or a bag, or food, or money. And do not take two shirts. **4** When you go into a certain house, stay there until you leave the town. **5** Some people might not take you in. When you leave that town, shake the dust off your feet. That will be a sign to them.' **6** The disciples left and went through the towns. They told the good news and healed people everywhere.

The death of John the Baptizer

7 Herod the ruler heard about all that was happening. He did not know what to think. Some people said John the Baptizer had risen from death. **8** Some people said Elijah had come back. And other people said that one of the old prophets of God had risen from death. **9** Herod said, 'I cut off John's head. Now who is this man of whom I hear such things?' He wanted to see Jesus.

Jesus feeds five thousand people

10 When the apostles came back, they told Jesus all they had done. He took them away with him and they went by themselves to a town called Bethsaida. **11** But the people found out and they followed him. He was glad to see them and talked to them about God's kingdom. He healed those who were sick. **12** When it was late in the day, the twelve disciples came to him. They said, 'Send the people away so they can go to the towns and the farms to sleep and get something to eat. This is a lonely place.'

13 But Jesus said to them, 'You give them food to eat.' They said, 'All we have is five loaves of bread and two fish. Shall we go and buy food

for all these people?' **14** There were about five thousand men.

He said to his disciples, 'Tell the people to sit down in groups of fifty.' **15** They did what he said, and they made all the people sit down. **16** He took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and thanked God for them. Then he broke the bread. He gave it to the disciples to give to the people. **17** They all ate and had enough. They picked up twelve baskets full of pieces that were left.

What Peter said about Jesus

18 One day Jesus was alone talking to God. His disciples were there too. He asked them, 'Who do people say I am?' **19** They answered, 'Some people say you are John the Baptizer. Others say you are Elijah. And others say that one of the old prophets of God has risen from death.' **20** Jesus said, 'But who do you say I am?'

Peter answered, 'You are the Christ sent by God.'

Jesus tells about his death

21 Jesus said to them, 'Do not tell this to anyone.' **22** Then he went on to say, 'The Son of Man will have much trouble. The leaders of the people, the chief priests, and the scribes will not believe him. He will be killed. On the third day he will be raised from death.' **23** And He said to all the people, 'If anyone wants to come with me, he must leave what he himself wants to do. Every day he must take up his cross [be ready to die] and come with me. **24** Anyone who tries to keep his life will lose it. And anyone who gives up his life for my sake will find it. **25** What good will it do a man if he gets the whole world for himself but loses his life or spoils it? **26** If anyone is ashamed of me and the things I say, the Son of man will be ashamed of that person when he comes. The Son of man will come with his holy angels and be great like his Father. **27** I tell you the truth. Some people are standing here who will not die before they see the kingdom of God.'

Jesus is changed

28 About eight days after saying these things, Jesus went up on a hill to talk with God. He took Peter, John, and James with him. **29** As he was talking with God, he was changed. His face was different. His clothes became very white and shining. **30** And then two men were talking with Jesus. They were Moses and Elijah. **31** Light was shining from them. They talked about his

leaving this world. That would happen when he was in Jerusalem.

32 Peter and the others were very sleepy. They woke up and saw the light shining from Jesus. And they saw the two men standing with him.

33 When the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, 'Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three places here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' Peter did not know what he was saying.

34 As he said this, a cloud came over them. They were very much afraid when the cloud came around them. **35** A voice in the cloud said, 'This is my dear Son. Listen to him!' **36** The talking stopped. Then Jesus was left alone. The disciples did not say anything. They did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

Jesus heals a boy who has a bad spirit

37 The next day they came down the hill. Many people met him. **38** One man among them called out, 'Teacher, I beg you, look at my son. He is my only child. **39** A bad spirit takes hold of him and he screams. It throws him around and makes him foam at his mouth. It beats him badly and does not want to leave him. **40** I begged your disciples to drive the bad spirit out, but they could not do it.'

41 Jesus said, 'You people today do not believe. You have turned away from God. How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.'

42 While he was coming, the bad spirit knocked him down and threw him around. Jesus told the spirit to stop. He healed the boy and gave him back to his father. **43** All the people were surprised to see that God has so much power.

Jesus tells again about his death

While the people were wondering about everything Jesus did, he talked to his disciples.

44 He said, 'Listen well to what I say. The Son of Man will be given over to men,'

45 But they did not understand what he said. The meaning was hidden from them so they would not understand it. And they were afraid to ask him about it.

Who is greatest?

46 The disciples started talking among themselves. They quarrelled about which of them was the greatest person. **47** Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he took a child and put him by his side. **48** Then he said, 'If anyone takes in a child like this for my sake, he takes in

me. And if anyone takes in me, he takes in the one who sent me. The one who takes the least or lowest place among you is the greatest.'

He that is not against you is on your side

49 John answered, 'Master, we saw a man driving bad spirits out of people. He was using your name. We told him to stop because he is not one of us.' **50** But Jesus said, 'Do not stop him. Anyone who is not against you is on your side.'

The Samaritan village that did not take in Jesus

1 The time was near for Jesus to be taken up to heaven. Then he started off for Jerusalem. He sent messengers ahead of him. **52** They went to one of the towns of the Samaritan people to get ready for him.

53 But the people would not take him in because he was going to Jerusalem. **54** When the disciples James and John saw that, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to ask for fire to come down from the sky and burn them up?'

55 But he turned and said to them, 'Stop that! You do not think about what kind of spirit you are showing. **56** The Son of Man did not come to kill people, but to save them.' And they went on to another town.

The people who wanted to follow Jesus

57 As they went along on the road, a man said to him, 'I will go anywhere you go.' **58** Jesus said, 'Foxes have holes to live in. Birds have nests. But the Son of Man has no place to lie down to rest.'

59 Jesus said to another man who followed him, 'Come with me.' But the man said, 'Lord, let me go first and bury my father.' **60** Jesus said to him, 'Let those who are dead bury their own dead people. As for you, go and tell people about God's kingdom.'

61 Another man said to Jesus, 'Sir, I will go with you. But let me go first to my home and tell them I am going.' **62** Jesus said to him, 'Any person who starts doing something and then keeps looking back is not fit for the kingdom of God.'

CHAPTER 10

Seventy men are sent out

After this the Lord chose seventy other men. He sent them ahead of him, two by two. He sent

them to every town and village that he was going to visit.

2 He said to them, 'The harvest is much, but there are not many people to gather it. So talk to the Lord of this harvest and ask him to send out people to his harvest. **3** Go on your way now. I am sending you out among people. You will be like sheep among bad animals. **4** Do not take money, or a bag, or shoes. And do not stop to talk with anyone on the road. **5** When you go into a house, first say, "May God give peace to this family." **6** If a man of peace is there, your blessing will stay with him. If not, your blessing will come back to you. **7** Stay in that house. Eat and drink what the people give you. The one who works should have his pay for it. Do not move from one house to another house.

8 'When you go into a town and they take you in, eat what is put before you. **9** Heal the sick people in the town. Tell the people, "The kingdom of God has come to you." **10** But when you go into a town and they do not take you in, then go out into the streets of the town. **11** Say to the people, "We wipe off even the dust of the town that is on our feet. This will be a sign to you. But remember this, the kingdom of God has come." **12** I tell you this. On the day when people are judged, they will be punished more than the people in the city of Sodom.'

Bad cities will have trouble

13 'Chorazin, you will have trouble! Bethsaida, you will have trouble! If the big works I did in you had been done in the cities of Tyre and Sidon, the people there would have stopped doing bad things long ago. They would wear the clothes people wear to show they are sad, and would sit in ashes. **14** But on the day when people are judged you will be punished more than the people in the cities of Tyre and Sidon. **15** Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the sky? No, you will go down to the place of the dead.

16 'Anyone who listens to you listens to me. Anyone who does not believe you does not believe me. Anyone who does not believe me does not believe the one who sent me.'

The seventy men come back

17 The seventy men Jesus had sent out came back very happy. They said, 'Lord, even the bad spirits obey us when we talk to them in your name!'

18 Jesus said to them, 'I saw Satan fall from the sky like lightning. **19** I have given you power over all the power of the enemy. Nothing will

hurt you. **20** Do not be glad that the bad spirits obey you. But be glad that your names are written in the book in heaven.'

Jesus is very happy

21 At that same time the Holy Spirit made Jesus very happy. Jesus said, 'Father, you are Lord of heaven and earth. I thank you because you have hidden these things from people who are wise and know many things. But you have shown them to people who are like children. Yes, Father. That was the way you wanted it. **22** My Father has given everything to me. No one knows who the Son is but the Father. No one knows who the Father is but the Son and those to whom the Son wants to show him.'

23 Then Jesus turned to his disciples and said to them alone, 'God is blessing the eyes of people who see what you see! **24** I tell you this. Many prophets and kings wanted to see the things you see. But they did not see them. They wanted to hear the things you hear. But they did not hear them.'

The good Samaritan

25 A man who taught God's law stood up and asked Jesus a question to try him out. 'Teacher,' he said. 'What must I do so that I will live for ever?'

26 Jesus said to him, 'What does the law say? What do you read there?'

27 The man answered, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart. Love him with all your soul. Love him with all your power, and love him with all your mind. And you must love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

28 Jesus said, 'That is the right answer. Do that and you will live for ever.'

29 But the man wanted to prove that he was all right. So he said to Jesus, 'Who is my neighbour?'

30 Jesus answered, 'A man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho. Bad men caught him on the road. They took his clothes and beat him. Then they went away and left him half dead.'

31 A priest happened to be going down that road. He saw the man but he passed by on the other side of the road.

32 'A man who worked in the temple came along to that place also. He saw the man but he passed by on the other side.

33 'A man from the country of Samaria was going on that road also, and came to the place. He saw the man and wanted to share in his

troubles. **34** He went to him and tied up the sores he had from the beating. He washed them with oil and wine. Then he lifted the man up and set him on his own animal to ride. He took him to the house for strangers. And he cared for him.

35 'The next day he gave two pieces of money to the man who was in charge of the house for strangers. He said, "Take care of this man. If it costs you more than this, I will pay you when I come back".'

36 Jesus said to the teacher of the law, 'What do you think? Which of these three was a neighbour to the man who was caught by the bad men?'

37 He said, 'The man who was kind to him.'
Jesus said, 'Go and do as he did.'

Jesus visits Martha and Mary

38 Jesus and his disciples went on their way.

They came to a town. A woman named Martha took him into her home. **39** She had a sister named Mary.

Mary sat near the feet of Jesus and she listened to what he said. **40** But Martha was very busy doing many things for Jesus. She came to Jesus and said, 'Lord, my sister has left me to do all the work. Do you not care? Tell her to come and help me.'

41 The Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worrying. You are troubled about many things. **42** Only one thing is needed. What Mary has chosen is good. And it will not be taken away from her.'

CHAPTER 11

Jesus teaches about talking with God

One day Jesus was in a place talking with God. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to talk with God as John taught his disciples.'

2 Jesus said, 'When you talk with God, say, "Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your kingdom come. **3** Give us our food day by day. **4** Forgive us for the wrong things we have done. We forgive everyone who has done wrong to us. Do not lead us to be tested".'

5 Jesus said to them, 'Maybe one of you has a friend. You go to him in the middle of the night and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread. **6** A friend has come to my house. He has been on the road. I have no food to give him to eat."

7 'Maybe the friend in the house answers you and says, "Do not trouble me. The door is locked. And my children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything." **8** I tell you this. Maybe he will not give him anything because he is his friend. But he will get up and give him what he needs because he keeps on asking for it.

9 'And I tell you, ask and you will get what you ask for. Look and you will find what you look for. Knock and the door will be opened for you.

10 Everyone who asks will get. The one who looks will find. And the one who knocks will have the door opened for him. **11** Which of you fathers will give your son a snake if he asks for a fish? **12** Will you give him a scorpion [an insect with a sting] if he asks for an egg?

13 You are wrong and yet you know how to give good things to your children. Much more, the Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.'

Jesus and Beelzebub

14 Jesus was driving a bad spirit out of a man who could not talk. When the spirit left him, the man could talk. The people were surprised.

15 But some of them said, 'This man drives out bad spirits by the help of Beelzebub, the chief of bad spirits.'

16 Other people wanted to test Jesus. They asked him to show them a sign from heaven.

17 But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said, 'If one part of any country fights against the other part of the country, that country is spoiled. And if one part of any family fights against the other part of the family, it cannot stand. **18** If Satan fights against himself, how will his kingdom stand? You say I drive out bad spirits by the help of Beelzebub. **19** If I drive out bad spirits by the help of Beelzebub,

by whose help do your own people drive them out? Your own people will judge you for this! **20** But if I drive out bad spirits by the help of God, then know this, God's kingdom is here with you now.

21 'A strong man has something in his hand to fight. He guards his place. He will not lose his things. **22** But when a stronger man comes, he catches the man who guards his house. He will take away what is in the man's hand. And he will take his things and give them to his friends.

23 'Anyone who is not with me is against me. Anyone who does not work with me, works against me.'

A bad spirit comes back

24 'When a bad spirit has gone out of a man, he goes through dry places. He looks for a place to rest, but he does not find any. Then he says, "I will go back to my house from where I came."

25 'When he comes back, he finds it clean and all fixed up. **26** Then he goes and brings seven other spirits who are worse than he is. They go in and live there. Now the man is worse than he was at first.'

True blessings

27 As he said this, a woman among the people called out, 'Happy is your mother who gave birth to you, and fed you as a baby.'

28 But Jesus said, 'Happy are those who hear God's word and obey it!'

Bad people want a sign

29 More and more people were coming. He started to talk. He said, 'People today are bad. They want a sign. No sign will be given them but the sign of Jonah the prophet of God.'

30 Jonah was a sign to the men in the city of Nineveh. In the same way the Son of Man will be a sign to the people today. **31** When the people are judged, the Queen from the South will stand up and speak against men who live today. She came a long way to hear the wise words of Solomon. The one who is here is greater than Solomon. **32** When people are judged, the men of Nineveh will stand up and speak against the people of today. They stopped their wrong ways when Jonah told them God's word. And the one who is here is greater than Jonah.'

The light of the body

33 'No person lights a lamp and hides it in a hole or puts it under a basket. But he puts it on a place for a lamp. Then people who come in can see the light. **34** Your body gets its light through your eyes. When you have good eyes, all your body has light. But when your eyes are bad, your body is in darkness. **35** So be sure that it is not dark in you where it should be light. **36** If no part of your body is dark, it will all be light. It will be like a lamp that shines to give you light.'

The wrong ways of the scribes and Pharisees

37 While Jesus was saying these things, a Pharisee asked him to come to eat at his house. So Jesus went in and sat at the table. **38** The

Pharisee saw that Jesus did not wash his hands before he ate. He was surprised.

39 The Lord said to him, 'You Pharisees wash the outside of a cup and a dish clean. But inside you are full of greed and wrong ways. **40** You are fools! Did not God make the outside and inside also? **41** Do good, and do it from your heart. Then everything is clean for you.'

42 'You Pharisees will have trouble! You give to God a tenth part of small garden plants. But you do not judge in the right way. And you do not love God. You should do these things and the other things too.'

43 'You Pharisees will have trouble! In the meeting houses you want to sit in the front seats. And in the market you want people to greet you. **44** You will have trouble! You are not true to yourselves! You are like graves that are not marked. Men walk over them and do not know it.'

45 Then one of the men who taught God's law said to Jesus, 'Teacher, when you say these things, you talk against us too.'

46 Jesus said, 'You men will have trouble also! You put heavy loads on people's backs. But you yourselves will not put up one finger to help carry the loads. **47** You will have trouble! You build places to bury the prophets of God that your fathers killed. **48** In this way you show you agree to the things your fathers did. They killed the prophets, and you build places to bury them. **49** That is why God, who is wise, said, "I will send prophets and messengers to them. They will kill some of them. And they will trouble some of them." **50** So the people who are living now will be punished for all the blood of the prophets of God that is on the ground since the world was made. **51** I mean all the blood from the time of Abel to the time of Zechariah. (He was killed between the holy table and the temple.) Yes, I tell you. The people who are living now will be punished for all of it.'

52 'You teachers of God's law will have trouble! You have taken away the key of the door where people can go in and know what is true. You yourselves did not go in, and you stopped those who were going in.'

53 When Jesus left the house, the scribes and Pharisees began to be very angry with him. They asked him questions about many things.

54 They wanted him to say something that was wrong so they could make trouble for him.

CHAPTER 12**Jesus warns against men who are not true**

Many thousands of people had gathered. They stepped on each other.

Jesus began to talk to the disciples. He said, 'Take care. Do not let the yeast of the Pharisees spoil you. They are not true to themselves. **2** Everything that is covered up will be seen. Everything that is hidden will be known. **3** What you have said in the dark will be heard in the light. What you have said in secret with the door shut will be told from the tops of the houses.'

Whom to fear

4 'You are my friends. I tell you, do not fear people who can kill your bodies. After that they cannot do anything more to you. **5** I will tell you whom you must fear. Fear the one who, after he has killed, has the power to throw into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! **6** Are not five sparrows sold for a tiny sum of money? Yet God does not forget about one of them. **7** Even the number of hairs on your head is known. So do not fear. You are worth more than many sparrows.'

Telling people you know Christ.

8 'And I tell you. If anyone tells people that he knows me, the Son of Man will also tell the angels of God that he knows him. **9** But if anyone tells people he does not know me, the Son of Man will also tell the angels of God that he does not know that person.

10 'Everyone who says anything against the Son of Man will be forgiven. But anyone who says wrong things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

11 'When men take you to the meeting houses and to the rulers and to the courts, do not be troubled about what you will answer or say.

12 The Holy Spirit will teach you at the right time what you must say.'

The story of the rich man who was not wise

13 One of the people in the crowd said, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide with me the things my father left when he died.'

14 Jesus said, 'Man, who made me a judge over you or gave me power to divide your things?'

15 Then he said to the people, 'Take care. Do not be greedy in any way to get more and more things. Even if a man has much more than he needs, it cannot give him life.'

16 Then he told them a story. He said, 'A rich man had a farm. The things that grew on it were many. **17** He said to himself, "What will I do? I have no place to keep all the food I have grown." **18** So he said, "This is what I will do. I will break down my storehouses and build bigger ones. I will keep in them all the food and everything I have. **19** Then I will say to myself, "Man, you have much in your storehouses for many years. Rest now. Eat, drink, and have a good time.'" **20** But God said to him, "You are a fool! Tonight you will die. Then who will have all the things you have kept for yourself?" **21** So anyone who keeps things for himself is not rich in the way God wants him to be rich.'

Troubling your heart about things in this life

22 Jesus said to his disciples, 'So I tell you this. Do not be troubled about what you will eat to keep alive. Do not be troubled about clothes to wear on your body. **23** Life itself is worth more than food, and the body is worth more than clothes. **24** Think of the birds. They do not plant, cut, or keep any food. Yet God feeds them. You are worth much more than the birds!

25 'Can any of you live any longer by troubling yourself about these things? **26** If you cannot do a small thing like that, why do you trouble yourself about the other things?

27 'Think about the flowers. See how they grow. They do not work or make cloth. I tell you, King Solomon was a great man. But he was not dressed as fine as one of these flowers. **28** God dresses the grass in the fields so it looks nice. It is in the field one day and the next day it is burned. If God dresses the grass like that, he cares much more that you have clothes to wear. You do not believe in God very much!

29 'Do not keep asking, "What shall we eat?" and, "What shall we drink?" Do not be troubled about that. **30** All the people who are not Jews work for these things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need them. **31** But work for God's kingdom. Then you will have all these things also.'

Riches in heaven

32 'Do not fear, little family. Your Father wants to give the kingdom to you. **33** Sell what you have and give it to poor people. Make for yourselves money bags that will not wear out. Keep the things you like in heaven. They will not be lost there. People cannot go in and steal them, and insects cannot spoil them. **34** The

place where you keep the things you like is where your heart will be also.'

Servants who are ready

35 'Be dressed and have your lamps lit. **36** Be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from a wedding. They are ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks.

37 Happy the servants who are ready when the master comes! The servants who are ready when the master comes will be made happy. I tell you the truth. The master will get ready to serve them. He will set them at the table and will come and serve them. **38** He may come in the middle of the night or when it is nearly morning. But if they are watching for the master, they will be happy.

39 'And remember this. If the owner of a house knew at what time a man would come to steal, he would not let the man break into his house.

40 So then, be ready. The Son of Man will come at a time when you are not looking for him.'

The servant to be trusted or not

41 Peter said, 'Lord, are you telling this story for us or for all the people?'

42 The Lord said, 'Who is like a wise servant who can be trusted? His master will put him in charge of his other servants. He gives them food to eat at the right time. **43** His master will bless that servant if he is doing this when he comes!

44 I tell you the truth. His master will put him in charge of all that he has **45** But perhaps that servant says to himself, "My master will not come just now." Then he begins to beat the other servants. He begins to eat and drink until he is drunk. **46** If he does that, his master will come on a day when he is not looking for him. He will not know the time when his master is coming. His master will punish him very much and put him away with those he cannot trust.

47 'A servant knew what his master wanted. But he was not ready. He did not do what his master wanted him to do. So he will be beaten much. **48** But if a servant did not know and did something bad, he will be beaten only a little. To whom much has been given, from him much will be asked. When people give much to anyone, they will ask more from him.'

People are divided because of Jesus

49 'I came to start a fire on the earth. I wish the fire were already burning! **50** I will be going through a big trouble, and I feel like a prisoner until it is all over. **51** Do you think that I came

to bring peace on the earth? I tell you, "No". I came to take away peace. **52** From now, if there are five in a family, they will be against each other. Three of them will be against the other two. And two of them will be against the other three. **53** A father will be against his son, and the son will be against his father. The mother will be against her daughter, and the daughter will be against her mother. A man's mother will be against his wife, and his wife will be against his mother.'

Understanding signs

54 Jesus also said to the people, 'When you see a cloud coming up in the west, you say right away, "Rain is coming." And it comes. **55** When the wind is blowing from the south, you say, "It will be very hot." And it is. **56** You are not true to yourselves! You know the meaning of these signs in the earth and sky. But you do not know the meaning of the signs about the time in which we are living.'

Make an agreement with your enemy

57 'Why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? **58** If someone wants to take you to court, make an agreement with him quickly on the way. If you do not, he will take you to the judge. The judge will give you to the guard, and the guard will put you in prison. **59** I tell you, you will not get out of prison until you have paid up every piece of money.'

CHAPTER 13

Leave your wrong ways or die.

Some people were there at that time who told Jesus what Pilate had done. He had killed some of the people of Galilee and put their blood with the blood of their sacrifices to God. **2** Jesus answered, 'Do you think it was because they were worse than all the other people in Galilee? **3** I tell you, "No!" But if you do not stop doing wrong things, then you will all die as they did. **4** Eighteen men died when the high house in Siloam fell on them. Do you think they were worse than all the other men who lived in Jerusalem? **5** I tell you, "No!" But if you do not stop doing wrong things, you will all die as they did.'

The story of the fruit tree with no fruit

6 Then Jesus told this story: 'A man had a fruit tree on his farm. He came to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. **7** He said to the man who cared for the trees, "For three years I have

come to look for fruit on this tree, but I have not found any. Cut it down. Why should it spoil my farmland?"

8 'The man who cared for the trees answered, "Sir, let it stay one more year. I will dig around it and put good soil around it. **9** If it has fruit on it next year, that will be good. But if it has no fruit, you can have it cut down".'

Jesus heals a sick woman on the Sabbath day

10 Jesus was teaching in one of the meeting houses on the Sabbath day. **11** A woman was there who had a spirit that had made her sick for eighteen years. She had to bend down all the time and could not stand up straight.

12 Jesus saw her and called her to come to him. Then he said, 'Woman, you are healed. You are not sick any longer.' **13** Jesus put his hands on her, and right away she stood up straight. And she praised God.

14 The ruler of the meeting house was angry because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day. He said to the people, 'There are six days to work. You should come to be healed on those days, and not on the Sabbath day.'

15 The Lord said to him, 'You are not true to yourselves! Every one of you unties his cow or horse and takes it to the water to drink on the Sabbath day. Do you not? **16** This woman belongs to Abraham's family. Satan has tied her for eighteen years. Is it not right that she should be set free on the Sabbath day?'

17 When he said that, all those who had talked against him were ashamed. All the other people were very glad for all the wonderful things Jesus did.

The story of the mustard seed

18 He went on to say, 'What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I say it is like? **19** It is like this. A man took a mustard seed and planted it in his field. It grew up big like a tree. The birds came and lived in its branches.'

The story of the yeast

20 Then Jesus said again, 'What else is the kingdom of God like? **21** It is like this. A woman took yeast and mixed it with many cups of flour. The yeast went all through the flour.'

The small door

22 Jesus went through the towns and villages on the way to Jerusalem. He was teaching the people as he went. **23** A man asked him, 'Sir,

will only a few people be saved?' **24** Jesus answered, 'Try hard to go in by the small gate. I tell you, many will want to go in but they will not be able. **25** The master of the house will get up and lock the door. Then you will be standing outside. You will begin to knock on the door and call, "Sir, open the door for us!" But he will answer, "I do not know where you belong." **26** Then you will say, "We ate and drank with you. You taught in our streets." **27** But he will say, "I tell you, I do not know where you belong. Go away from me all you who do wrong!"

28 'You will see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God. And you will see yourselves thrown out. Then you will cry and make a noise with your teeth. **29** People will come from the east, from the west, from the north, and from the south. They will sit down to eat in the kingdom of God. **30** Yes, some people who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last.'

Jesus is very sad about Jerusalem

31 At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus. They said to him, 'Go away from here. Herod wants to kill you.'

32 He said, 'Go and tell that fox, "I drive bad spirits out of people and heal people. I do it today and tomorrow. On the third day I will finish what I am doing." **33** But I must go on my way today, tomorrow, and the next day. A prophet of God cannot be killed outside of Jerusalem.'

34 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets of God. You throw stones to kill men who are sent to you. How often I have wanted to gather your people together as a mother hen gathers her little ones under her wings. But you would not come! **35** Now you are left alone in your house. I tell you this. You will not see me again until the time when you say, "God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord".'

CHAPTER 14

Jesus heals a sick man

One Sabbath day Jesus went to eat at the house of a ruler. He was a ruler of the Pharisees. They were watching Jesus. **2** A man stood in front of him. He was sick. His body was filled with water. **3** Jesus asked the teachers of God's law and the Pharisees, 'Is it right to heal a person on the Sabbath day or not?'

4 They did not answer. So he took the man and healed him. Then he sent him away. **5** Jesus said to them, 'If your horse or cow falls into a hole, which one of you will not pull him out right away on the Sabbath day?' **6** They could not answer that.

What to do at a dinner

7 Jesus told a story to the people who were asked to eat at the house. He saw that they chose to sit at the best places. **8** He said to them, 'When you are called to a wedding, do not sit in the best place. It may be that a better man than you has been called. **9** Then the man who called you both will come and say to you, "Get up and let this man sit here." Then you will be ashamed. And you will go and sit down in the last place. **10** But when you are asked to go to a wedding, go and sit down in the last place. Then when the man who called you comes, he will say to you, "Friend, come to a better place." Then all the people who sit at the table will see how he respects you.

11 'Everyone who puts himself up in a high place will be brought down to a low place. And everyone who puts himself down in a low place will be brought up to a high place.'

12 Then Jesus said to the man who had asked him to come, 'When you make a dinner or a feast, do not ask your friends, or your brothers, or the people in your family, or your rich neighbours. They will repay you by making a dinner for you. **13** But when you make a dinner, ask the people who are poor, hurt, lame, or blind. **14** You will be made happy because they cannot pay you. You will be repaid when all good people are raised from death.'

The story about a big feast

15 One of those who was sitting at the table heard this. He said, 'Happy is the person who will eat in the kingdom of God!'

16 But Jesus said to him, 'A man made a big feast and asked many people to come. **17** When the feast was ready, he sent his servant to tell the people who had been asked. He said, "Come. Everything is ready." **18** But the people all began to make excuses. The first one said, "I have bought a farm. I must go and see it. I beg you, excuse me from the feast." **19** Another man said, "I have bought ten oxen. I am going to see them. I beg you, excuse me from the feast." **20** Another one said, "I have married a woman, and so I cannot come."

21 'The servant came and told his master. Then the master was very angry. He said to his servant, "Go out quickly. Go on all the streets in the city. Bring here people who are poor, hurt, blind, or lame."

22 'The servant came back and said, "Sir, I have done what you told me to do. There is still room for more people." **23** Then the master said to the servant, "Go out onto the roads and behind bushes. Find people and make them come in so that my house will be full.

24 "'I tell you, not one of the men who were called first will eat any of my feast'."

The cost of going with Jesus

25-26 Many people were going with Jesus. He turned to them and said, 'If any man comes to me, he must hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sister. Yes, he must hate himself too. If he does not, he cannot be my disciple. **27** If anyone does not carry his cross [is not ready to die] and come with me, he cannot be my disciple.

28 'When any of you wants to build a high house, you sit down first and see how much it will cost. You want to see if you have enough money to finish it. **29** If you do not have enough money, you will not be able to finish it after you have made the foundation. Then all the people who see it will laugh at you. **30** They will say, "This man started to build a house and could not finish it."

31 'When a king goes to fight against another king, he sits down first and thinks about the matter. He will ask himself, "Can I fight him with ten thousand soldiers? He has twenty thousand soldiers." **32** If he cannot fight him, he will send some men to meet the other king while he is still far away. He will try to make peace with him.

33 'In the same way, any one of you who does not give up all he has cannot be my disciple.'

Salt that has lost its taste

34 'Salt is good. But if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? **35** It is not good for the land or the dirt pile. People throw it away.

'Everyone who has ears to hear, listen!'

CHAPTER 15

The story of the lost sheep

The tax collectors and bad people all came close to Jesus to hear him. **2** The Pharisees and

scribes did not like it. And they said to each other, 'This man is glad to have bad people come. He eats with them.'

3 So Jesus told them this story. **4** He said, 'Which one of you will not do this? A man has a hundred sheep. He loses one of them. He leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and he goes to look for the one that is lost. He looks until he finds it. **5** And when he has found it, he is very glad. He carries it on his back. **6** When he comes home, he calls his friends and neighbours to come. He says, "Be glad with me! I have found my lost sheep."

7 'I tell you, the angels in heaven will be glad like that when one bad person stops doing wrong things. The angels will be more glad about that one person than about ninety-nine good people who do not need to change their ways.'

The story of the lost money

8 'What woman will not do this? She has ten pieces of silver money. If she loses one of them, she lights a lamp and sweeps the house. She looks for the money until she finds it. **9** When she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbours to come. She says, "Be glad with me! I have found the piece of money I lost."

10 I tell you, the angels of God will be glad like that when one bad person stops doing wrong things.'

The story of the lost son

11 Jesus also said, 'A man had two sons. **12** The younger son said to his father, "Father, give me my part of what will belong to me." So his father divided all he had between the two sons. **13** After a few days, the younger son packed up his things. He left home and went to a country far away. There he spent his money in foolish and wrong ways. **14** He spent everything he had.

'There was no food in that country for a long time. He began to be in trouble. **15** So he went to stay with a man in the country who had a farm. The man sent him out to his farm to feed the pigs. **16** He would have been glad to eat the food the pigs ate. But no one gave him anything.

17 'Then he started to get sense. He said, "My father has many men who work for him. They have plenty of food. But here I am dying because I have nothing to eat! **18** I will get up and go to my father. I will say to him, 'Father I have been a bad son. I have done wrong to God

in heaven and to you. **19** I am not good enough now to be called your son. Let me be like one of these men who work for you.'

20 'So he got up and went to his father. While he was still far away, his father saw him. He loved him and wanted to share in his troubles. He ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **21** The son said to him, "Father, I have been a bad son. I have done wrong to God in heaven and to you. I am not good enough now to be called your son. Let me be like one of these men who work for you."

22 'But his father said to his servants, "Go quickly and bring the best clothes. Dress him. Put a ring on his hand. Put shoes on his feet. **23** Bring the fat calf and kill it. Let us have a feast and a good time. **24** This is my son. He was dead and now he is alive again. He was lost and is found." And they began to have a good time.

25 'The older son was out on the farm. When he came home and was near the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** He called one of the servants and said, "What is going on?" **27** The servant said, "Your brother has come home. Your father has killed the fat young cow because your brother is home and he is well."

28 'But the older son was angry. He would not go into the house. His father came out and begged him to come in. **29** But the son said to his father, "Look. I have worked hard for you for many years. I have always done everything you told me to do. And yet you never even gave me a young goat to make a feast with my friends. **30** But now this son of yours has come back. He has spent all your money and was with bad women. And yet you kill the fat calf for him!"

31 'The father said, "Son you have always been with me. And all that I have is yours. **32** But now we should have a good time and be happy. Your brother was dead and now he is alive again. He was lost and is found".'

CHAPTER 16

The story of the bad manager

Jesus also talked to his disciples. He said, 'A rich man had a manager in charge of his things. People told the rich man that the manager was wasting his things. **2** So he called the manager and asked him, "What is this I hear about you? Tell me what you have done. You cannot be my manager anymore."

3 'Then the manager thought to himself, "What will I do? My master is taking my work away from me. I am not strong enough to go out and dig. I am ashamed to beg. **4** I know what I will do. Then, when I lose my job, these people will take me into their own homes."

5 'So he called to him everyone who owed his master something. He asked the first man, "How much do you owe my master?" **6** He answered, "A hundred tins of oil." The manager said, "Take your paper. Sit down right now and write on it fifty." **7** Then he asked the next man, "How much do you owe?" He said, "A hundred bags of grain." The manager said, "Take your paper and write on it eighty."

8 'Then the master praised the manager who did wrong. He praised him because he did what was wise. The people of this world are wiser than the people who have the Light. They know how to get along with people like themselves.

9 'I tell you this. Money may be a wrong thing, but use it to make friends for yourselves. Then when your money is spent, they will be glad to see you come into that place where people live for ever.

10 'Anyone who can be trusted in a little matter can also be trusted in a big matter. Anyone who does wrong in a very little matter will do wrong also in a big matter. **11** So if you could not be trusted to use money, which is bad, who will trust you to use true riches? **12** If you could not be trusted with what belonged to another person, who will give you something for yourself? **13** No servant can work for two masters. He will hate one and love the other. Or he will obey one and despise the other. You cannot work for both God and money.'

The law and the kingdom of God

14 The Pharisees loved money. They heard all these things. They made fun of him. **15** He said to them, 'You try to make men think you are all right. But God knows your hearts. What men think is fine, God hates.

16 'The Law and the Prophets gave God's word until John came. Since then, the good news of God's kingdom has been told. And now everyone tries hard to get into the kingdom. **17** It would be easier to take away the sky and the earth than for the smallest part of the law to fall.'

Teaching about sending away a wife

18 'If a man sends away his wife and marries another woman, he commits adultery. And if the man marries a woman who has been sent away by her husband, he commits adultery.'

The rich man and Lazarus

19 'There was a rich man who dressed and lived like a king every day. **20** A poor man named Lazarus was put at his door. He had many sores on his body. **21** He wanted to eat the pieces of food that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs came and licked his sores. **22** The poor man died. Angels carried him to be with Abraham.

'The rich man also died and was buried. **23** He was in great pain in the world of dead people. He looked up and saw Abraham far away. With him was Lazarus. **24** He called out, "Father Abraham, help me! Send Lazarus to dip his finger in some water and cool my tongue. This fire is very hot for me."

25 'But Abraham said to him, "Son, remember this. You had a good time when you were living. Lazarus had a bad time when he was living. But now he is happy here and you are in pain. **26** But that is not all. A wide hole is between you and us. No one can go from here to you if he wanted to. And no one can come from where you are to us."

27 'The rich man said, "Then, father, I beg you, send Lazarus to my father's house. **28** I have five brothers there. Tell him to talk to them so that they will not come to this place where there is pain."

29 'But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets. They can listen to them."

30 'He answered, "No, father Abraham! But if a man who had died went to them, they would stop their wrong ways."

31 'Abraham said, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, then they will not believe, even if a man were raised from death".'

CHAPTER 17

Making people want to do wrong things

Jesus said to his disciples, 'People will make other people do wrong. But the person who makes another person do wrong will have trouble. **2** A big stone should be tied around his neck and then he should be thrown into the sea. That would be better for him than to make one of these little children do wrong.

3 'Take care! If your brother does something bad, tell him what he has done. If he is sorry, then forgive him. **4** Maybe he will do wrong to you seven times in one day. But if he comes to you seven times in one day and says, "I am sorry for what I did," then you must forgive him.'

Believing more

5 The apostles said to the Lord, 'Help us to believe more.'

6 The Lord said, 'If you believe as much as a little mustard seed, then you can say to this tree, "Come up by the roots and plant yourself in the sea." And it would obey you.'

What a servant should do

7 'If your servant is working in the field or taking care of sheep, what will you say to him when he comes in from the field? Will you say, "Come now and sit down to eat"? **8** No, you will say, "Get my food ready. Get ready to wait on me. I will eat and drink. After that, then you may eat and drink." **9** Will you thank the servant for doing what you told him to do?

10 'It is the same with you. When you have done all you were told to do, you should say, "We are servants. We have not done a big thing. We have only done what we should do".'

Jesus heals ten people with leprosy

11 Jesus was going on the road to Jerusalem. He went between the countries of Samaria and Galilee. **12** When he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy came to him. They stood far away. **13** And they called out, 'Jesus, Master, help us!'

14 When Jesus saw them, he said to them, 'Go and let the priests look at you.' While they were going, they were healed of the leprosy. **15** One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back. He praised God with a loud voice.

16 He bowed down in front of Jesus and thanked him. He was a man from the country of Samaria. **17** Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten people healed? Where are the other nine? **18** Is this stranger the only one who has come back to praise God?' **19** Then he said to the man, 'Get up and go on your way. You were healed because you believed.'

The coming of the kingdom

20 The Pharisees asked Jesus, 'When will the kingdom of God come?'

He answered them, 'You cannot see the kingdom of God when it comes. **21** People will not be able to say, "Look, here it is!" or "There it is!" That is because the kingdom of God is inside you.'

22 Jesus said to his disciples, 'The time will come when you will want to see one of the days of the Son of Man. But you will not see it.

23 People will say to you, "Look! Here he is!" or "Look! There he is!" But do not go out or follow them. **24** When lightning comes, it lights up the whole sky. It will be like that on the day when the Son of Man comes. **25** But first he will have much trouble. The people who are living now will not believe in him.

26 'The way it was in the time of Noah is the way it will be in the time of the Son of Man.

27 People ate and drank. They married and gave their daughters to be married. All this went on until the day when Noah went into his house built on a boat. Then there was much water and all the people outside the boat died.

28 'It was the same way in the time of Lot. People ate and drank. They bought and sold. They planted and built. **29** Then one day Lot went out of the city of Sodom. Then on that day fire and burning rock came down from the sky and killed all the people.

30 'That is the way it will be on the day when the Son of Man is seen. **31** On that day a man will be at the top of his house, and his things will be below. But he must not go down to get his things. In the same way a man will be in the field, but he must not go back home.

32 Remember what happened to Lot's wife. **33** Anyone who wants to keep his life will lose it. And anyone who gives up his life will keep it.

34 'I tell you, on that night two people may be in one bed. One will be taken away and the other will be left. **35** Two women will be making flour together. One woman will be taken away and the other woman will be left. **36** Two men will be in a field. One man will be taken away and the other man will be left.'

37 They asked him, 'Where will this be, Lord?' He said, 'The big birds that eat meat will go to the place where the dead body is.'

CHAPTER 18

The story of the woman and the judge

Jesus told them a story to teach them that they should keep on talking with God and not give up. **2** He said, 'There was a judge in a city. He

did not respect God or care about people. **3** There was a woman in that city whose husband was dead. The woman came to the judge again and again. She said, "Save me from my enemy!" **4** For a long time he would not do it. But after a time he said, "I do not respect God or care about people. **5** But this woman is troubling me. So I will save her from her enemy. If I do not, she will keep coming until I am tired".'

6 The Lord said, 'The judge was a bad man. And yet you should listen to what he says. **7** When the people whom God has chosen call to him day and night, he will save them from their enemies. He may let them wait a time. **8** But I tell you, he will save them from their enemies soon. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find any people who believe in him?'

The story of the Pharisee and the tax collector

9 There were some people who thought they were very good. And they thought that other people were not good. Jesus told this story to them. **10** He said, 'Two men went to the temple to talk with God. One was a Pharisee and the other one was a tax collector.

11 'The Pharisee stood and said to himself, "God, I thank you that I am not like other men. They steal, cheat, and commit adultery. I thank you that I am not like this tax collector. **12** Two times in the week I do not eat - I fast. I give away one tenth part of all I get."

13 'The tax collector stood far away. He did not even look up towards heaven. But he beat his chest, and said, "God, I am a bad man. Help me!" **14** I tell you, when this man went home, he was right with God. The other one was not. Everyone who puts himself up in a high place will be brought down to a low place. And everyone who puts himself in a low place will be brought up to a high place.'

Jesus blesses children

15 People brought even small children to Jesus. They wanted him to put his hands on them. When the disciples saw it, they tried to stop the people. **16** But Jesus called them to him and said, 'Let the children come to me. Do not try to stop them. The kingdom of God belongs to people like them. **17** I tell you the truth. If anyone does not believe in the kingdom of God like a child, he will never go in.'

The rich young ruler

18 A ruler asked Jesus, 'Good Teacher, what must I do so that I will live for ever?'

19 Jesus answered him, 'Why do you call me good? Only one is good, and that is God.

20 'You know the laws, "Do not commit adultery. [Do not take a man or woman who is not your husband or wife.] Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not tell lies. Respect your father and your mother".'

21 The man said, 'I have kept all these laws since I was a boy.'

22 When Jesus heard that, he said to him, 'You need one thing more. Sell everything you have. Give the money to poor people. You will be rich in heaven. Then come and go with me.'

23 When the man heard that, he was sad because he was very rich.

24 Jesus looked at him and said, 'It is very hard for rich people to enter the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a big animal like a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'

26 Those who heard it asked, 'Then who can be saved?'

27 But Jesus said, 'God can do what men cannot do.'

28 Peter said, 'See, we have left all things and have come with you.'

29-30 Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth. If any man has left his house, or his wife, or his brothers, or his father, or his mother, or his children for the sake of the kingdom of God, he will receive many times as much as he has left. He will receive that in this world. And in the next world he will live for ever.'

Jesus tells again about his death

31 Jesus took the twelve disciples with him. He said to them, 'We are going to Jerusalem. The prophets of God long ago wrote about the Son of Man. Everything they wrote will be done to him. **32** He will be given over to rulers who are not Jews. They will make fun of him. They will treat him very badly. They will spit on him.

33 They will beat him and kill him. On the third day he will rise.' **34** But the disciples did not understand any of these things. The meaning was hidden from them and they did not understand what he said.

The blind beggar healed near Jericho

35 When he came near the city of Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road. He was begging for money. **36** He heard many people passing by. He asked, 'Why are so many people passing here?'

37 They told him, 'Jesus of Nazareth is passing this way.' **38** Then he shouted, 'Jesus, son of David! Help me!'

39 The people in front said, 'Be quiet!' But he shouted louder and said, 'Son of David! Help me!'

40 Jesus stopped and said, 'Bring him here.' When the man came close, Jesus asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?'

41 The man said, 'Sir, I want to see.'

42 Jesus said, 'You can see now. You are healed because you believed.' **43** Right then he was able to see. He went with Jesus and he praised God. All the people saw it and they all praised God too.

CHAPTER 19

Jesus and Zacchaeus

Jesus came to the city of Jericho and was passing through it. **2** A man named Zacchaeus was there. He was the head tax collector, and he was a rich man. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was but he could not see him because he was a short man and there were many people around him. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed into a tree to see Jesus, for he was coming that way. **5** When Jesus came to the tree, he looked up. He said, 'Zacchaeus, come down right now. I must stay at your house today.'

6 So Zacchaeus came down right then. He was glad to have Jesus come in his house. **7** When all the people saw this, they did not like it. They said, 'He has gone to visit a bad man.'

8 Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord, I will give to the poor people half of all I have. And if I have cheated anyone, I will give him back four times as much as I took.'

9 Jesus said to him, 'The head of this house has been saved today! He also is a son of Abraham.'

10 The Son of Man came to look for and to save those who are lost.'

The money and the ten servants

11 While they were listening to this, he started to tell them a story. He did so because they were near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God would begin right

away. **12** So he said, 'A man who belonged to a respected family went to a country far away. He went to get power to rule. Then he was going to come back. **13** Before he left, he called ten of his servants. He gave each of them some money. He said, "Go and trade with this money until I come back."

14 'His people hated him. They chose some men and sent them after him to tell the king, "We do not want this man to rule over us." **15** But he was given the power to rule and came back. Then he called the servants to whom he had given the money. He wanted to know how much money each one had made by trading. **16** The first one came to him and said, "Sir, your money has made ten times more money."

17 'The ruler said, "You have done well. You are a good servant. You will rule over ten cities because you have done well with a very small thing." **18** The second one came to him and said, "Sir, your money has made five times more money." **19** The ruler said, "You will rule over five cities."

20 'Then another servant came and said, "Sir, here is your money. I hid it in a cloth and kept it. **21** I was afraid of you. You are a hard man. You take in where you put nothing out. You gather where you did not plant." **22** The ruler said "You bad servant! I will judge you by your own words. You knew that I was a hard man! You knew that I take in where I put nothing out. You knew that I gather where I did not plant. **23** Why did you not put my money in the bank? Then when you came home I would have had my money with interest."

24 'Some men were standing there. He said to them, "Take the money from him. Give it to the man who has ten times as much." **25** They said, "Sir, he has ten times as much already!" **26** The ruler said, "I tell you. Anyone who has some will get more. But he who does not have anything, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. **27** But where are those people who hate me and did not want me to rule over them? Bring them here and kill them right here in front of me".'

Jesus goes to Jerusalem

28 When Jesus had said this, he went on ahead of them towards Jerusalem. **29** He came near Bethphage and Bethany by the hill called the Mount of Olives. Then he sent two of his disciples ahead. **30** He said, 'Go into the village in front of you. As soon as you go in, you will

find an animal tied up. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it to me. **31** If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" tell him, "The Lord needs it."

32 They went and found it just as Jesus had said.

33 When they were untying the animal, the men who owned it asked them, 'Why are you untying the animal?' **34** They said, 'The Lord needs it.'

35 They brought it to Jesus and laid their coats on it. Then they put Jesus on it.

36 As he was riding along, people spread their coats on the road. **37** He came near the top of the hill called the Mount of Olives. Then all the people who believed in him began to be happy. They sang out loudly, and praised God in a loud voice for all the big works they had seen.

38 They said, 'God bless the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven where God is praised!'

39 Some of the Pharisees who were among the people said to Jesus, 'Teacher, tell your disciples to stop saying that.'

40 Jesus answered, 'I tell you, if they do not speak like this the stones will call out.'

41 When Jesus came near, he saw the city. His heart was very sad and he cried. **42** He said, 'I wish you knew today what things would give you peace! But now you do not see what they are. **43** The time will come when the people who hate you will put a wall all around you. They will shut you up and keep you in on every side. **44** They will break you down to the ground. They will kill the people within you. They will not leave one stone of your houses on top of another. That will happen because you did not know the time when God was ready to help you.'

Cleaning out the temple

45 Jesus went into the temple. He began to drive out the people who were buying and selling in the temple.

46 He said to them, 'It is written, "My house shall be a place where people talk with God." But you have made it a place for people who steal!'

47 He taught in the temple every day.

The chief priests, scribes and the leaders of the people wanted to kill him. **48** But they did not find any way they could do it. All the people stayed around to hear what Jesus said.

CHAPTER 20

The question about Jesus' right

One day Jesus was teaching the people in the temple. He was telling them God's good news. The chief priests and the scribes came to him with the leaders. **2** They said to him, 'Tell us what right you have to do these things. Who gave you the right to do them?'

3 He answered, 'I will ask you a question also. Tell me this. **4** Who gave John the right to baptise people? Did God or did men give it to him?'

5 They talked it over together. They said, 'If we say, "God gave John the right to do it," he will say, "Then why did you not believe him?" **6** But if we say, "Men gave him the right to do it," then the people will kill us with stones. They believe that John was a prophet of God.' **7** So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know who gave him the right to do it.'

8 Then Jesus said to them, 'Neither will I tell you what right I have to do these things.'

The farm and the bad men

9 Then Jesus began to tell the people this story. 'A man planted a farm. He let some men use the farm. They paid him money for the rent. Then he went to a country far away and stayed a long time.

10 'At harvest time the owner sent one of his servants to the men who used the farm. He wanted to have some fruit from the farm. But the men beat the servant and sent him away without any fruit. **11** So he sent another servant. They beat this one also, and did wrong things to him. And they sent him away without any fruit. **12** He sent a servant the third time. They hurt this one also and threw him out of the farm.

13 'Then the man who owned the farm said, "What shall I do? I will send my dear son. Maybe they will respect him."

14 'But when the men saw him they said to each other, "This is the one who will have everything when his father dies. Let us kill him. Then everything will belong to us." **15** They dragged him off the farm and killed him.

'What will the man who owned the farm do to them? **16** He will come back and kill those men. And he will give the farm to other men to use.'

When the chief priests and scribes heard this, they said, 'May it not be so!'

17 But Jesus looked right at them. He said, 'What about this writing then? "The stone which the builders would not use is now the chief corner stone."' **18** Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces. But if that stone falls on anyone, it will crush him.'

19 The scribes and the chief priests wanted to catch Jesus right then but they feared the people. They understood that he had told this story against them.

Paying taxes to Caesar

20 So they watched for a chance to catch him. And they sent men to spy on him. These men acted as if they were good men. They did this because they wanted to catch him in something that he said. They wanted to give him over to the ruler who would judge and punish him.

21 So they asked Jesus, 'Teacher, we know that you talk and teach what is right. You do not fear any person. But you teach the true way of God.'

22 Is it right to pay money as taxes to Caesar or is it not?'

23 He knew they were trying to get him into trouble. **24** So he said, 'Show me a piece of money. Whose picture and name are on it?'

They said, 'Caesar's'

25 Then he said to them, 'So give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.'

26 They were not able to catch him in anything he said in front of the people. They were surprised at his answer and they could not say anything.

The matter of rising from death

27 Some of the Sadducees came to Jesus. (They say that people do not rise from death.)

28 They came to ask Jesus a question. 'Teacher,' they said, 'Moses gave us this law: "If a man dies and leaves a wife but no children, then his brother must marry the wife and raise a family for his brother."' **29** There were seven brothers. The first one married. He died and left no children. **30** The second one married the wife. **31** Then the third one married her. All seven brothers married her. They all had no children and they died. **32** Last of all, the woman died also. **33** Now then, when people rise from death, whose wife will she be? All seven of them had married her.'

34 Jesus said to them, 'Men and women in this world marry. **35** But men and women who are good enough to have a place in the next world

and to be raised from death do not marry.

36 They cannot die again. They are like angels. They are God's children because they have been raised from death. **37** Even Moses showed that people do rise from death. It is in his book where we read about the small tree which burned. Moses says that the Lord is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. **38** He is not the God of dead people, but of living people. All people are alive to him.'

39 Some of the scribes said to him, 'Teacher, what you say is right.' **40** After that, people were afraid to ask him any more questions.

The matter of David's son

41 But Jesus asked them, 'How can people say that Christ is David's son? **43** David himself says in the book of the Psalms, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit beside me until I make you master over your enemies."' **44** So David calls Christ his Lord. How can Christ be David's son?'

Jesus talks against the scribes

45 Then Jesus talked to his disciples while all the people could hear him. **46** He said, 'Take care. Do not let the scribes fool you. They like to walk about dressed in long gowns. They want people to greet them in the market. They want to have the front seats in the meeting houses. They want to sit in the best places at feasts. **47** They take away the homes of women whose husbands are dead. They cover up their wrong ways by talking to God a long time. They will be punished more!'

CHAPTER 21

What the poor woman gave

Jesus looked around in the temple. He saw the place where the people put in their money. Rich people were putting in their money. **2** And he saw a poor woman whose husband was dead. She put in two small pieces of money. **3** Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. This poor woman has given more than all the other people. **4** All these people had plenty of money and they gave only a part of it. She was poor and she gave everything she had. She has nothing left to live on.'

What will happen to the temple

5 Some people were talking about how nice the temple looked. They talked about the fine stones and the things people gave to make the temple. **6** Jesus said, 'You see these things. Not

one stone here will be left on top of another. They will all be thrown down!’

Troubles begin

7 They asked him, ‘Teacher, when will this happen? What will be the sign when these things are going to be done?’

8 He said, ‘Take care. Do not let anyone fool you. Many men will come in my name. They will say, “I am Christ.” And they will say, “The time is now.” Do not go after them. **9** When you hear about wars and fighting, do not fear. These things must happen first, but it is not the end right away.’

10 Then he said, ‘One tribe will fight against another tribe. And one country will fight against another country. **11** In some places the earth will shake very much. In many places the people will have no food to eat. And many people will be sick. There will be things to make people fear. There will be big signs in the sky.’

12 ‘But before all these things happen, people will catch you and trouble you. They will take you to the meeting houses to be judged. They will put you in prison. They will take you to kings and rulers because you are true to me.’

13 This will be a chance for you to talk about me. **14** So do not trouble your minds about what you will say. **15** I will give you words and sense. All those who are against you will not be able to answer your words or say they are not true. **16** Even your parents, brothers, family people, and friends will give you over to trouble. They will kill some of you. **17** All people will hate you because you are true to me. **18** But you will not lose one hair from your heads. **19** If you keep on being true to me, you will live for ever.’

Jesus tells that Jerusalem will be broken down

20 ‘When you see soldiers all around Jerusalem, then you will know that it will soon be broken down. **21** Then the people in Judea must go quickly to the hills. Those who are in the city must leave it. Those who are in the country must not come into the city. **22** Those will be days of punishment. All that has been written in the holy writings must happen. **23** In those days it will be very hard for women who are to have a child. It will be very hard for mothers who have babies. There will be big trouble on the earth. God will show his anger to these people. **24** They will be killed by swords or long knives. They will be taken away as prisoners to every country. Jerusalem will be broken down by

people who are not Jews. They will walk over it until the end of their allowed time.’

The coming of the Son of Man

25 ‘There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. And there will be much trouble for the people on earth. They will not know what to do. It will be like the sound of big waves of the sea.’

26 Men will be weak with fear. They will be afraid of the things that will be happening to the world. The powers in the sky will be shaken.

27 Then people will see the sign of the Son of Man in a cloud. He will have much power and will be very great. **28** When these things begin to happen, look up. Lift up your heads. You will soon be free.’

The lesson of the fig tree

29 Jesus told them a story. He said, ‘Look at a fig tree. Look at all the trees. **30** As soon as you see the leaves coming, you know that it will soon be the warm time of the year. **31** It is the same way when you see all these things happening. You will know that the kingdom of God is near. **32** I tell you the truth. People who are living then will not die before all these things happen. **33** The sky and the earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.’

Why we should take care

34 ‘But take care. Do not think too much about eating, drinking, and things in this life. If you do, that day will come and catch you like a trap.’

35 That day will come to all people who are living on the whole earth. **36** Watch all the time. Ask God to make you strong to do right so that you will not go through all these things that are going to happen. Ask him to make you able to stand in front of the Son of Man.’

37 Jesus taught in the temple every day. But at night he went out and stayed on the hill called the Mount of Olives. **38** Early in the morning all the people came to hear him in the temple.

CHAPTER 22

The leaders plan to have Jesus killed

It was near the time for the feast with bread that has no yeast in it. This is called the Passover Feast. **2** The chief priests and the scribes planned how to kill Jesus. But they feared the people.

3 Satan came into the heart of Judas. Judas was one of the twelve disciples. His other name was Iscariot. **4** Judas went away and talked things over with the chief priests and captains. He told

them how he could help them catch Jesus. **5** They were glad, and they said they would give him money for it. **6** He agreed. He watched for a good way to help them catch Jesus when there were not too many people around.

Jesus eats the Passover Feast with his disciples

7 It was the day of the feast with bread that has no yeast in it. The sheep had to be killed for the Passover Feast, **8** So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying to them, 'Go and get the Passover Feast ready for us to eat.'

9 They asked, 'Where do you want us to get it ready?'

10 He said, 'When you go into the city, a man carrying a pot of water will meet you. Follow him into the house where he goes. **11** Tell the master of the house, "The Teacher says, "Where is the room where I can eat the Passover Feast with my disciples?"'" **12** He will show you a large room upstairs. It will be all fixed up. Make it ready there.' **13** So they went and found everything just the way Jesus had said. Then they made the Passover food ready.

14 When it was time to eat, he sat down at the table and the apostles sat down with him.

The cup and the bread of Jesus

15 He said to them, 'I have wanted very much to eat this Passover Feast with you before my troubles come. **16** I tell you this. I will not eat it again until the great feast in the kingdom of God.'

17 He took the cup and thanked God. He said, 'Take this. All of you drink from this. **18** I tell you this. I will not drink from the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom of God comes.'

19 He took some bread. He thanked God for it and broke it. He gave it to the disciples and said, 'This is my body, which is given for you. When you do this, then remember me.'

20 In the same way he took the cup after they had eaten. He said, 'This cup is the new agreement made by my blood. It is given for you.'

21 'There is a man who will give me over to my enemies. His hand is here at the table with me.'

22 The Son of Man will go on as it was planned for him. But the man who gives him over will have trouble!'

23 The disciples began to ask each other, 'Which of us will do this?'

The quarrel about greatness

24 They started to quarrel among themselves about which of them was the greatest person.

25 Jesus said to them, 'The kings of countries make their people obey them. Those who rule give themselves a good name. **26** But it must not be so among you. The one who is greatest among you must be like the most unimportant. And the leader must be like one who helps others. **27** Which man is greater, the man who sits at the table or the man who helps him? Is it not the man who sits at the table? But I am like the man who helps you.'

28 'You have stayed with me through my troubles. **29** My Father made me a ruler, and now I make you rulers. **30** You will eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. You will sit on chief chairs or thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.'

Jesus tells what Peter will say

31 'Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has asked to have all of you. He wants to shake you like grain with the cleaning fan. **32** But I have talked to God about you, Simon, so that you will keep on believing in me. And when you come back, then help your brothers to be strong.'

33 Simon said, 'Lord, I will go with you, even to prison or to die.'

34 Jesus said, 'I tell you this, Peter. This very day, before the cock calls, you will say three times that you do not know me.'

Money, a bag, and knives

35 Jesus said to them, 'When I sent you out to the towns, I told you not to carry a money bag, or a bag, or shoes. Did you ever need anything at that time?'

They said, 'No.'

36 He said, 'But this time, anyone who has money should take it and his bag too. Anyone who has no sword should sell his coat and buy one.'

37 'The holy writings say, "He was counted as one of the bad people." And I tell you, that means me. And the things that are written about me must happen to me.'

38 The disciples said, 'Look, Lord, here are two swords.'

And he answered, 'That is enough.'

Jesus talks with God

39 Then Jesus went out of the room and went to the hill called the Mount of Olives where he

often went. His disciples went with him. **40** He said to them, 'Talk with God so that you will not do wrong.'

41 He went away from them about as far as a person can throw a stone. Then he kneeled down to talk with God. **42** He said, 'Father, if you will, take this cup away from me. But do not do what I want but what you want.' **43** Then an angel came to him from heaven and helped to make him strong.

44 His heart was troubled very much. So he talked with God more than before. His sweat was like big drops of blood falling on the ground.

45 He stopped talking with God and got up. He went to his disciples and found them sleeping because they were sad. **46** He said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up. Talk with God so that you will not do wrong.'

The people catch Jesus

47 As Jesus was saying this, many men came. One of the twelve disciples, named Judas, was leading the people. He came near Jesus to kiss him. **48** Jesus said to him, 'Judas, will you give over the Son of Man to his enemies with a kiss?'

49 The disciples around Jesus saw what was going to happen. They said, 'Lord, shall we fight with our swords?' **50** One of them hit the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. **51** Jesus said, 'Just let me do this.' And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

52 The chief priests, the captains of the temple, and the leaders of the people had come to catch Jesus. He said to them, 'Have you come to take me with swords and sticks, the way you catch a man who steals?' **53** I was with you every day in the temple. You did not try to catch me then. But this is your time now, the time of the power of darkness.'

What Peter says about Jesus

54 The men caught Jesus and took him away to the high priest's house. Peter followed them far behind. **55** They made a fire in the yard and sat around it. Peter sat down with them. **56** A woman saw Peter sitting by the fire. She looked at him and said, 'This man was with him also.'

57 But Peter said, 'Woman, I do not know him.'

58 After a while, another person saw him and said, 'You are one of them also.'

But Peter said, 'Man, I am not.'

59 About an hour later another person said, 'Surely this man was with him. He comes from Galilee.'

60 Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about.' And right then, while he was talking, the cock called. **61** The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered that the Lord had said to him, 'Before the cock calls in the morning, you will say three times that you do not know me.' **62** Peter went out and cried very much.

Making fun of Jesus

63 The men who guarded Jesus made fun of him and beat him. **64** They tied something over his eyes. Then they hit him in the face and said, 'Tell us if you know who hit you!' **65** And they said many other wrong things to him.

Jesus in court

66 In the morning the leaders of the people, the chief priests and scribes met together. They took Jesus to their court. **67** They said, 'If you are the Christ, tell us.'

Jesus said, 'If I tell you, you will not believe.

68 And if I ask you anything, you will not answer. **69** From this time on the Son of Man will sit beside God who has all power.'

70 They all said, 'Then are you the Son of God?' He said, 'Yes, I am.'

71 They said, 'We do not need any more proof against him. We ourselves have heard what he said.'

CHAPTER 23

Then all the people got up and took Jesus to Pilate. **2** They began to make a complaint against him. They said, 'This man is leading our people to do wrong. He says we should not pay taxes to Caesar. He says that he is Christ, a King.'

3 Then Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

Jesus answered, 'Yes, I am.'

4 Pilate said to the chief priests and to the people, 'I find nothing wrong in this man.'

5 But they said all the more, 'He troubles the people by his teaching. He has been teaching people in all the country of Judea. He began in Galilee and has come as far as this city.'

Jesus in Herod's court

6 When Pilate heard this, he asked, 'Is this man from Galilee?'

7 When he knew that he came from Herod's country, he sent him to Herod. Herod was in Jerusalem at that time. **8** He was glad to see Jesus. He had heard about him. And he had wanted to see him for a long time. He was hoping that he would see Jesus do a big work. **9** He asked Jesus many questions. But Jesus did not answer him.

10 The chief priests and the scribes stood near. They brought strong complaints against him.

11 Then Herod and his soldiers laughed at Jesus and made fun of him. He dressed him up in very fine clothes and sent him back to Pilate.

12 Herod and Pilate became friends that day. Before that, they had hated each other.

The people say that Jesus must die

13 Pilate then called the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people. **14** He said to them, 'You brought this man to me. You said he is leading your people to do wrong. I have asked questions here in front of you. I have found nothing wrong in this man. **15** Herod did the same. He sent him back to us. This man has done nothing for which he should die. **16** So I will beat him and let him go.'

17 At the feast Pilate always let one man go free. **18** But they all shouted, 'Kill this man! Let Barabbas go free for us!' **19** (Barabbas had been put in prison because he led some people who had been fighting in the city. He had killed a man.) **20** Pilate talked to the people again. He wanted to let Jesus go free. **21** But they shouted, 'Nail him to a cross! Nail him to a cross!'

22 Pilate said to them the third time, 'Why, what wrong thing has he done? I have not found any wrong thing for which he should die. So I will beat him and let him go.'

23 But they shouted all the more loudly, saying, 'Nail him to a cross!' And Pilate gave in to their shouting. **24** So he said they could have it their way. **25** He let the other man go free. (He was the one who had been put in prison because he fought and had killed a man. He was the one the people asked Pilate to let go free.) And Pilate did to Jesus what they wanted him to do.

Jesus being nailed to a cross

26 They took Jesus away. On the way, they caught a man who was coming in from the farms. His name was Simon. He was born in the country of Cyrene. They made him walk behind Jesus and carry his cross.

27 Many people followed him. Women cried and were sorry for him. **28** But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not cry for me. But cry for yourselves and for your children. **29** The time will come when people will say, "Happy are the women who have no children or who have never had a child."

30 Then people will begin to say to the big hills, "Fall on us." They will say to the small hills, "Hide us." **31** If this is what people do when the wood is new, what will they do when it is old?'

32 Two men were also led away to be killed with Jesus. They were bad men. **33** They came to the place called Calvary (the head bone.) There they nailed the two bad men to the crosses also. They put one man on the right side of Jesus and one man on the left side of him.

34 Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them! They do not know what they are doing.'

The soldiers played a game to see how they should divide his clothes. **35** The people stood around watching. But the rulers made fun of him. They said, 'He saved other people. He should save himself if he is God's Christ, God's chosen one!'

36 The soldiers made fun of him. They came and brought him wine to drink. **37** They said, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' **38** The sign that was put above Jesus' head said, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

39 One of the bad men who was hanging there said wrong things against Jesus. He said 'If you are the Christ, why do you not save yourself and us?'

40 But the other bad man told him to stop. He said, 'Do you not even fear God? You are being punished just as he is. **41** It is right for us to be punished because we have done wrong things. But this man has done nothing bad.'

42 He said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when you become a King.'

43 And Jesus said to him, 'I tell you the truth. Today you will be with me in God's garden of paradise.'

The death of Jesus

44 About noontime the whole land became dark and stayed dark for three hours. **45** The sun did not shine. The big cloth that hung in the temple was torn into two pieces. **46** Jesus called out loud, 'Father, I put my spirit into your hands!' When he had said this, he died.

47 The captain saw all this. Then he praised God. He said, 'Surely, this was a good man!'

48 Many people were around there to look on. When they saw what happened, they all went home beating their chests [because they were sad]. **49** All Jesus' friends and the women who had come with him from Galilee stood far away. They saw all of this.

Jesus' body being put in the grave

50 There was a man named Joseph. He was a member of the court. He was a good man who lived the right way. **51** He had not wanted the people to do what they did. He was looking for the kingdom of God. He was from a town of the Jews, called Arimathea. **52** He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **53** He took the body down from the cross. He wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid it in a grave cut in a rock. No one had ever been put in this grave. **54** It was the day before the Sabbath. And it was almost time for the Sabbath to begin.

55 Some women had come with Jesus from Galilee. They followed and saw the grave where his body was put. **56** Then they went back and got things ready to put on his body. These things were spices that smelled very nice, and sweet kinds of oil.

On the Sabbath day they rested as the law said they should.

CHAPTER 24

Jesus rises from death

On the first day of the week, early in the morning, the women went to the grave. They took with them the things they had made ready. **2** They saw that the stone was rolled away from the grave. **3** So they went in. But they did not see the body of the Lord Jesus. **4** They were troubled about this.

Then they saw two men standing near them. They were dressed in white clothes. **5** The women were afraid and bowed their faces down to the ground. The men said to them, 'Why do you look for a living person among dead people?' **6** He is not here. He has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee. **7** He said that the Son of Man would be given over to bad men. He would be nailed to a cross, and he would rise on the third day.'

8 Then they remembered what he had said. **9** They left the grave and went back. They told all these things to the eleven disciples and to all the other people. **10** The women who told these

things to the apostles were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women who were with them. **12** But Peter got up and ran to the grave. He bowed down and looked in. He saw the linen clothes lying there, but nothing more. Then he left, wondering about what had happened.

The walk to Emmaus

13 That same day, two of the disciples were going to the town called Emmaus. It was about two hours walk from Jerusalem. **14** They were talking together about all the things that had happened. **15** While they were talking and asking each other questions, Jesus himself came and walked with them. **16** But even though they saw him, they did not know who he was. **17** Jesus asked them, 'What is this that you are talking about as you walk along looking so sad?'

18 One of them named Cleophas answered him. He said, 'Are you a stranger in Jerusalem and do not know what has happened there these last days?'

19 Jesus said, 'What things?'

They said, 'All that has happened to Jesus of Nazareth. He was a prophet of God. He had power to do big works and to teach the people. He was respected by God and all the people.'

20 Our chief priests and rulers gave him over to be punished by death, and they nailed him to a cross. **21** But we were hoping that he was the one who would free the people of Israel. But that is not all. This is the third day since they did it. **22** Some of our women told us things that surprised us. Early this morning they were at the grave. **23** They did not find his body there. They came back and said that they saw angels. The angels told them that Jesus was living. **24** Some of us went to the grave. And they found everything just as the women said. But they did not see Jesus.'

25 Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! Your hearts are slow to believe all that the prophets of God have said long ago. **26** Christ had to have this trouble and go to the place where he will be great, did he not?' **27** Then he told them the meaning of all that Moses and all the prophets of God long ago had written about him.

28 They came near the village to which they were going. It looked as if he was going on further. **29** But they begged him not to go further. They said, 'Stay with us. It will soon be night. The day is almost finished.'

So he went in to stay with them. **30** He sat down at the table with them. Then he took the bread and thanked God for it. He broke it and gave it to them. **31** Then they saw who he was. They knew him. And then suddenly they could not see him anymore.

32 They said to each other, 'It was like a fire burning in our hearts when he talked to us on the road and told us the meaning of the holy writings!'

33 They got up right then and went back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples together. Some other people were with them.

34 These people said, 'The Lord has really risen! He came to Simon!'

35 Then the men from Emmaus told them what had happened on the road. They told how they knew Jesus when he broke bread and gave it to them.

The disciples see Jesus again

36 While they were telling them this, Jesus himself stood there with them. He said to them, 'Peace to you!' **37** They were troubled and afraid. They thought they were seeing a spirit.

38 He said to them, 'Why are you troubled? Why do you wonder about these things in your hearts? **39-40** Look at my hands and my feet. You can see that it is I myself. Touch me with your hands and see. A spirit does not have a body and bones as you see I have.'

41 They were very happy and surprised and still found it hard to believe. Then Jesus said, 'Do you have anything to eat?'

42 They gave him a piece of cooked fish. **43** He took the fish and ate it in front of them.

44 Then he said, 'I told you this while I was with you. I told you that things were written about me in the books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. And I told you that all of these things must come true.'

45 Then he taught them so that they understood the things in the holy writings.

46 He said, 'It is written that the Christ must have trouble. On the third day he will rise from death. **47** Men will talk in his name to people in all countries. They will tell them to stop their wrong ways and ask to be forgiven. They will begin in Jerusalem. **48** You are the men who have seen these things, and will tell people about them. **49** I will send you what the Father has promised to give you. So wait in the city of Jerusalem until you have been given power from God.'

Jesus is taken up to heaven

50 Jesus led the disciples out as far as the town of Bethany. He put up his hands and blessed them. **51** While he was blessing them, he left them. He was taken up into heaven. **52** They bowed down and worshipped him.

They were very happy and went back to Jerusalem. **53** Every day they were in the temple praising God.

THE GOOD NEWS AS TOLD BY JOHN

John was one of the first people to follow Jesus. He was a very close friend of Jesus. He came to know him well in the three years that Jesus was teaching the people. In this book John tells who Jesus really is. He calls him God's Word. We can understand God through Jesus because God made him human like us. John also calls him God's Light because Jesus shows us what God is really like. John tells how Jesus did many good things and spoke about the love of God. The people who did not believe Jesus killed him but he came back to life again. Now he lives as one with God, his heavenly Father. God says we will live for ever with him if we believe in his Son (3:16). John has written all this down to tell how to find God's love, truth and freedom through Jesus.

CHAPTER 1

John speaks about Jesus Christ - The Word of God

The Word already was, way back before anything began to be. The Word and God were together. The Word was God. **2** Before anything began to be, the Word was there with God. **3** God made everything by the Word. Nothing has been made without him. **4** Life was in the Word. That life was Light for people. **5** The Light shone where it was dark and the darkness did not stop the Light from shining.

6 God sent a man named John. **7** He came to talk about the Light, so that all people might believe in the Light by what he said. **8** He himself was not that Light, but he was sent to talk about the Light.

Jesus Christ - the Light of the World

9 The true Light which gives light to every person who comes into the world. **10** He, the Word, was in the world. Yes, he even made the world. And yet the world did not know him. **11** He came into the world that was his own, but his own people did not receive him. **12** But there were people who did believe in his name. They did receive him. He gave all those who received him and believed him the right to become children of God. **13** They were born into God's family by God. That is, they were not born into his family in the way a person is born into this world. It was not by any person's will.

Jesus Christ becomes a man

14 The Word became man and he lived among us. We saw with our own eyes that he is great. He is great the way God the Father made his only Son great. We saw that he is full of loving kindness and truth. **15** John talked about him. He called out saying, 'Here is the man I told you about. I said that the one who is coming after me is greater than I am, because he lived

before I lived.' **16** He was full of loving kindness, and we have all received so much kindness from him. **17** Moses gave the law, but Jesus Christ gave this loving kindness and truth. **18** No one has ever seen God. But his only Son is very near to his Father's heart. He has told us plainly about God.

John tells others about Jesus

19 The leaders of the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem. They asked John, 'Who are you?' John told them.

20 He did not hide the truth, but he told people plainly. He said, 'I am not the Christ.'

21 So they asked him, 'Well then, are you Elijah?'

He answered, 'No, I am not.'

They asked, 'Are you the Prophet?'

He answered, 'No.'

22 Then those priests said, 'Who are you? We want to give an answer to the people who sent us. What do you say about yourself?'

23 John said, 'I am a voice calling in the desert, "Make the road straight for the Lord." This is what was said by Isaiah, the prophet of God long ago.'

24 It was the Pharisees who had sent these people to John. **25** So they asked him, 'If you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why then are you baptizing?'

26 John answered, 'I baptize people in water. But there is a man standing among you whom you do not know. **27** He is the one coming after me who is greater than I am. I am not even good enough to untie his shoe strings.' **28** The place where John was baptizing was Bethany on the other side of the Jordan River.

John meets Jesus

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming to him. 'Look,' said John. 'See God's special Lamb! He

takes away the wrong ways of the world. **30** Here is the man I told you about. I said that the one who is coming after me is greater than I am, because he lived before I lived. **31** I myself did not know who he was. But I came and baptized people in water so that the people of Israel would know who he was.'

32 John also said, 'I saw the Spirit coming from the sky. He came down on him like a dove. It stayed on him. **33** I myself did not know who he was. But he who sent me to baptize people in water told me. He said, "You will see the Spirit coming from the sky on a man. That man will baptize people in the Holy Spirit." **34** I saw the Spirit coming on him, and I have told you. This man is the Son of God.'

The first followers of Jesus

35 The next day, John was standing with two of his followers. **36** Jesus walked by. When John saw him, he said, 'Look, see God's Lamb!' **37** The two followers heard what John said, so they went after Jesus. **38** Jesus turned. He saw them coming after him. He said to them, 'What are you looking for?'

They said, 'Teacher, where do you live?'

39 Jesus said, 'Come and see.'

They went and saw the place where Jesus was staying. The time was about four o'clock in the afternoon. They stayed with Jesus the rest of the day. **40** Andrew was one of those two followers of John who heard John speak and went after Jesus. He was Simon Peter's brother. **41** The first thing Andrew did then was to find his brother Simon. He said, 'We have found the Messiah!' (Messiah means the Christ, the messenger of God.)

42 Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon, the son of John. Your name will be Cephas.' (Cephas means Peter, a rock or stone.)

Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael

43 The next day Jesus said, 'I will go to Galilee.' He found Philip and said to him, 'Come with me.'

44 Philip was from the town of Bethsaida. Andrew and Peter were also from that town.

45 Philip went to find Nathanael. He said, 'We have found the man about whom Moses wrote in the books of the law. The prophets also wrote about him. He is Jesus, from Nazareth. He is the son of Joseph.'

46 Nathanael said, 'From Nazareth? Can any good thing come from there?' Philip said, 'Come and see for yourself.'

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him. He said, 'Here is a man who is truly of Israel. He does not fool people.'

48 Nathanael asked, 'How do you know me?'

Jesus answered, 'I saw you when you were under the fig tree. That was before Philip called you.'

49 Nathanael said, 'Teacher, you are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.'

50 Jesus answered, 'I told you that I saw you under the fig tree. Is that why you believe in me now? You will see more wonderful things than that! **51** I tell you the truth,' said Jesus. 'You will see heaven open. You will see God's angels going up and down to the Son of Man.'

CHAPTER 2

The wedding in Cana

Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana in the country of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. **2** Jesus and his disciples were also asked to the wedding. **3** The people needed more wine. Then Jesus' mother said to him, 'They have no wine.'

4 Jesus said, 'Woman, why are you telling me about it? It is not yet the time for me to do something.'

5 His mother said to the servants, 'Do all that he tells you to do.'

6 Six very large water pots made of stone were standing there. The pots were there because the Jews had a certain law about washing themselves. **7** Jesus said, 'Fill the pots with water.' So they filled them to the very top.

8 Jesus said, 'Now take some out. Carry it to the one in charge of the feast.' They did what he said.

9 The man in charge of the feast tasted the water that was now turned into wine. He did not know where it came from, but the servants who drew the water knew. When the man had tasted it, he called the man who was being married.

10 He said, 'Other people give the good wine at the beginning of the feast. When people have had all they want, then they give the wine which is not so good. But you have kept the good wine until now.'

11 This was the first big work that Jesus did. It was in Cana in Galilee. He showed that he was great. And his disciples believed in him.

12 After this he went to the town called Capernaum. His mother, his brothers, and his disciples also went with him. They stayed there for a few days.

Cleaning out the temple

13 The time for the Passover Feast of the Jews was near. So Jesus went to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple he found people buying and selling things. They were selling cows, sheep, and doves. Others were sitting at tables changing money for the people.

15 Jesus tied some pieces of cord together to make a whip. Then he drove out all the people who were buying and selling in the temple. And he drove out the sheep and the cows. He threw down the tables of the money changers and their money. **16** He said to the people who sold doves, 'Take these things out of here. Do not make my Father's house into a market place.'

17 His disciples remembered that God's word says, 'My love for your house is like a fire burning in me.'

18 The leaders of the Jews said to Jesus, 'Who gave you the right to do this? What big work will prove it to us?'

19 Jesus answered them, 'Break down this temple and in three days I will raise it up.'

20 The Jewish leaders said, 'It took forty-six years to build this temple. Do you say you will raise it in three days?'

21 But Jesus was talking about the temple which was his body. **22** After Jesus died and had been raised from death, the disciples remembered that he had said this to them. Then they believed what the holy writings say. They also believed what Jesus had said to them.

23 Many people believed in Jesus' name when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast. They believed in him because they saw the big works he did. **24** But Jesus would not trust himself to them. **25** He knew what all people are like. He did not need anyone to tell him about any person, because he knew what was in a person's heart.

CHAPTER 3

Jesus and Nicodemus

There was a man named Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee, a ruler and leader of the Jews. **2** One

night Nicodemus came to Jesus. He said, 'Master, we know you are a teacher sent by God. We know this because no person could do the big works you are doing if God did not help him.'

3 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. No person can see God's kingdom if he is not born again.'

4 Nicodemus said, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he go inside of his mother again and be born?'

5 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. This new birth is by water and by the Spirit. No person can enter God's kingdom if he has not been born that way. **6** That which is born of a person is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** You must not be surprised when I say, "You must be born again." **8** The wind blows where it wants to blow. You can hear the sound of it. But you do not know where it comes from, and you do not know where it goes. It is the same way with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'

9 Nicodemus asked Jesus, 'How can such things be?'

10 Jesus answered, 'Are you a teacher of the people of Israel and you do not know this? **11** I tell you the truth. We know what we are talking about. We talk about the things we have seen. But you will not believe what we tell you.'

12 You do not believe what I have told you about things on earth. So how will you believe if I tell you about things in heaven? **13** No one has ever gone up to heaven - only the One who came down from heaven. That One is the Son of Man who is in heaven. **14** Moses lifted up a snake on a piece of wood in the desert. So the Son of Man must be lifted up. **15** Then everyone who believes in him will not die, but will live for ever.'

God loved the world

16 'God loved the world so very, very much that he gave his only Son. Because he did that, everyone who believes in him will not lose his life, but will live for ever. **17** God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world. He sent him to save the world.'

18 'Everyone who believes in the Son will not be judged. But everyone who does not believe in him is judged already, because he does not believe in the name of God's only Son. **19** Light came into the world. But people wanted to be in the dark because they did wrong things. They did not want the light. That is why they are

judged. **20** Everyone who does wrong things hates light. He does not come to the light because he is afraid people will see what he does and will say it is bad. **21** But everyone who does what is right comes to the light. He wants people to see that God helps him to do what is right.'

What John said about Jesus

22 After this, Jesus and his disciples came into the country of Judea. Jesus stayed there with them and baptized people. **23** John was also baptizing people in the river at Aenon, near the town of Salim. There was much water. People came to him and were baptized. **24** This was before John was put in prison.

25 John's disciples and the leaders of the Jews were talking about how to be clean, the way God wants us to be clean. **26** They came to John and said, 'Teacher, there was a man with you on the other side of the Jordan River. You were telling people about him. Now he himself is baptizing and all the people are going to him.'

27 John answered, 'A man cannot get anything unless God in heaven gives it to him. **28** You yourselves heard what I said. I am not the Christ but I have been sent ahead of the Christ. **29** The wife belongs to the man who has married her. The man's best friend may stand and listen. And when he hears what that man says, he is very glad for him. So what I hear makes me very glad in the same way. **30** He must become more and more great, but I must become less and less great.

31 'The one who comes from heaven is greater than all other people. The one who is of the earth talks about things on earth. So the one who comes from heaven is greater than all.

32 He tells what he has seen and heard, but no one wants to believe what he says. **33** If a person believes what the one from heaven says, then he also says God is true. **34** The one God sent speaks the words of God. God does not give him the Spirit little by little, but he gives the Spirit in full. **35** The Father loves his Son and has put everything in his hand. **36** He who believes in the Son will live for ever. He who does not believe in the Son will not live. God will be very angry with him for ever.'

CHAPTER 4

Jesus and the woman of Samaria

The Pharisees heard that Jesus was getting people to follow him and was baptizing them.

(Jesus' disciples baptized them, not he himself.) He now had more followers than John. **2** The Lord knew that they had heard about it. **3** So he left Judea and went back to Galilee again. **4** He had to pass through the country of Samaria. **5** He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar. It was near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. **6** Jacob's well was there. Jesus was very tired from walking on the road. So he sat down by the well. It was about midday. **7** A woman from Samaria came to the well to draw water.

Jesus said, 'Please give me a drink of water.' **8** His disciples had gone into the town to buy some food.

9 The woman said to Jesus, 'Why do you ask me for a drink of water? You are a Jew and I am from Samaria.' (The Jews are not friends with the people of Samaria.)

10 Jesus answered her, 'You do not know what God gives people. And you do not know who is asking you for a drink. If you knew him, then it is you who would have asked for a drink of water. He would give you living water.'

Living water

11 The woman said, 'Sir, you have nothing to draw with. The well is deep. Where do you get that living water? **12** Are you greater than our father Jacob who gave us this well? He drank water from this well, also his children and cattle.'

13 Jesus answered her, 'Anyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. **14** But anyone who drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty. The water I give him will become a well inside of him that will never be dry. It will give him life for ever.'

15 The woman said, 'Sir, give me this water. Then I will never be thirsty again. I will not need to come here to draw water.'

16 Jesus said, 'Go, call your husband, then come here.'

17 She said, 'I have no husband.'

Jesus said, 'You say, "I have no husband." That is true. **18** You have had five husbands, but the man you are living with now is not your husband. You have told the truth.'

True worship

19 The woman said, 'Sir, this shows me you are a prophet of God. **20** Our fathers came to this mountain to worship God. But you people say

Jerusalem is the place people must go to worship him.'

21 Jesus said, 'Woman, believe what I say. The time is coming when you will not come to this mountain or to Jerusalem to worship my Father.

22 You worship one whom you do not know. But we know whom we worship. The Saviour will come of the Jews. **23** But the time is coming, yes, the time is here already, when those who worship God will worship him in spirit and in a true way. My Father is looking for that kind of people to worship him. **24** God is Spirit. Those who worship him must do so in spirit and in a true way.'

25 The woman said to Jesus, 'I know that Messiah is coming. His name is Christ. When he comes he will tell us everything.'

26 Jesus said to her, 'I who am talking to you am he.'

27 When Jesus had said this, his disciples came back. They were surprised to hear him talking to a woman. But not one of them asked, 'What do you want?' or, 'Why are you talking to her?'

28 The woman left her water pot and went back to the town. **29** She said to the people, 'Come, I will show you a man who has told me everything I have done. Can this be the Christ?'

30 The people left the town and went to him.

31 While they were on the way coming to Jesus, the disciples asked him, 'Teacher, will you please eat.'

32 Jesus said to them, 'I have food that you do not know about.'

33 So the disciples asked one another, 'Has anyone brought him food to eat?'

The food of Jesus

34 Jesus said to them, 'My food is to obey the one who sent me and to finish his work. **35** Do you not say, "In four months it will be harvest time"? Listen, I say. Look up and see the fields. The harvest is ready to cut now. **36** The one who gathers the harvest receives a reward for it. He gathers a harvest that will live for ever. Then the one who sows and the one who gathers will both be happy. **37** This saying is true here: "One sows and another gathers." **38** I sent you to gather what you did not help to plant. Other people have worked hard and you have been helped through their work.'

39 Many of the people of the town believed in Jesus because of what the woman told them. She said, 'He told me everything I have done.'

40 When the people from Samaria came, they begged him to stay with them. So he stayed with them for two days. **41** Many more people believed in Jesus because of his own word.

42 They said to the woman, 'Now we believe, not because of what you told us, but because of what he himself has told us. We know it is true. This is the Saviour of the world.'

Jesus returns to Galilee

43 Two days after this, Jesus left Samaria and went to Galilee. **44** Jesus himself said, 'No prophet is honoured by the people in his own country.'

45 When he came to Galilee, the people of that country were glad to see him. They had seen all the things he did when he was at the feast in Jerusalem. They had been at the feast also.

An officer's son is healed

46 So Jesus came back to the town of Cana in Galilee. That was the place where he had changed water into wine. One of the king's officers was there. His son was sick in the town of Capernaum. **47** He heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, and he went to Jesus and said, 'I beg you, come and heal my son. He is dying.'

48 Jesus said to him, 'If you do not see some signs and big works, then you will not believe.'

49 The officer said, 'Sir, I beg you. Come right away before my son dies.'

50 Jesus said, 'Go home. Your son will not die.' The man believed what Jesus said and went home.

51 On the way, his servants met him. They said, 'Your son is living.'

52 He asked, 'What time did he begin to get well?'

They said, 'Yesterday at one hour after midday the fever left him.'

53 The father knew that was the time when Jesus said to him 'Your son will not die.' So he and all his family believed in Jesus. **54** This was the second big work that Jesus did after he came back from Judea to Galilee.

CHAPTER 5

The healing at the water

After that, the Jews had a feast and Jesus went to Jerusalem. **2** In Jerusalem, near the Sheep Gate, there is a wide water hole. The Jews called this water hole Bethesda. It had five

places with roofs for people to stand under. **3** Many sick people were lying on these places. Some of them were blind. Some were lame. Some were very thin and stiff so that they could not move by themselves. All of them were waiting for the water to move. **4** An angel came down into the water at a certain time and made it move. The first person who stepped into the water when it moved was healed of any sickness that he had. **5** A man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. **6** Jesus saw the man lying there. He knew that he had been sick for a long time. He said to him, 'Do you want to be healed?'

7 The sick man said to him, 'Sir, I have no man to put me into the water when it moves. While I am trying to get in, some other person comes and gets in before me.'

8 Jesus said, 'Get up. Take up your bed and walk!' **9** The man was healed right away. He took up his bed and walked.

This happened on the Sabbath day. **10** So the leaders of the Jews talked to the man who was healed. They said, 'It is the Sabbath day. It is not right for you to carry your bed.'

11 But he answered them, 'The man who healed me said to me, "Take up your bed and walk".'

12 They asked him, 'Who is the man who told you to take up your bed and walk?'

13 The man who was healed said, 'I do not know who he is.' Many people were at the place and Jesus had gone away.

14 After that, Jesus saw the man in the temple. He said to him, 'See, you are healed. Do no more wrong things. If you do, something worse may happen to you.' **15** The man went away and told the leaders of the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. **16** The Jewish leaders made trouble for Jesus because he did this on the Sabbath day.

Jesus speaks about his Father

17 But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is still working and I am working also.' **18** This was why the leaders of the Jews tried much more to kill Jesus. He had broken the law of the Sabbath day. And also he called God his Father. In that way, he was making himself equal with God.

19 Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth. The Son cannot do anything alone. He sees what his Father is doing and he does the same. **20** My Father loves his Son. He shows him all that he

himself is doing. He will show his Son bigger works than these so that you may be surprised.

21 My Father raises people who were dead, and gives them life. So his Son gives life to anyone he wants to. **22** My Father judges no one, but he has made his Son to be the judge of everything. **23** He did this so that all people would respect the Son, just as they respect his Father. My Father has sent his Son. Anyone who does not respect his Son does not respect the Father.'

Life for ever

24 'I tell you the truth. The person who hears what I say and believes in him that sent me will live for ever. He will not be judged. He has already passed from death to life.

25 'I tell you the truth. The time is coming. Yes, the time is here when the dead people will hear the voice of the Son of God. Those who hear his voice will live. **26** My Father has life in himself. And so he has made his Son to have life in himself. **27** He has given his Son power also to judge because he is the Son of Man. **28** Do not be surprised at what I say. The time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear his voice. **29** They will come out of the graves. Those who have done what is good will come out to live. But those who have done what is wrong will come out to be punished.

30 'I have no right to do anything myself. I judge the way I am told to judge. The way I judge people is right. I do not do what I myself want to do, but I do what my Father wants me to do. He sent me.'

The truth about Jesus

31 'If I talk about myself, then what I say is not true. **32** But someone else also speaks about me. I know what he says about me is true. **33** You sent someone to John and he has told you the truth about me. **34** I do not need to listen to what a person says about me. But I tell you this so that you may be saved. **35** John was a light burning and shining. For a while you were happy to be in his light. **36** But I have something greater than John to talk for me. It is the works that I do. My Father has given me works to finish. The works that I do tell that he sent me. **37** And my Father who sent me has himself talked about me. You have never heard him speak and you do not know what he is like. **38** The word he talks is not in your hearts, because you do not believe the one he sent to you.

39 'You read holy writings carefully. You think that there you will find out how to live for ever. In the same writings you will read about me. **40** And yet you will not come to me for that life. **41** I do not want people to call me great. **42** But I know that you do not love God in your hearts. **43** I have come in my Father's name, but you will not receive me. If another person comes in his own name, then you will receive him. **44** How can you believe? You are always calling each other great, but you do not want the only God to make you great. **45** Do not think that I will carry a complaint against you to my Father. Moses has already carried the complaint against you. He is the very one you trust. **46** If you really believed Moses, you would believe me too, because he wrote about me. **47** But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?'

CHAPTER 6

Jesus feeds five thousand people

Then Jesus crossed over the sea of Galilee. (Another name for this sea was Tiberias.)

2 Many people followed him because they saw the big works he had done in healing the sick people. **3** Jesus went up on a hill and sat down with his disciples. **4** The time for the Passover Feast of the Jews was near. **5** When Jesus looked up, he saw many people coming to him. He said to Philip, 'Where shall we buy food for these people to eat?' **6** Jesus knew what he himself would do, but he said this to see what Philip would do.

7 Philip answered him, 'It would take nearly a year's wages to buy enough food for them, even if each one gets only a little.'

8 One of Jesus' disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, talked to Jesus. **9** He said, 'A boy here has five loaves of bread and two small fish. But what can that little bit of food do for so many people?'

10 Jesus said, 'Tell the people to sit down.' Much grass was there. The number of men who sat down was about five thousand. **11** Then Jesus took the bread and thanked God for it. He gave it to the disciples and they divided it among those who were sitting. He did the same thing with the fish. The people had all they wanted.

12 When they had eaten enough, he said to his disciples, 'Gather up all the pieces that are left so that nothing will be lost.' **13** They gathered

all the pieces of the five loaves. Twelve baskets full were left over after all the people had eaten enough.

14 When those men saw the big work that Jesus did, they said, 'Truly, this is the Prophet that is to come into the world.'

15 The people wanted to take Jesus by force to make him a king. When he saw this, he left again and went on the hill by himself.

Jesus walks on the water

16 In the evening his disciples went down to the lake [called the sea of Galilee]. **17** They got in a boat and crossed over the sea toward the town of Capernaum. It was dark, but Jesus had not come back to them.

18 A strong wind was blowing. It made the water very rough. **19** They rowed the boat into the middle of the lake. Then they saw Jesus walking on the water. He came close to the boat. They were afraid. **20** But Jesus said to them, 'It is I. Do not fear.' **21** Then they were glad to take him into the boat. Then at once the boat reached the land to which they were going.

The people look for Jesus

22 The people who stayed back on the land had seen one boat only. They had seen the disciples get in it and go away without Jesus. **23** But there were some other boats from Tiberias. It was near the place where they had eaten bread, after the Lord had thanked God for it.

24 The next day the people saw that Jesus and his disciples were not there. Then they went to Capernaum in boats to look for Jesus. **25** When they found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they said, 'Teacher, when did you get here?'

26 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. You do not want me because you saw the big works I did, but you want me because you ate all the bread you wanted. **27** Do not work for the food that spoils, but work for the food that will never spoil, the food that will give you life for ever. The Son of Man will give you that food. God my Father has chosen him to do that.'

28 They asked him, 'What works does God ask us to do?'

29 Jesus answered them, 'The work that God asks you to do is to believe in the one whom he has sent.'

30 They said, 'What big work will you do? We want to see it and believe you. What work are you are going to do? **31-32** Our fathers ate

bread in the wilderness. The holy writings say, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat".'

Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth. It was not Moses who gave you that bread from heaven. But my Father gives you true bread from heaven. **33** He who comes down from heaven is the bread that God gives. He is the one who gives life to the world.'

34 They said to him, 'Lord, give us this bread always!'

35 Jesus said, 'I am the bread that gives life. Anyone who comes to me will never be hungry. Anyone who believes in me will never be thirsty.'

36 'But I said to you that you have seen me, and yet you will not believe in me. **37** All those whom my Father gives me, they will come to me. I will never turn anyone away who comes to me. **38** I did not come down from heaven to do what I myself want to do. I came to do what the one who sent me wants me to do. **39** My Father sent me. He wants me to lose nothing that he has given me. And he wants me to raise it up on the last day. **40** My Father wants everyone who sees his Son and believes in him to live for ever. I will raise him up on the last day.'

Bread from heaven

41 The leaders of the Jews did not like Jesus to say, 'I am the bread that has come down from heaven.' **42** They said, 'Is he not Joseph's son, Jesus? We know his father and mother. How can he say, "I have come down from heaven"?''

43 Jesus answered them, 'There is no need for you to talk against me to each other. **44** No one can come to me if my Father does not draw him. He sent me. I myself will raise up the one who comes to me. I will bring him back to life on the last day. **45** The prophets wrote, "God will teach all people." So then, every person who listens to his words and learns what he says, he will come to me.'

46 'But no person has seen my Father. The only one who has seen him is the one who comes from God. He has seen my Father. **47** I tell you the truth. The person who believes in me will live for ever. **48** I am the bread that gives life. **49** Your fathers ate bread in the desert long ago, but they died. **50** Here is bread that comes down from heaven. The person who eats this bread will never die. **51** I am the bread that gives life. I came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live for ever. I will give

bread so that the world may live. I am that bread.'

52 The leaders of the Jews began to quarrel with each other about what Jesus said. They said, 'How can he give us himself to eat?'

53 Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth. If you do not eat the Son of Man and do not drink his blood, you will not have life. **54** Anyone who eats me and drinks my blood will live for ever. I will raise him up at the last day. **55** I am real food, and my blood is real drink. **56** Anyone who eats me and drinks my blood is in me and I in him. **57** My Father is living. He sent me. I have my life from him. In the same way, the person who eats of me will live because of me. **58** This bread which came down from heaven is not like the bread that your fathers ate. They ate bread but they died. Anyone who eats this bread from heaven will live for ever.'

59 Jesus was in the meeting house in Capernaum when he was teaching people these things. **60** Many of his disciples heard it. They said, 'This is a hard teaching. Who can listen to it?' **61** But Jesus knew that his disciples did not like what he said. He asked, 'Is this hard for you? **62** What would you do if you saw the Son of Man go up to the place where he came from?' **63** It is the Spirit that gives life. The flesh does not help. The words I say to you are Spirit and life. **64** But even so, some of you do not believe me.' Jesus knew right from the beginning which ones of them would not believe. He knew who was going to give him over to people who hated him. **65** Then Jesus said, 'That is why I said to you, "No one can come to me unless my Father lets him come".'

How to live for ever

66 After that, many of the followers of Jesus left him and stopped travelling around with him.

67 Jesus said to the twelve disciples, 'Will you also leave me?'

68 Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? It is you who has told us how we may live for ever. **69** We believe now, and we know it is true. You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

70 Jesus said to them, 'Did I not choose you twelve? And one of you is a devil!' **71** Jesus was talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Judas was the one who was going to give him over to people who hated him. Judas was one of these twelve disciples.'

CHAPTER 7**Jesus' brothers do not believe him**

After this, Jesus travelled around in Galilee. He would not travel around in Judea because the leaders of the Jews wanted to kill him. **2** Every year the Jews had a feast to remember the time when their fathers lived in tents in the desert. The time was near for that feast. **3** Jesus' brothers said to him, 'Go away from here to Judea. Let your disciples also see the work you are doing. **4** When a person wants people to know about him, he does not hide what he is doing. If you are doing these big things, let the world see you.' **5** Even his brothers did not believe in Jesus.

6 Jesus said to them, 'It is not yet the time for me to go. But you may go any time you want to. **7** The people of the world cannot hate you. But they hate me because I say what they do is wrong. **8** Go to the feast yourselves. I am not going to the feast until it is the right time for me to go.' **9** He said this to them and stayed in Galilee.

10 After his brothers went to the feast, Jesus went also. He did not go with the other people, but he went by himself. **11** The leaders of the Jews at the feast tried to find him. They said, 'Where is he?'

12 People were talking among themselves about Jesus. Some said, 'He is a good man.' Others said, 'No. He is leading people to do wrong things.' **13** But they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, so no one talked about him out in the open.

14 When the feast was half finished, Jesus went to the temple and taught the people. **15** The Jews were very much surprised. 'How can this man know books? He never went to school.'

Jesus' teaching comes from God

16 Jesus answered the people, 'I am not teaching you my teaching. It is the teaching of the one who sent me. **17** If any man wants to do what God wants him to do, he will know the teaching. He will know if it is God's teaching or if I am speaking from my own mind. **18** The person who speaks from his own mind only wants to be great himself. But the person whom God has sent wants to show that God is great. That person is true. He is not a bad man. **19** Did not Moses give you the law? Not one of you is keeping the law. Why are you trying to kill me?'

20 The people answered Jesus, 'A bad spirit is in you! Who is trying to kill you?'

21 Jesus answered them, 'I have done one thing. You are all surprised about it. **22** Moses gave you the law of circumcision. You obey the law, not because it came from Moses, but because it came from the fathers long ago. You circumcise a baby boy on the Sabbath day.

23 You do it on the Sabbath day so that you will not break the law of Moses. If you do that, then why are you angry with me because I healed a man on the Sabbath day? **24** Do not judge by what you see, but judge in the right way.'

25 Some people from Jerusalem said, 'Is not this the person they are trying to kill? **26** See, he does not fear to speak and yet they say nothing to him! Do the rulers really know that this man is the Christ? **27** But we know where this man comes from. When the Christ comes, no one will know where he comes from.'

28 Jesus was teaching in the temple. He spoke loudly saying, 'You know me and you know where I come from. I have not come in my own power. The one who sent me is true. He is the one you do not know. **29** I know him because I came from him. He sent me.'

The Jewish leaders want to catch Jesus

30 Then the people wanted to catch him. But no one put a hand on him. It was not yet the time for that. **31** Many of the people believed in Jesus. They said, 'When Christ comes, will he do greater works than this man has done?'

32 The Pharisees heard what the people said about him. The chief priests and the Pharisees sent soldiers to catch him. **33** Jesus said, 'I will stay with you a short time longer. Then I will go back to him who sent me. **34** You will look for me, but you will not find me. You will not be able to go to the place where I will be.'

35 The Jews said to one another, 'Where will he go that we cannot find him? Will he go to our people who are living in other countries? Will he teach them? **36** What does he mean by this: "You will look for me and will not find me. You will not be able to go to the place where I will be"?''

37 The last day of the feast was a big day. On that day Jesus stood up and shouted, 'If anyone is thirsty, he may come to me and drink. **38** If anyone believes in me, the holy writings say, "Rivers of water that give life will flow out of his heart".' **39** This is what Jesus meant: those who believe in him would receive the Spirit. At that

time no one had received the Holy Spirit because Jesus had not yet been lifted up to heaven.

The people do not agree

40 When some of the people heard this they said, 'Truly, this is the Prophet.'

41 Other people said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'The Christ will not come from Galilee. Shall Christ come out of Galilee? **42** Do not the holy writings say that Christ will be of David's family? Will he not come from Bethlehem where David lived?'

43 The people did not all say the same thing about him. **44** Some of them wanted to catch Jesus, but no one put hands on him.

45 The soldiers came back to the chief priests and the Pharisees. They asked the soldiers, 'Why did you not bring him?'

46 The soldiers replied, 'No person has ever talked like he does!'

47 The Pharisees said, 'Has he fooled you also?'

48 None of the rulers and none of the Pharisees have believed on him, have they? **49** These poor people do not know the law. They will die!'

50 Nicodemus, the man who came to Jesus by night, was one of them. **51** He said, 'Is it right to judge any man by our law before we hear him and learn what he has done?'

52 They answered him, 'Are you from Galilee also? Study what is written. You will see that no prophet is to come from Galilee.' **53** Then every one of them went home.

CHAPTER 8

The woman caught in adultery

Then Jesus went to the hill called the Mount of Olives.

2 Early the next morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him. He sat down and taught them. **3** The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus. They had caught her having sex with a man who was not her husband. They made the woman stand in front of them. **4** They said, 'Teacher, this woman has committed adultery. She was caught doing it. **5** The law of Moses tells us that the people who do that should be killed with stones. What do you say?'

6 They said this to see what Jesus would do, because they wanted to find something wrong with him. Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground with his finger. **7** They kept on asking

him. He stood up and said to them, 'The one among you who has never done any wrong thing may throw the first stone at her.' **8** And Jesus bent down again and wrote on the ground. **9** When the people heard what he said, they went out, one by one. The oldest one went out first. Jesus was left alone with the woman in front of him. **10** Jesus looked up and said to her, 'Woman, where are the people? Has no one judged you?'

11 She said, 'No one, Sir.'

Jesus said, 'I also do not judge you. Go, and do no wrong thing again.'

Jesus the Light of the world

12 Then Jesus talked to the people in the temple. He said, 'I am the Light of the world. The one who comes with me will never walk in the dark, but he will have light that gives life.'

13 The Pharisees said, 'You are talking about yourself. What you say is not true.'

14 Jesus said to them, 'Even if I do talk about myself, what I say is true. I know where I come from and I know where I am going. But you do not know where I came from, or where I am going. **15** You judge in the way people judge matters. I do not judge any person. **16** But even if I do judge, I judge right. I am not alone. My Father who sent me is with me. **17** Even in your law it says that when two people say the same thing, it is true. **18** I talk about myself, and my Father who sent me talks about me.'

19 They asked him, 'Where is your Father?'

He said, 'You do not know me and you do not know my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.'

20 When Jesus said these words he was teaching in the temple. He was in the place where the money is kept. No one caught him because it was not yet his time.

21 Jesus talked to them again. He said, 'I am going away. You will try to find me and will die doing wrong things. You cannot come where I am going.' **22** Then the Jews said, 'Will he kill himself? He says, "You cannot come where I am going".'

23 Jesus said to them, 'You are from below. I am from above. You belong to this world. I do not belong to this world. **24** That is why I said, "You will die doing wrong things." If you do not believe that I am who I said I am, then you will die doing wrong things.'

25 They said to him, 'Who are you?'

Jesus answered, 'I am what I told you from the beginning. **26** I have many things to say to you and to judge you in many things. But he who sent me is true. I tell the world what he has told me.' **27** The people did not understand that Jesus was talking to them about his Father. **28** So Jesus said, 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he. You will know that I do nothing by my own power, but I talk the way my Father taught me. **29** He who sent me is with me always. I always do what he wants me to do.' **30** Many people believed in Jesus while he was talking this way.

The truth will make you free

31 Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him, 'If you obey my word, you are truly my disciples. **32** And you will understand the truth and the truth will make you free.'

33 They said to him, 'We are Abraham's children. We have always been free. Why do you say to us, "You will be free"?''

34 Jesus answered them, 'I tell you the truth. People who do wrong things are not free. They become a slave of the wrong things they do.

35 A slave does not belong to the family for ever. But a son belongs for ever. **36** So if the Son makes you free, you will be truly free. **37** I know that you come from Abraham. But you want to kill me because you do not like what I tell you. **38** I tell you about the things that I have seen where my Father is, and you do what you have seen your father do.'

39 They answered him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did. **40** But you want to kill me because I told you the truth which I learned from God. Abraham did not do that. **41** You are doing your father's work.'

Then they said to him, 'We were not born of an unmarried woman. God is the Father of us all.'

42 Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father you would love me, because I have come from God. I did not come by my own power. God sent me. **43** Why do you not understand what I say? I will tell you why. It is because you do not want to understand it.

44 'The bad spirit, the devil, is your real father. You gladly do the wrong things he wants you to do. From the beginning he killed people. He has nothing to do with what is true. His way is to tell lies. He himself is a liar and all lying comes from him. **45** You do not believe me because I tell you what is true. **46** Which one of you can

prove that what I have done is bad? I tell you what is true. Why then do you not believe me?

47 The person who comes from God listens to what God says. You do not come from God. That is why you do not listen to me.'

48 The leaders of the Jews answered him, 'We say what is true. We say that you come from Samaria. And we say that a bad spirit is in you.'

49 Jesus said, 'I have no bad spirit in me. I respect my Father but you do not respect me.

50 I do not want to make myself great. There is one who makes me great. He judges the matter.

51 I tell you the truth. If anyone obeys my word, he will never die.'

52 The leaders of the Jews said to him, 'Now we know it is true that a bad spirit is in you. Abraham died. So did the prophets. And yet you say, "If anyone obeys my word, he will never die." **53** Are you greater than our father Abraham and the prophets of God who died long ago? Who do you make yourself out to be?'

54 Jesus answered, 'If I make myself great, then I am not great. But my Father makes me great. You say he is your God. **55** But you do not know God. I know him. If I say, "I do not know him," I am a liar, just as you people are. But I know him and I obey his word. **56** Your father Abraham was glad that he would see my coming. He did see it and he was very glad.'

57 The Jewish leaders said to him, 'You are not fifty years old yet. How could Abraham see you?'

58 Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth. I already was before Abraham was born.' **59** Then they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus got out of their way. He left the temple and they did not know where he went.

CHAPTER 9

Jesus heals a man who was blind

On his way out of the temple Jesus saw a man who had been born blind. **2** His disciples asked Jesus, 'Master, was this man born blind because of the wrong things he did, or was it the wrong things his parents did?'

3 Jesus answered, 'It was not that he or his parents did any wrong thing. But it was so that people would see what God will do in him.

4 There is one who has sent me. I must do his work while it is still daylight. Night is coming. Then it will be too dark to work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.'

6 When Jesus had said this, he spat on the ground. Then he put some of the wet dirt on the man's eyes. **7** And he said, 'Go. wash your eyes in that water hole called Siloam.' (Siloam means Sent.) The man went and washed his eyes. After that, he was able to see.

8 His neighbours and other people had seen him when he was blind. They said, 'Is not this the same man who used to sit here and beg?'

9 Some people said, 'Yes, this is the same man.' Others said, 'He is like that man.' But the man himself said, 'I am that man.'

10 They asked him, 'How is it that you can see now?'

11 He answered them, 'That man whose name is Jesus made some mud. He rubbed it on my eyes and told me to go and wash them in the water hole Siloam. And when I had washed my eyes, I could see.'

12 'Where is the man?' they asked. He said, 'I do not know.'

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. **14** The day Jesus made the mud and healed the man was the Sabbath day.

15 Then the Pharisees also asked the man, 'How is it that you can see now?'

He answered them, 'The man put mud on my eyes. I washed my eyes and now I can see.'

The Pharisees do not know what to think

16 Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God. He does not obey the Sabbath day law.'

The others said, 'But how can a bad man do such a big work?' So the Pharisees did not agree together in what they thought about Jesus.

17 Then they asked the man who had been born blind, 'What do you say about the man who healed you?'

He answered, 'I say he is a prophet from God.'

18 But the leaders of the Jews did not really believe what they heard about the man. They did not believe that first he had been blind and now was able to see. So they called the parents of the man who could now see. **19** 'Tell us,' they said. 'Is this your son who you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?'

20 The parents answered, 'We know that this is our son. And we know that he was born blind.'

21 But we do not know how it is that he can now see. We do not know who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to talk for himself.'

22 The parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. They knew that the leaders of the Jews had already agreed that if anyone said Jesus is the Christ, they would be put out of the meeting place. **23** That is why the parents said, 'He is old enough to talk for himself. Ask him.'

The Pharisees are angry

24 Then again they called the man who had been blind. They said to him, 'You must praise God for this. We know that the man who healed you is a bad man.'

25 He answered them, 'I do not know if he is a bad man or not. But one thing I do know. I know that first I was blind, but now I can see.'

26 Then they said to him again, 'What did he do to you? How did he heal you?' **27** He answered them, 'I told you already. You did not listen. Why do you want me to tell you again? Do you also want to be his disciples?'

28 This made them angry. They said, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.'

29 We know that God talked to Moses. But this man, we do not know where he comes from.'

30 The man who had been blind said, 'This surprises me! He healed me and yet you do not know where he comes from! **31** We know that God does not listen to bad people. But God listens to the person who shows him respect and who obeys him. **32** Before this, no one has ever healed a man who was born blind. Such a thing has not been heard of since the world was made. **33** If this man did not come from God, he could not do anything like this.'

34 They answered, 'You have been a bad man ever since you were born! Now are you trying to teach us?' And with that they put him out of the meeting place.

35 Jesus heard that the people had put him out. When he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?'

36 He answered, 'Sir, who is the Son of God? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.'

37 Jesus said, 'You have already seen him. The person who is talking to you now, he is the Son of God.'

38 The man said, 'Sir, I do believe.' He knelt down in front of Jesus and worshipped him.

39 Jesus said, 'I came into the world so that people may be judged. I came so that those who are blind may see. And I came so that those who see may become blind.'

40 Some of the Pharisees were with Jesus and heard him say this. They asked him, 'You mean to say that we are blind also?'

41 Jesus answered them, 'If you agreed that you were blind, you would not be bad people. But you say, "We can see." So then you are still bad people.'

CHAPTER 10

The story of the sheep house

Then Jesus went on to say, 'I tell you the truth. A person must get to the sheep through the door. Anyone who climbs over the wall to get in is a bad man and steals things. He has come to steal the sheep. **2** But the man who comes in through the door, he is the one who takes care of the sheep. **3** The guard will open the door for him. The sheep will listen to him. He calls his own sheep by their names and leads them out. **4** When all his own sheep are out of the house, he goes ahead of them. The sheep come behind him because they know his voice. **5** They will not go after a stranger. They will run away from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.'

6 Jesus told this story to the Pharisees, but they did not understand what he was trying to tell them.

7 So Jesus told them again. He said, 'I tell you the truth. I am the door of the sheep house.

8 All those who came before me are bad people and steal things. They came to steal the sheep. But the sheep did not listen to them. **9** I am the door. Anyone who comes in through me will be saved. He will go in and out as he wants to, and will have food to eat. **10** The thief comes only to steal the sheep and to kill them and spoil them. I have come so that people may live and that they may enjoy life to the full.

11 'I am the good shepherd. I am the one who really cares for the sheep. The good shepherd is willing to die to save his sheep. **12** Some people work for pay. The one who does that is not the one who really cares. The sheep do not belong to him. When he sees a bad animal coming, he will leave the sheep and run away. He will let the animal take the sheep and make the sheep run away. **13** He does that because he is only working for pay and does not care what happens to the sheep.

14 'I am the good shepherd, the one who really cares for the sheep. I know my sheep and my sheep know me. **15** So my Father knows me

and I know him. I am willing to die to save the sheep.

16 'I have some other sheep which are not with these sheep. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice. Then all the sheep will be together and there will be one person who cares for all of them. **17** My Father loves me because I am willing to die. But when I die, I will live again. **18** No one kills me. I die only because I choose to die. I have power to die and I have power to live again. This is what my Father has told me to do.'

The Jews do not agree

19 The Jews did not all say the same thing because of what Jesus said. **20** Many of them said, 'A bad spirit is in him. He is crazy. Why do you listen to him?'

21 But others said, 'A person who has a bad spirit in him does not say the things this man says. Can a bad spirit make blind people see?'

22 At that time there was a feast in Jerusalem at the temple. It was the cold time of the year.

23 Jesus was walking in that part of the temple called Solomon's resting place. **24** The Jews came around Jesus and said, 'How long will you keep us wondering about this matter? If you are really the Christ, then tell us plainly.'

25 Then Jesus said, 'I have already told you and you did not believe it. My Father has given me the power to do big works. These works tell you who I am. **26** And yet you do not believe because you are not my sheep. I told you this before. **27** My sheep listen to me. I know them. They come to me. **28** I give them life that lasts for ever. They will never die. No one will take them out of my hand. **29** My Father gave the sheep to me. He is greater than anyone else. No one is able to take them out of my Father's hand. **30** My Father and I are one.'

The Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus

31 Then the leaders of the Jews picked up stones again to kill him. **32** So Jesus said to them, 'I have done many good things that come from my Father. For which one of those are you going to kill me?'

33 Then the Jewish leaders answered him, 'We do not kill you for doing any good thing. But you do not respect God. You are only a man, and yet you say you are God.'

34 Jesus answered them, 'In your own books it is written that God said, "You are gods."

36 Nothing can change the words in the holy

writings. It is written that God spoke to men and that he called them gods. So he called some men gods. Then why do you say I do not respect God when I say that I am the Son of God? I am the one God chose and sent into the world. **37** If I am not doing my Father's work, then do not believe me. **38** But if I am doing my Father's work, believe the work that I do, even though you do not believe me. Then you will know and you will believe that my Father is in me and I am in him.'

39 Because of what he said, they tried to catch Jesus again. But he got away from them.

40 He went away again to the other side of the Jordan River. He went to the place where John [the Baptizer] was when he first baptized people. Jesus stayed there for a while. **41** Many people came to him there. They said, 'John himself did not do any big work. But everything that John said about this man is true.' **42** Many people believed on Jesus there.

CHAPTER 11

The death of Lazarus

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived at Bethany, the home of Mary and her sister Martha. **2** Mary was the same woman that put oil on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. **3** So the sisters sent someone to tell Jesus. They said, 'Lord, the one whom you love is sick.'

4 Jesus heard the message. He said, 'The man is sick, but he will not die from it. But this will show people that God is great, and his Son also.'

5 Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6 When he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two days more. **7** After that, he said to his disciples, 'Let us go back again to Judea.'

8 They said, 'Master, it is not long since the Jews wanted to kill you with stones. Are you going back there again?'

9 Jesus answered them, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If a person walks in the daylight, then he will not fall. He can see by the light that is in the world. **10** But if a person walks at night, he will fall because there is no light for him to see.' **11** After he said this, he said also, 'Our friend Lazarus is sleeping, but I am going to wake him up.'

12 His disciples said, 'Lord, if he is sleeping then he will get well again.' **13** But Jesus meant that Lazarus had died. The disciples thought that Lazarus was sleeping to have a rest.

14 Then Jesus told them plainly. He said, 'Lazarus is dead. **15** For your sake I am glad that I was not there. You will really believe in me. But come, let us go to him.'

16 Then Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to the other disciples, 'Let us all go and die with Jesus.'

Jesus goes to Lazarus

17 When Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days. **18** Bethany was only about two miles from Jerusalem. **19** Many Jews had come out to see Martha and Mary. They came to comfort them because their brother had died. **20** As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary just stayed in the house. **21** Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. **22** But even yet, I know that God will give you anything that you ask for.'

23 Jesus said, 'Your brother will rise again.'

24 Martha said, 'I know that he will rise when the dead people are raised up on the last day.'

25 Jesus said, 'I am the one who will raise people up and give them life. The person who believes in me will live, even though he has died. **26** Anyone who is living and who believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

27 She said, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ. I believe that you are the Son of God who was to come into the world.'

28 When she had said this, she went back to call her sister. She said quietly, 'Mary, the Master has come. He is calling you.'

29 When Mary heard that, she got up quickly and came to him. **30** Jesus was not in the town yet. He was at the same place where Martha had met him. **31** The Jews who were in the house to comfort Mary saw her get up quickly and go out. They went after her. They said, 'She is going to the grave to cry.'

32 Mary reached the place where Jesus was. When she saw him, she kneeled down before him and said, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'

33 Jesus saw her crying. He saw the Jews who came with her crying also. Then his heart was troubled very much.

34 'Where have you buried him?' he said.

'Come, Lord, and see,' they said. **35** Then Jesus cried.

36 'Look,' the Jews said. 'He truly loved him very much!' **37** Then some of them said, 'This man made the blind see. Could he not have saved Lazarus from dying?'

38 Jesus' heart was troubled very much again. Then he came to the grave. It was a hole in the side of a large rock. A stone covered the hole.

39 Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.'

Martha, the sister of the dead man, said, 'Lord, he will smell bad by this time. He has been dead four days already.'

40 Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed God you would see that he is great?' **41** So they pushed the stone away from the grave.

Jesus looked up and said, 'Father, I thank you because you have heard me. **42** I know that you always hear me. But I have said this so that the people who are standing here might believe that you have sent me.' **43** When he had said this, he shouted, 'Lazarus, come out!'

44 Out came the dead man! The cloth that they had buried him in was tied around his hands and feet. Another small cloth was tied around his face. Jesus said to the people, 'Take off the cloths and free him!'

The leaders plan to kill Jesus

45 When they saw the things Jesus did, many of the Jews who had come with Mary believed on Him. **46** But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees met together. They said, 'What are we going to do? This man is doing many big works. **48** If we do not stop him, everybody will believe on him. Then the Roman rulers will come and break down our holy town and our nation.'

49 One of them, Caiaphas, was high priest that year. He said to them, 'You know nothing.

50 You do not understand. It is better for us if one person dies for the people. Then the whole nation will not be broken down.' **51** He himself did not understand what he was saying. But he was the high priest that year. God spoke through him to say that Jesus should die for those people. **52** Jesus would die, not only for those people, but he would gather together all of God's people who are out in different places.

53 So from that day on they planned to kill Jesus.

54 That is why Jesus did not go among the Jews in the open. But he went to another part of the country, to a town called Ephraim. He stayed there with his disciples.

55 The time for the Passover Feast of the Jews was near. Many people from all around the country went to Jerusalem. They had to make themselves clean according to the law before the Passover Feast. **56** They were looking around for Jesus. As they were standing in the temple they talked to one another. They said, 'What do you think? Do you think that he will come to the feast?'

57 Both the chief priest and the Pharisees had told the people, 'If any man knows where he is, tell us. We want to catch him.'

CHAPTER 12

Mary puts oil on Jesus

Six days before the Passover Feast Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus lived. This was the Lazarus that Jesus had raised from death. **2** The people made supper for Jesus. Martha helped give food for the people, and Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Jesus. **3** Mary had a jar of oil. It smelled very nice and cost much money. She put some of it on Jesus' feet. Then she wiped his feet with her hair. The smell of oil went all through the house. **4** Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, was there. He was one of the disciples, the one who was going to give Jesus over to the people who hated him. **5** He said, 'This oil is worth a year's wages! Why did we not sell it and give the money to poor people?' **6** Judas did not say this because he cared for poor people. But he used to steal. He carried the disciples' money bag and he used to take money out of the bag for himself.

7 Then Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She has kept this oil for the time when they will bury me.

8 You will have poor people with you always. But you will not always have me with you.'

9 Many of the Jews knew that Jesus was at Bethany. So they came because Jesus was there. But they also came to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from death. **10** The chief priests planned to kill Lazarus also. **11** Many of the Jews left the priests and believed in Jesus, because of Lazarus.

Jesus goes to Jerusalem

12 The next day Jesus went to Jerusalem. Many people who were at the feast heard that he was coming. **13** So they took branches of palm trees

and went to meet him. They shouted, 'Praise God! God bless the King of Israel! He is coming in the name of the Lord!'

14 Then Jesus found a young donkey and rode on it. He did as the holy writings say, **15** 'Do not fear, people of Jerusalem. Your King is coming. He will be riding on a young donkey.'

16 His disciples did not understand this at first. But when God had made Jesus great, then they remembered what the holy writings said about him. They remembered that people had done these things to him. **17** Many people were with Jesus when he called Lazarus out of the grave and raised him from death. They had talked about what he did. **18** That is why many people went out to meet Jesus.

They had heard about the big work he did.

19 The Pharisees said to each other, 'See, you cannot stop this thing. People everywhere are going after him.'

The Greek people look for Jesus

20 Some of the people who came to worship God at the feast were Greek people. **21** They came to Philip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They said, 'Sir, we want to see Jesus.'

22 Philip came to Andrew and told him. Then they both went and told Jesus. **23** Jesus said, 'The time has come when the Son of Man will be made great. **24** I tell you the truth. If a seed of grain is not put in the ground to die, it will be only a seed. But if it dies, it will bear many seeds. **25** Anyone who tries to keep his life will lose it. Anyone who gives up his life in this world will live for ever in the next world. **26** If anyone wants to do my work, he must go where I go. Then he and I will be together. My Father will honour everyone who works for me.'

27 'Now my heart is very sad. Shall I say, "Father, save me from this time of trouble"? No, I have come to this time just so that I might go through it. **28** Father, do what will make your name great.'

Then a voice from the sky said, 'I have already done that and I will do it again.'

29 Some people were standing near. When they heard the voice, they said, 'It is thundering.' Other people said, 'An angel talked to him.'

30 Jesus answered them, 'This voice did not come for my sake, but it came for your sake.'

31 It is time now for the world to be judged. The ruler of this world will be put out. **32** And as for me, if they lift me up from the earth, I will

draw all people to me.' **33** He said this to show how he would die.

34 The people answered him, 'Our law book tells us that Christ will stay here for ever. Why do you say, "The Son of Man will be raised up from the earth"? Tell us who this Son of Man is.'

35 Then Jesus said to them, 'You have light for a short time longer. Walk while you have the light so that you will not need to walk in the dark. The person who walks in the dark cannot see where he is going. **36** Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may be a people who have the light in you.'

The Jews do not believe in Jesus

When Jesus had said this, he left them. They did not know where he was. **37** Even though they had seen Jesus doing many big works, they did not believe in him. **38** What the prophet Isaiah said came true. He said, 'Lord, who has believed what we told them? Who has believed even though they have seen the power of God's hand?'

39 So they could not believe. Isaiah said also, **40** 'God has made them blind. Their hearts have no feeling. They cannot see. They do not understand with their heart. They will not turn to God. If they did turn, he would heal them.'

41 Isaiah said this about the Christ when he saw how great he was. **42** Some of the chief rulers believed in Jesus, but they did not tell anyone that they believed in him. They were afraid the Pharisees would put them out of the meeting place. **43** They wanted the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 Jesus called out, 'Anyone who believes in me does not believe just in me, but in the one who sent me. **45** Anyone who sees me sees the one who sent me. **46** I am a light and have come into the world. Anyone who believes in me will not be in the dark. **47** If anyone hears what I say and does not believe it, I do not judge him. I did not come to judge the world. I came to save the world. **48** The one who will not believe in me and will not listen to what I say will be judged anyway. The same things that I have said will judge him on the last day.'

49 'I have not said this from my own mind, but my Father who sent me told me what to say. He told me what to tell you. **50** I know that what he told me to say has power to give life for ever. So I say everything my Father has told me to say.'

CHAPTER 13**Jesus washes his disciples' feet**

Before the Passover Feast had started, Jesus saw that the time had come for him to leave this world. The time had come for him to go back to his Father. He loved his own people who were in the world. And he loved them the same way right to the end. **2** He and his disciples were eating together. The devil had already put it into Judas' heart to give Jesus over to people who hated him. (Judas was the son of Simon Iscariot.) **3** Jesus knew that his Father had put everything into his hands. He knew he had come from God. He knew he was going back to God. **4** Jesus stood up where he had been eating. He took off his outer clothing. And he took a towel and tied it around him. **5** Then he poured water into a pan and began to wash the disciples' feet. He wiped their feet with the towel he had tied around him.

6 He came to Simon Peter. Peter said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

7 Jesus answered him, 'You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand it later.'

8 Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet!'

Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, then you do not belong to me.'

9 Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, wash my feet, and my hands, and my head also!'

10 Jesus said, 'A person who has bathed himself needs to wash his feet only. He is all clean. You are clean, but not all of you.' **11** Jesus knew who was going to give him over to people who hated him. That is why he said, 'You are not all clean.'

12 After Jesus had finished washing their feet, he took his gown and sat down again. 'Do you understand what I have done to you?' he asked.

13 'You call me Master and Lord. What you say is right. I am your Master and Lord. **14** I am your Lord and Master and have washed your feet. If I do that, then you should wash one another's feet. **15** I have shown you what to do. Now you do as I have done. **16** I tell you the truth. The servant is not better than his master. The one who is sent is not better than the one who sent him. **17** Do you understand what I have told you? If you do, you will have much happiness for doing it. **18** I am not talking about all of you but I know the people I have chosen.

So God's word comes true. The holy writings say, "He who is eating my bread has turned against me."

19 'I am telling you this now before it happens. So when it happens you will believe who I am.

20 I tell you the truth. The person who receives the one I send, receives me. He that receives me, receives the one who sent me.'

Jesus tells what Judas will do

21 When Jesus had said this, he was troubled in his heart. He said, 'I tell you the truth. One of you will give me over to people who hate me.'

22 The disciples looked at one another. They did not know which one of them Jesus was talking about. **23** The disciple Jesus loved was at his right side. **24** Simon Peter nodded to that disciple. He said, 'Tell us who he is talking about.' **25** He who was at Jesus' right side said to Jesus, 'Lord, who is it?'

26 Jesus answered, 'I will put a piece of bread in the dish. Then I will give it to that one.' He put in the bread, then he took it and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. **27** Right after Jesus had given the bread, Satan came into Judas.

Then Jesus said to him, 'What you are going to do, do right away.' **28** No one at the table knew why Jesus said, 'Do it right away.' **29** Judas had the money bag. Some thought that Jesus was telling him, 'Buy what we need for the feast,' or that he wanted Judas to give something to the poor people. **30** Judas went out right after he had taken the bread. It was night.

The new law

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man is very great. And he has made God's name great. **32** If he has made God's name great, God also will make him great by his own power. He will do it right away. **33** My children, I am with you for a short time longer. You will look for me. What I said to the Jews I say to you now: "You cannot come to the place where I am going." **34** I give you a new law. That law is, "Love each other." As I have loved you, so you also love each other. **35** This is how all people will know that you are my disciples.'

Jesus tells what Peter will say

36 Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, where are you going?'

Jesus answered him, 'You cannot go with me where I am going now. Later on you will go with me.'

37 Peter said to him, 'Lord, why can I not go with you now? I am willing to die for you.'

38 Jesus answered him, 'Will you die for me? I tell you the truth. Before the cock calls, you will say three times that you do not know me.'

CHAPTER 14

Jesus and his Father

Jesus said, 'Do not let anything trouble your heart. You believe in God and you must believe in me also. **2** In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to make a place ready for you. **3** If I go to make a place ready for you, I will come again. I will come to take you so that you may be with me. **4** You know where I am going, and you know the way.'

5 Thomas said to Jesus, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?'

6 Jesus said to him, 'I am the way. I am the truth. I give life. No one can come to my Father unless I take him there. **7** If you knew me, you would have known my Father also. But from now on you do know him because you have seen him.'

8 Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, then we will be happy.'

9 Jesus said to him, 'Philip, you mean to say that I have been with you all this time and yet you do not know me? The person who has seen me has seen my Father also. Why do you say, "Show us your Father"? **10** Do you not believe that I am in my Father and my Father is in me? The things that I say, I speak not from my own mind. But my Father lives in me and he does the work. **11** I tell you that I am in my Father and my Father is in me. But you do not believe me. So then let the work that I do prove it to you.'

12 'I tell you the truth. The person who believes in me will do the big work that I do. And he will do even bigger work because I go to my Father.'

13 I will do anything you ask of my Father in my name. In that way the Son will make my Father's name great. **14** If you ask anything in my name, I will do it.'

The promise of the Holy Spirit

15 'If you love me, you will obey me. **16** I will ask my Father. He will give you another one to help you and to be with you always. **17** He will send you the Spirit of truth. The world cannot receive the true Spirit because it does not see or

know him. You know him because he is with you and will be in you.

18 'I will not leave you without someone to help you. And I myself will come back to you. **19** In a short time the world will not see me again, but you will see me again. Because I live, you will live also. **20** At that time you will know that I am in my Father. You are in me, and I am in you. **21** He who knows the things I tell him to do and does them, really loves me. My Father will love him and I also will love him. I will show him who I am.'

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Jesus, 'Lord, how are you going to make yourself real to us, and not to the rest of the world?'

23 Jesus said to him, 'If a person loves me, he will obey me. My Father also will love him. And we will come to him and will live with him.'

24 The person who does not love me does not obey me. The word which you hear is not my word. It is my Father's word. He is the one who sent me.

25 'I have told you these things while I am still with you. **26** But the Holy Spirit is the one who will help you. My Father will send him in my name. He will teach you everything that I have said to you. His Helper will remind you of all that I said. **27** Peace is what I leave for you. I give you my own peace. People of the world also say, "Peace" to you. I do not say it as they say it. Do not let anything trouble your hearts. Do not fear. **28** You heard me say, "I am going away and then I will come back to you." If you really loved me, then you would have been very glad that I am going to my Father. My Father is greater than I am. **29** I have told you this before it happens. Then when it does happen, you will believe. **30** After this I will not talk much with you. The ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me. **31** I will do what my Father tells me to do so that the people of the world may know that I love my Father. Get up now! We must go.'

CHAPTER 15

Jesus, the true fruit tree

I am the real fruit tree. My Father is the One who takes care of the tree. **2** He takes away from me every branch that does not bear fruit. And he cleans every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit. **3** What I said to you has made you clean already. **4** But you must be in me and I will be in you. The branch cannot

bear fruit by itself. It must be joined to the tree. And you cannot do any good thing if you are not joined to me. **5** I am the fruit tree and you are the branches. I will be in the person who is in me. That person will have a fruitful life. But you can do nothing without me. **6** If any person is not in me, he is cut off like a branch and dies. People gather the dry branches and throw them into the fire to be burned. **7** If you are in me and obey me, you may ask me for anything you want and I will give it to you. **8** If you do much good and become my disciples, you will make my Father's name great.

9 'I have loved you just as my Father has loved you. So let me love you always. **10** If you obey me, I will love you always. That is what I have done. I have obeyed my Father. And he will love me always.

11 'I have told you these things so that you may be glad in the same way I am glad. Then you will be very glad always.

12 'I am telling you to love each other as I have loved you. **13** The strongest love anyone can have is this. He will die to save his friends.

14 You are my friends if you do what I tell you to do. **15** I do not call you servants anymore, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because you know everything that my Father has told me. **16** You did not choose me, but I chose you. I gave you a big work to do. That work is to go out and do good things and to make the good things that you do remain strong. If you do that, my Father will do anything you ask in my name.

17 'Here is the law I gave you. Love each other.'

18 'If the world hates you, remember that it hated me before it hated you. **19** If you belonged to this world, the world would love you. But you do not belong to the world. I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. **20** Remember what I told you. I said, "The servant is not better than his master." If the people in the world have troubled me, they will also trouble you. If they obey me, they will also obey you. **21** They will do all these things to you because you are true to me. They do not know the one who sent me.

22 'I came and spoke to them. If I had not done that, then what they did would not have been a wrong thing. But now they have no excuse for doing it. **23** The person who hates me hates my Father also. **24** No other person has ever done the work that I have done. If they had, then what they did would not be a wrong thing. But

now they have seen me and hated me and my Father also. **25** This has happened in order to make the words of their law book come true. It says, "They hated me for no reason."

26 'I will send the true Spirit to comfort you. He will come from my Father. When he comes, then he will talk about me. **27** You also will talk about me because you have been with me from the time I began my work.'

CHAPTER 16

I have told you these things so that you will not turn back. **2** The people will put you out of the meeting place. Yes, the time is coming when someone will kill you and think he is working for God. **3** They will do these things because they do not know my Father nor me. **4** I have told you all these things now. Then when that time comes, you will remember that I told you about them.

'I did not tell you these things in the beginning because I myself was with you. **5** But now I am going back to him who sent me here. Yet not one of you is asking me, "Where are you going?" **6** Your hearts are very sad because I have told you these things. **7** Anyway, I am telling you the truth. It is better for you if I go away. If I do not go away, the one who is to help you will not come to you. But if I go away, I will send him to you.

8 'When the Helper comes, he will prove this to the people of the world that they are wrong. They are wrong about what they call bad and about what they call good. He will show them how to be right with God. He will show them about God's judgement. **9** He will prove it is a bad thing that they do not believe in me. **10** He will show what really is right, because I am going to my Father and you will not see me anymore. **11** He will show them how to judge right, because the ruler of this world himself will be judged.

12 'I have many other things to tell you, but you cannot understand them now. **13** When the truth-giving Spirit comes, he will show you everything that is true. He will not speak his own message, but he will tell you the things that he has been told to tell you. He will tell you what is going to happen. **14** He will make my name great. He will take what is mine and tell it to you. **15** Everything that belongs to my Father belongs to me also. That is why I said, "He will take what is mine and tell it to you."

16 'Very soon now, you will not see me. A little while after that, you will see me again, because I go to my Father.'

17 Some of the disciples talked among themselves and said, 'He says, "Very soon now, you will not see me. A little while after that, you will see me." And he says, "Because I go to my Father." What does he mean by "a little while"?'

18 We do not know what he means.'

19 Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him this question. So he said to them, 'Are you asking each other what I mean by saying, "Very soon you will not see me. Then in a little while after that you will see me"?' **20** I tell you the truth. You people will cry and be very sad, but the people in the world will be very glad. At first you will be sad, but after that you will not be sad. You will be glad.

21 'Any woman is sad just before her baby is born. She has much pain because the time has come for the baby to be born. But as soon as the baby is born, she forgets the pain she had. She is very glad because a person has been born into the world. **22** So you also are very sad now. But I will see you again. Then you will be very glad. And no one can take your joy from you. **23** When that time comes, you will not ask me for anything. I tell you the truth. My Father will do for you anything you ask in my name. **24** You have not asked for anything in my name yet. Ask my Father and he will give it to you. That is what will make you very glad always.

25 'I have told you these things by a story. The time will come when I will not talk by stories. I will tell you about my Father plainly. **26** When that day comes, you will ask in my name. I do not say that I will ask my Father for you. **27** My Father himself loves you. He loves you because you have loved me. And he loves you because you have believed that God sent me. **28** My Father sent me into the world. And now I will leave the world and go back to my Father.'

29 The disciples said to him, 'Yes, now you are telling us plainly. You are not telling us with words we do not understand. **30** We know now that you know everything. No one needs to ask you questions. This makes us believe that God sent you.'

31 Jesus answered them, 'Do you really believe now? **32** Listen, the time is coming. No, the time is here when you will run away. Every man will go to his own home. You will leave me on my own. And yet I am not alone, because my Father is with me. **33** I have told you these

things so that you may have peace. I give you peace. The world will trouble you much. But be glad. I have power over the world.'

CHAPTER 17

Jesus' prayer for his disciples

When Jesus had said these things, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the time has come now. Make your Son's name great, so that your Son may make your name great. **2** You have given your Son power over all people. So all those you have given him will live for ever. **3** You are the only true God. If they know you, and Jesus Christ whom you sent, they will live for ever. **4** I made your name great on earth. I have done the work you gave me to do. **5** So now, Father, let my name be great with you. Make my name as great as it was when I was with you before the world was made.

6 'I have shown these men who you really are. They are men whom you gave me from the world. They belonged to you and you gave them to me. They have obeyed you. **7** Now they really know that everything you gave me comes from you. **8** I have told them the things that you told me to tell them. And they have believed my words. They know it is true that I was with you before I came. They have believed that you sent me. **9** It is these men I am asking you for. I am not asking you for the people of the world. But I am asking for those you gave me, because they belong to you. **10** All those I have are yours. And all you have are mine. And they make my name great.

11 'I am not in the world any longer. But they are in the world. And I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me. Then they will be one, just as you and I are one. **12** While I was with them, I took care of them in your name, which you gave me. I have taken care of them. Only one of them is lost. That is the one who was born to be lost. What your book says came true. **13** Now I am coming to you.

'I say these things while I am in the world so that they may be very glad, as I am. **14** I have told them what you said. The world has hated them because they do not belong to the world. So also, I do not belong to the world. **15** I do not ask you to take them out of the world. But I ask you to take care of them, so that the evil one of this world will not harm them. **16** They do not belong to the world, even as I do not belong to the world. **17** Make them clean by the

true word and keep them for yourself. Your word is true. **18** I have sent them into the world as you sent me into the world. **19** I have made myself clean and kept myself for them, so that they may be clean and be kept for you also by the truth.

20 'I do not ask this for these people only; I ask it also for the people who will believe in me when they hear what these people say. **21** I do this so that the people will all be one. That is the same way with us. You, my Father, belong to me and I belong to you. I ask that they also may be joined to us. Then the world will believe that you have sent me. **22** I have made them great the way you have made me great. That makes us one, as we are one. **23** I belong to them and you belong to me, so that they all may be really one together. Then the world will know that you have sent me and that you have loved them just as you have loved me.

24 'Father, I want the people that you have given me to be with me. Then they will see that you made me great, because you loved me before you made the world. **25** Father, you are the one who is right. The world has not known you. But I have known you. These people know that you have sent me. **26** I have told them who you are. I will tell them again and again. Then they will love each other as much as you have loved me. And I will live in them.'

CHAPTER 18

The people catch Jesus

When Jesus had finished saying this, he and his disciples went through the valley called Kidron. There was a garden with trees. He and his disciples went into the garden. **2** Jesus had gone to this place often with his disciples, so Judas knew where the place was. He was the one who gave Jesus over to the people who hated him. **3** The chief priests and the Pharisees sent soldiers and guards with Judas. They had lamps, and torches, and things to fight with.

4 Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him. So he went out and said to them, 'Who are you looking for?'

5 They answered, 'Jesus from Nazareth.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am he.' Judas, who had given Jesus over to them, was standing with them. **6** When Jesus said to them, 'I am he,' they all drew back suddenly and fell down. **7** So Jesus asked them again, 'Who are you looking for?'

And they said, 'Jesus from Nazareth.'

8 Then Jesus answered, 'I have already told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, let these men go.' **9** So his words came true. He had said, 'I did not lose one of those you gave me.'

10 Simon Peter had a long knife or sword. He took it out and hit the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back in its place. Must I not drink the cup that my Father has given me?'

Jesus is taken to the high priest

12 Then the soldiers, and the captain, and the guards caught Jesus and tied him up. **13** First they took him to Annas. He was the father of Caiaphas' wife. Caiaphas was the high priest that year. **14** This was the same Caiaphas that had talked to the leaders of the Jews. He had said, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.'

15 Simon Peter and one other disciple went after Jesus. The other disciple knew the high priest, so he went right in with Jesus through the gate of the high priest's large house. **16** But Peter stood by the gate outside. The other disciple who knew the high priest talked to the servant at the door and brought in Peter. **17** The servant at the door said to Peter, 'Are you one of this man's disciples too?'

Peter said, 'No, I am not!' **18** It was cold there. The servants and the officers had made a small fire. They stood by it and warmed themselves. Peter stood by the fire also and warmed himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus about his disciples, and about his teaching. **20** Jesus answered him, 'I have talked so that anyone who wanted to could hear me. I have always taught in the meeting houses and in the temple. That is where the Jews always go. I have not said anything in a secret way. **21** Why do you ask me? The people heard me talk. Ask them what I told them. They know what I said.'

22 When he had said this, one of the officers who stood there hit Jesus. He said, 'Is that the way you answer the high priest?'

23 Jesus answered him, 'If I have said anything bad, tell me plainly what wrong thing I have said. If I have told the truth, why do you hit me?' **24** Jesus was still tied up. Annas sent him over to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Simon Peter stayed by the fire and stood warming himself. So the people said to him, 'Are you not one of his disciples also?'

He said, 'No, I am not!'

26 A servant was there. He was of the same family as the one whose ear Peter had cut off. He said, 'Did I not see you in the garden with him?'

27 Again Peter said, 'No!' And just then a cock called out.

Jesus in Pilate's court

28 Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the court house. It was early in the day. They themselves did not go into the court house. They did not want to become unclean. They wanted to eat the Passover Feast.

29 Pilate went out to the Jewish leaders and said, 'What complaint do you bring against this man?'

30 They said to him, 'If he were not a very bad man, then we would not have brought him to you.'

31 Pilate said, 'Take him and judge him by your own law.'

The leaders of the Jews said, 'But we are not allowed to kill anyone.' **32** So this is the way the words of Jesus came true. He had said how he was going to die.

33 Then Pilate went back into the court house again. He called for Jesus and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

34 Jesus answered, 'Do you ask me because you yourself think I am, or do you ask me because others said I am?'

35 Pilate answered, 'Am I a Jew? Your own people and the chief priests have brought you here to me. Tell me, what have you done?'

36 Jesus answered him, 'I am not a king in this world. If I were, my people would fight so that I would not be given to the Jews. But I am not a king in this world.'

37 So Pilate said, 'So you really are a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. The reason that I was born was that I should tell what is true. That is why I came into the world. Everyone who likes what is true listens to what I say.'

38 Pilate said, 'What is truth?'

When he had said this, he went out to the Jews again. He told them, 'I find nothing wrong in this man. **39** But at the Passover Feast you

always want me to let one prisoner go free for you. Do you want me to let the King of the Jews go free?'

40 Then they all shouted again, 'Not this man, but Barabbas!' Barabbas was a man who had stolen things.

CHAPTER 19

Pilate took Jesus and had him beaten. **2** The soldiers made a big ring of thorns like a crown and put it on Jesus' head. They put a red gown on him. **3** They said, 'Greetings, King of the Jews!' They beat him with their hands.

4 Then Pilate went out to the people again and said to them, 'See, I bring the man before you. This is to show you that I find nothing wrong in him.' **5** Then Jesus came out. He had the crown of thorns on his head and had the red gown on him. Pilate said, 'Here is the man!'

6 When the chief priests and the officers saw Jesus, they shouted, 'Nail him to a cross! Nail him to a cross!'

Pilate said to them, 'You take him and nail him to a cross. I find nothing wrong in him.'

7-8 The leaders of the Jews answered him, 'We have a law. That law says he should die, because he calls himself the Son of God.'

When Pilate heard what they said, he was very much afraid. **9** He went into the court house again and said to Jesus, 'Where do you come from?' But Jesus did not answer him. **10** Then Pilate said, 'Do you not answer me? Do you not know that I have power to nail you to a cross, or to let you go free?'

11 Jesus said, 'You would have no power over me if God did not give you power. So then, the man who gave me up to you has done something worse than you.'

12 After that Pilate tried to let Jesus go free. But the Jews shouted, 'If you let this man free, you are not Caesar's friend! Anyone who makes himself a king is fighting against Caesar!'

13 When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out. Then Pilate sat on the bench where the judge sits. The place was called the Street of Stone. The Jews called it Gabbatha. **14** It was about the middle of the day before the Passover Feast. Pilate said to the Jews, 'See, here is your King!'

15 But they shouted, 'Take him away! Take him away! Nail him to a cross!'

Pilate said to them, 'Shall I nail your King to a cross?'

The chief priests answered, 'Caesar is the only king we have.'

16 Then Pilate gave them Jesus to be nailed to a cross.

Jesus being nailed to a cross

17 They took Jesus and led him away. Jesus went out carrying his own cross. They went to a place which the Jews called Golgotha. That means 'the place of the skull bone'. **18** There they nailed Jesus to the cross. Two other people were also nailed to crosses. One was put on each side of Jesus. Jesus was put in the centre. **19** Pilate wrote a sign and put it on the cross. He wrote, 'Jesus from Nazareth, the King of the Jews.'

20 Many of the Jews read this sign. The place where Jesus was nailed to a cross was near the city. The sign was written in the Jewish, Greek, and Latin languages. **21** Then the chief priests among the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews," but write, "This man said he is King of the Jews".'

22 Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written!'

23 When the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they took his clothes. They divided them into four parts and gave each soldier one part. Then they took his coat. It was not sewn together but the cloth was all made in one piece from the top to the bottom. **24** So the soldiers said to one another, 'We will not tear this. But let us gamble for it.' What the holy writings say came true. They say, 'They divided my clothes among them. They gambled for my coat.' That is what the soldiers did.

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. **26** Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near. He said to his mother, 'Woman, see your son!'

27 And he said to the disciple, 'See your mother!' From that time on, that disciple took her to live in his own home.

The death of Jesus

28 Jesus now knew that everything had happened that the holy writings said. He said, 'I am thirsty.'

29 A bowl of bad wine was there. They took something called a sponge and made it wet with

the wine. Then they put it on a stick and put it to Jesus' mouth.

30 Jesus took the wine. Then he said, 'It is finished.' And he bowed his head and died.

31 It was the day before the Sabbath day. The Jewish leaders did not want the bodies to stay on the cross on the Sabbath day because it was a big day. So they begged Pilate to break the legs of those who had been nailed to crosses. Then they could be taken away. **32** The soldiers came and broke the legs of the one nailed to the cross on one side of Jesus. Then they broke the legs of the one on the other side of him.

33 When they came to Jesus, they saw that he was dead already. So they did not break his legs. **34** One of the soldiers stuck a spear into the side of Jesus' body. Right away, blood and water came out. **35** The man who saw it told what he saw, so that you may believe. What he said is true and he knows that it is true.

36 What the holy writings say came true. They say, 'Not one of his bones shall be broken.'

37 They also say, 'They shall look at the one into whom they stuck the spear.'

Jesus' body being put in the grave

38 A man named Joseph, from the town of Arimathea, was a disciple of Jesus. But he did not say so because he was afraid of the leaders of the Jews. After all this had happened, he went to Pilate. He asked him to let him take Jesus' body away. Pilate let him. So he came and took his body. **39** Nicodemus also came. He was the one who had come to Jesus at night. He brought with him a heavy bag of sweet-smelling spices called myrrh and aloes. It was mixed together. **40** They wrapped linen cloth around the body of Jesus and put the myrrh and aloes in with the cloth. That is how Jews bury a person. **41** There was a garden at the place where Jesus was nailed to the cross. In the garden was a new grave cut in the rock. No one had ever been laid in it. **42** They laid Jesus' body there because it was the day before the Sabbath day, and the grave was near.

CHAPTER 20

Jesus rises from death

Mary Magdalene came to the grave on the first day of the week. It was early in the morning and not very light. She saw that the stone had been taken away from the grave. **2** So she ran and met Simon Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved. She said to them, 'They have

taken the Lord out of the grave! We do not know where they have laid him!

3 Then Peter and that other disciple also went to the grave. **4** Both of them ran. The other disciple ran faster than Peter and got to the grave first. **5** He bent down and looked in. He saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go inside. **6** Then Simon Peter came up behind him. He went into the grave and saw the linen cloths lying there. **7** He also saw the small cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. It was not with the other cloths, but it was folded together by itself in another place. **8** Then the other disciple, who got there first, also went in. He saw and believed. **9** Until this time they did not understand the holy writings where it says, 'He must rise from death.'

10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

Mary Magdalene sees Jesus

11 But Mary stood outside the grave crying. As she cried, she bent down and looked into the grave. **12** She saw two angels with white clothes on. They were sitting where Jesus' body had been. One sat at the head and one at the foot. **13** They said to her, 'Woman, why are you crying?'

She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him.' **14** When she had said this, she turned around. She saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?'

She thought he was the man who took care of the garden. So she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him. I will take him away.'

16 Jesus said to her, 'Mary.'

She turned around again and said, 'Master!'

17 Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold me, because I have not yet gone up to my Father. But go to my brothers and tell them that I am going up to my Father. He is your Father also. I am going up to my God. He is your God also.'

18 Mary Magdalene went to the disciples. She said, 'I have seen the Lord!' And she told them what he had said to her.

The disciples see Jesus

19 It was the first day of the week. In the evening the disciples were in a house together. The doors were shut because they were afraid

of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood there with them. He said to them, 'Peace to you!' **20** When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

21 Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! My Father sent me: now I am sending you in the same way.' **22** When he had said this, he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. **23** Whoever you make free from the wrong things they have done will be free. Whoever you do not make free from the wrong things they have done will not be free.'

24 Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, was called the Twin. He was not with them when Jesus came. **25** The other disciples told him about it. They said, 'We have seen the Lord!'

Thomas said, 'I will not believe unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands. I will not believe unless I put my finger on the mark and feel his side with my hand.'

26 Then eight days later his disciples were in the house again. This time Thomas was with them. The doors were shut. Then Jesus came and stood there with them. He said to them, 'Peace to you!'

27 Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Feel my side with your hand. Do not doubt anymore, but believe.'

28 Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'

29 Jesus said to him, 'You yourself have seen me. Is that why you now believe? God will bless people who believe though they have not seen me.'

30 Jesus did many other big works when he was with the disciples. They are not written in this book. **31** But these things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And when you believe in his name, then he will give you power to live.

CHAPTER 21

The next time the disciples saw Jesus was at the Sea of Tiberias [Galilee]. This is how Jesus showed himself to them. **2** Some of the disciples were in one place. They were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of Jesus. **3** Simon Peter said to the others, 'I am going fishing.'

The others said, 'We are going with you also.'

They went out in a boat right away. That night they caught nothing.

4 Early in the morning, Jesus was standing there by the sea. The disciples did not know it was Jesus. **5** He said to them, 'My children, did you catch any fish?'

They answered, 'No.'

6 He said to them, 'Throw out your net on the right side of the boat, then you will catch some.'

They threw out their net and caught many fish, so that they were not able to bring in the net.

7 That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!'

As soon as Simon Peter heard it was the Lord, he put on his coat and his belt. He had taken off some clothes to work. Then he jumped into the water. **8** The other disciples came in a small boat. They were pulling the net. It was full of fish. They were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards.

9 When they came to the land, they saw a small fire. Fish and some bread lay on the fire.

10 Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.'

11 Simon Peter went to the boat. He pulled the net to land. It was full of big fish. There were a hundred and fifty-three fish. But even with so many fish the net did not break. **12** Jesus said to them, 'Come and eat.'

The disciples were all afraid to ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord. **13** Jesus came. He took bread and gave it to them. Then he took fish and gave it to them. **14** This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he had risen from death.

'Do you love me?'

15 After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?'

He said, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I like you. I am your friend.'

Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.'

16 He asked him the second time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?'

Peter said, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I like you. I am your friend.'

Jesus said to him, 'Take care of my sheep.'

17 Then he asked Peter the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you like me?'

Peter was sad because of the way Jesus asked him the third time. So he answered him, 'Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you as a close friend'

Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. **18** I tell you the truth. When you were young, you put on your own belt. You went where you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will put out your hands. Others will put your belt on for you. They will take you where you do not want to go.'

19 Jesus said this to show how Peter would die and make God's name great. When he had finished saying this, he said to him, 'Come and follow me!'

20 Peter turned around. The disciple whom Jesus loved was coming with Jesus also. He was the one who was at Jesus' right side at the supper table. He had said to Jesus, 'Lord, who will give you over to people who hate you?'

21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, 'Lord, what about this man?'

22 Jesus said to him, 'If I want him to wait till I come, what is that to you? I want you to come and follow me.'

23 So the report went around among the brothers that that disciple would not die. Jesus had not said to him, 'You will not die.' But he had said, 'If I want him to wait till I come, what is that to you?'

24 The same disciple said these things and wrote them. We know what he said is true.

25 Jesus did many other things also. If everyone were written down, I think that the world would be too small to hold all the books that would need to be written. Yes, it is so!

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Luke tells us about the work of Jesus after he went back to heaven to be one with God his Father. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help his disciples tell others about him. The numbers of followers of Jesus Christ then began to grow. The Good News about Jesus spread from Jerusalem to all parts of the world. This book tells us of the many things that happened. The last half of the book is about the acts of a converted Jew named Paul and how he, too, helped to tell others about Jesus Christ. Luke often went with Paul on his journeys to tell about the Good News.

CHAPTER 1

The promise of the Holy Spirit

Theophilus, in the first book I wrote to you, I wrote about all the things Jesus began to do and to teach. **2** He did those things until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before he went up, he gave orders by the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. **3** In many ways he proved to them that he was living again after his terrible death. For forty days they often saw him. Then he told them things about God's kingdom. **4** One day when he was eating with them, he told them not to leave Jerusalem. He said, 'Wait here for what the Father promised you. I have told you about that promise already. **5** John baptised with water. But you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit when a few days have passed.'

Jesus goes up to heaven

6 When they had come together, the apostles asked Jesus, 'Lord, are you now going to set up the kingdom of Israel?'

7 He answered them, 'You will not know the days or the months which the Father has chosen. **8** But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power. You will speak of me in Jerusalem and all around in Judea and Samaria and everywhere in the world.'

9 When Jesus had said this, he went up. They watched him going. Then a cloud hid him, and they did not see him anymore.

10 While they were looking at the sky as he went up, two men stood by them in white clothes. **11** They said, 'You men from Galilee, why do you stand there looking at the sky? Jesus has gone up into heaven. In the same way that you saw him go up, he will come again.'

One is chosen to take Judas' place

12 Then they left the hill called the Mount of Olives. They went back to Jerusalem which was

not far away. (It was how far the law said people may walk on the Sabbath day.)

13 When they reached Jerusalem, they went to a room up in a house. Here lived Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the freedom fighter, and Judas the son of James. **14** All of these people were talking to God. The women, Jesus' mother Mary, and Jesus' brothers were there talking to God also.

15 About one hundred and twenty people were gathered together. Peter stood up among them to speak to them.

16 He said, 'My friends and brothers, Judas showed the people where Jesus was so they could take him. The Holy Spirit spoke through king David long ago about Judas before he did it. What was written about him has now happened. **17** Judas was one of us. He had his part of the work to do.' **18** (Judas received money for the wrong thing he did. He bought a field with the money and fell on his face. His belly burst open and all his insides came out. **19** All the people who live in Jerusalem know about this. In their language they named the field Akeldama, which means The Field of Blood.)

20 'The book of Psalms says, "His house must be empty. No one may live in it." And it also says, "Someone else must do his work."

21 'Here are men who have been with us all the time that the Lord Jesus was with us. **22** They were with us from the time John baptised people until the day Jesus was taken up from us. One of these men must help us tell people that Jesus was raised from death.'

23 They took two men. One was Joseph, named Barsabbas, who had another name Justus. The other man was Matthias.

24-25 Then the people talked to God. They said, 'Lord, you know what is in everybody's heart. Show us which of these two men you

have chosen to have a part in this work and to be an apostle. For Judas left this work and went to the place where he belonged.'

26 Then they picked out the name of Matthias. He was chosen to be with the eleven apostles.

CHAPTER 2

The coming of the Holy Spirit

On the day of Pentecost these people were all in one place. **2** Then, suddenly, a sound came from heaven. It was like a very strong wind blowing. It went all through the house where they were sitting. **3** And then they saw tongues like fire. These were divided and came on each one of the people there.

4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak the words of God in other languages as the Spirit spoke through them.

5 Crowds of Jews were staying in Jerusalem. They had come from every country in the world. They were good men who believed in God.

6 Many people came together when they heard the apostles speaking. They did not know what to think. Everyone heard someone speaking in his own language. **7** They were all very much surprised and said to each other, 'These men who are speaking, are they not all from Galilee?

8 How is it then that each one of us hears the language of our own country?

9-11 'We people from the countries of Parthia and Media and Elam all hear the wonderful things God has done. So also do the people who live in the countries of Mesopotamia, and in Judea in Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, in Phrygia, and Pamphylia, and in Egypt, and in some parts of Lybia around Cyrene, people from the city of Rome who are now living in Jerusalem, both Jews and those who joined themselves to the Jews, the people from Crete and Arabia. These men from Galilee are speaking in our own languages.'

12 They were all very much surprised and could hardly believe it. 'What does this mean?' they asked each other. **13** Other people laughed about it and said, 'These men have been drinking too much new wine.'

Peter's talk on the day of Pentecost

14 Peter stood up with the eleven apostles. He shouted, 'You men of Judea and all who stay in Jerusalem, listen to me! I will tell you the truth.

15 You think that these men are drunk. That is not so. It is only nine o'clock in the morning.

16 The thing that has happened is what the

prophet Joel told about. **17** He said, "God says, 'In the last days I will send my Spirit on all people. I will speak through your sons and daughters. Your young men will see visions and your old men will have dreams. **18** In those days I will send my Spirit on the men and women who serve me and I will speak through them. **19** In the sky above and on the earth below I will show wonderful signs with blood and fire and clouds of smoke. **20** The sun will be dark and the moon will be like blood. These things will happen before the day of the Lord comes. It will be a great day that will be remembered always. **21** And anyone who calls out to the Lord will be saved.'"

22 'You men of Israel, listen to this. God showed you that he was pleased with this man, Jesus of Nazareth. He proved it by the big works and the wonderful signs which he did by Jesus right here among you people. And you yourselves know it. **23-24** This same Jesus was given up. You let bad men take him. You let them nail him to a cross and kill him. This is just the way God had planned it. He knew how it would happen. But God raised him back to life. He set him free from the pain of death. Death could not hold him.

25 'King David spoke about Jesus long ago. He said, "I saw the Lord before me always. He is at my right hand so that I may not be shaken.

26-27 That made my heart very happy. It made my tongue sing for joy. And even my body also will rest in peace because you will not leave my body in the grave. You will not let your Holy One die and be spoiled. **28** You have shown me the ways of life. You will make me very happy when I am with you."

29 'My brothers, I can talk very plainly to you about your father, David. He died and was buried. His grave is still here today. **30** He was a prophet. He knew that God had promised him that someone born of his family would sit on his chair to rule. That one was Christ. **31** David knew what would happen. So he said that Christ would be raised from death. Christ was not left in the grave. His body was not spoiled. David said all this before it ever happened. **32** And now we all saw it. We are telling people that God raised this Jesus back to life.

33 'God made him great by making him sit at his right side. God gave him the Holy Spirit as he had promised. So he sent this which you now see and hear. **34-35** David himself has not gone up into the heavens. What he said was, "The

Lord God said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand till I bring your enemies down and put your feet on them.'"

36 'So let all the people of Israel know this: God has made Jesus to be Lord and Christ. This is the same Jesus whom you nailed to the cross.'

37 What Peter said cut the people's hearts when they heard it. They knew they had done wrong. They said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'

38 'Stop your wrong ways and turn back to God,' answered Peter. 'And then everyone of you can be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Your wrong ways will be forgiven you, and you will receive the Holy Spirit. **39** This promise is for you and your children and for all those whom the Lord our God calls, even though they are far away.'

40 Peter went on talking and teaching the people. 'Do not follow the wrong ways of people today,' he begged.

41 Then those who gladly received his words and believed were baptised. That same day about three thousand new believers joined them. **42** They kept on being taught by the apostles. And they kept on being with them. They ate bread together and talked with God.

Life among the believers

43 All the people were very much surprised. Many wonderful things and signs were done by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together; and everything they had was for the use of all.

45 They sold their things and divided the money among the believers. They gave each person what he needed. **46-47** And every day the believers kept on gathering in the temple. They ate bread in each other's homes. They ate their food gladly and with open hearts. They praised God. All the people respected them.

Day by day, the Lord added to the church those who were saved.

CHAPTER 3

A lame man is healed at the gate of the temple

One day at three o'clock, Peter and John went to the temple to talk with God. **2** There was a man who had been born lame. He was carried and was laid at the gate of the temple every day. The gate was called Beautiful. He was brought there to beg. He asked for money from the people who went into the temple. **3** This

man saw Peter and John ready to go into the temple. He begged them to give him something.

4 Peter and John looked at him. Peter said, 'Look at us.'

5 The man looked at them. He thought they would give him something. **6** Then Peter said, 'I have no money. But I will give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!'

7 He took the man's right hand and raised him up. Right away his feet and ankles became strong. **8** He jumped to his feet and walked into the temple with them. He was so happy he jumped around and praised God.

9 All the people saw him walking and praising God. **10** And they knew that this was the man who sat begging at the temple gate which was called Beautiful. They were very much surprised at what had happened to him. They could hardly believe it.

Peter's talk in Solomon's porch

11 While the man still held on to Peter and John, all the people came running to them. It was in the part of the temple which is called Solomon's porch. They were still very excited.

12 When Peter saw this, he talked to the people. He said, 'Men of Israel, why are you so surprised at this? Do you think that we have power or are good enough to make this man walk? Why do you look at us that way? **13** The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and of our fathers, has made his Son Jesus great. You gave him up to Pilate. You did not want to believe who he was. You did not want him back when Pilate agreed to let him go free. **14** You would not receive the one who was holy and good. You asked for a bad man, who killed people, to be given to you. **15** You killed the one who gives life, the one whom God brought back from death. We saw it and are telling people about it.

16 This man whom you see and know, believed in the name of Jesus Christ. This man's faith in that name has healed him. Yes, believing in Jesus Christ has made him well here in front of you all.

17 'My brothers, I know that you and your rulers killed Jesus because you did not understand what you were doing. **18** But in this way God did what he had told us would happen. Through all the prophets he had told us that Christ would suffer.

19 'Stop doing wrong things. Turn to God again. Then the wrong things you have done will be

wiped away altogether. The Lord will give you a new start and make you very glad. **20** He will send you Jesus. He was the one God chose to be the Christ. **21** But he must wait in heaven until the time when all things will be made new again as they were at first. By his holy prophets God spoke of all this from the beginning. **22** Moses himself said, "The Lord God will raise up for you a Prophet like me. He will be one of your brothers. You must listen to everything that the Prophet says to you. **23** And everyone who does not obey that Prophet will be cut off from his people altogether."

24 'Prophets spoke at the time of Samuel, and prophets spoke after that time. They all have told about these days also. **25** You are the people who have received what the prophets promised. And you have received the agreement which God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, "Through your children all the nations of the earth will receive blessing." **26** God raised up and sent his Son to you first to bless you. He blesses you when each one of you stops doing wrong things.'

CHAPTER 4

Peter and John in court

Peter and John were talking to the people. The priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them. **2** They were angry at Peter and John because they taught the people. They were angry because they told them that Jesus was brought back from death. **3** They caught them and put them in prison until the next day, because it was already evening. **4** But many of the people who heard them speak the word of God, believed what they said. The number of men who believed was about five thousand.

5 The next day their rulers, leaders, and scribes met in Jerusalem. **6** Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all of the high priest's family were there also.

7 Peter and John were brought before them. They asked the apostles, 'By what power or in what name have you done this?'

8-9 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and leaders of Israel, have you brought us to court today because of the good thing that was done to the lame man? Do you want to find out how he was healed? **10** Well, let it be known by all the people of Israel. This man standing before you

is healed by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He has done this. You nailed him to a cross, but God raised him from death. **11** Jesus Christ is the stone which you, the builders, would not use. But he is now the chief corner stone. **12** No one else can save us. Of all the people in the world, God chose him to save us. It is by him we must be saved.'

13 They saw that Peter and John were not afraid to speak out. They knew that they were like any other men. They did not have much training. So the people were very much surprised. They knew that Peter and John had been with Jesus. **14** They saw the man who had been healed standing beside them. So they could say nothing against them. **15** They told Peter and John to leave the court. Then they talked the matter over among themselves. **16** They said, 'What shall we do to these men? All the people who live in Jerusalem know about this big work they have done. And we cannot say they did not do it. **17** But we do not want any more people to hear about it. So let us say to these men, "Take care! Never speak to anyone in this name again".'

Peter and John are told not to use the name of Jesus

18 They called them in and said, 'Never speak or teach in this name again.'

19 But Peter and John answered them, 'How does God look at it? Is it right for us to obey you or to obey him? You judge that for yourselves.

20 As for us, we must tell the things we have seen and heard.'

21 So the high priest and those with him told them again. Then they let them go. They could not punish them because of the people. They all praised God for what had been done.

22 The man who had been healed was more than forty years old.

The believers ask God for power

23 When they were free, Peter and John went back to their own friends. They told them all that the chief priests and leaders had said to them.

24 When they heard it, they talked to God together. They said, 'Lord, you are God. You made the sky, and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. **25** Our father David was your servant. Through him you said by the Holy Spirit, "Why are the people who are not Jews so angry? And why do the people plan things for

nothing? **26** The kings of the earth joined their forces. And the rulers met together against the Lord and his Christ.”

27 ‘It is true that Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with Jews and those who were not Jews here in this city. They met to make secret plans against your holy Son Jesus, whom you made Christ. **28** But they only did what you had already planned should be done. **29-30** Lord, hear their words. Listen to the wrong things they say against us. We are your servants. Help us to speak your word without fear. And heal the sick by your own power. Let signs and wonderful things be done in the name of your holy Son Jesus.’

31 When they had talked to God, the room they were in shook. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. And they spoke the word of God without fear.

The believers have all things together

32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. Not one of them said, ‘This is mine.’ But everything they had was for the use of all.

33 With much power the apostles told how the Lord Jesus was raised from death. And God blessed them all very much. **34-35** None of them was in need of anything. Those who owned fields and houses sold them. They brought the money to the apostles. Then the apostles gave each one what he needed.

36 There was a man named Joseph, a Levite. He was born in the country of Cyprus. The apostles called him Barnabas. That means “one who helps.” **37** He had a field and sold it. He brought the money to the apostles and gave it to them.

CHAPTER 5

Ananias and Sapphira

A man named Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, sold a field. He brought some of the money to the apostles. But he kept the rest of it. His wife knew what he had done.

3 Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart? Why do you lie to the Holy Spirit? You have kept some of the money which you got for the field. **4** As long as you had the field, it belonged to you. When you had the money, you could do what you wanted to do with it. Why then did you plan to do a thing like this? You have not lied to men, but to God.’

5 As Ananias heard Peter’s words, he fell down and died. All who heard these things were very

much afraid. **6** The young men came and wrapped him up. They carried him out and buried him.

7 About three hours later, his wife came in. She did not know what had happened.

8 Peter asked her, ‘Tell me, did you sell the field for so much money?’ and she answered, ‘Yes, that is how much it was.’

9 Then Peter said to her, ‘Why did you two agree together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen, I hear the footsteps of the men who buried your husband. They are at the door. They will carry you out too.’ **10** And she fell down at Peter’s feet and died. The young men came in and saw that she was dead. They carried her out and buried her beside her husband. **11** Then all the church people, and all the people who heard about this were very much afraid.

Many signs and wonders are done

12 The apostles did many signs and wonderful things for the people who met together in the place called Solomon’s porch. **13** Other people feared to join them, but they spoke well of them. **14** Many more men and women believed and came to the Lord. **15** They brought sick people out into the streets and laid them on beds and mats. They hoped that at least Peter’s shadow would touch them as he passed by.

16 Many people also came from the cities around Jerusalem. They brought others who were sick and those who were controlled by bad spirits. Every one of them was healed.

The apostles have much trouble

17 Some Sadducees were with the high priest. They all became very jealous. **18** They caught the apostles and put them in prison.

19 But that night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out. **20** ‘Go,’ said the angel. ‘Stand in the temple and tell the people all about this new life.’

21 When the apostles heard that, they went into the temple early in the morning and taught the people there.

The high priest and his men came. They called a meeting of the court and all the leaders of the Jews. Then they sent men to the prison to bring the apostles out.

22 When the men came to the prison, they did not find the apostles there. Then they went back and told the high priest and those with him.

23 They said, ‘The prison was locked very well.

And the police were guarding the doors. But when we opened the doors, no one was inside.'

24 When the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard this, they did not know what to think. 'We wonder what will come from all this,' they thought.

25 Just then someone came and told them, 'The men you put in prison are standing in the temple teaching the people.'

26 Then the captain went with the men and brought the apostles quietly. They did not bring them by force because they were afraid the people would kill them with stones.

27-28 So they brought them in and put them before the court.

The high priest asked them, 'Did we not tell you that you must never teach again in this name? But here you are, teaching people all over Jerusalem in this name. You are trying to put on us the blame for this man's death.'

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered them, 'We must obey God rather than men.'

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, the one you killed by hanging on a dead tree.

31 God has made him great at his right side. He has made him leader and Saviour. He has done this so that the people of Israel may stop doing wrong things and be forgiven. **32** We know these things are true. So does the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

33 When the judges heard this, they were very, very angry and wanted to kill them. **34** Then a lawyer named Gamaliel stood up in the court. He was a Pharisee and all the people respected him. He asked that the apostles be taken out for a while. **35** Then he said, 'Men of Israel, you had better take care what you plan to do to these men. **36** Before this time, there was a man named Theudas. He tried to make people believe that he was a great man. He had about four hundred followers. He was killed, and all of his followers were scattered, and the whole thing ended. **37** Then after that, at tax time, another man named Judas from Galilee made trouble. Many people followed him. He also was killed and all of his followers were scattered.'

38-39 So now, I say, do nothing to these men. Leave them alone. If this is the teaching or work of men, it will come to an end. But if it is of God, you cannot stop these men. You might even be fighting against God!'

40 They agreed to do what he said. They called in the apostles and had them beaten. They told

them not to speak in the name of Jesus. Then they let them go.

41 The apostles left the court. They were very glad to think that God let them be punished for the name of Jesus. **42** Every day, in the temple and in homes, they kept on teaching and talking about Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 6

Seven men are chosen

At that time more and more people joined the disciples. Then there was trouble about a certain matter. The Jews who spoke the Greek language complained against the other Jews. They said that each day when the food was being divided, their women whose husbands were dead did not get their part.

2 Then the twelve apostles called all of the disciples together. They said, 'It is not right for us to stop preaching God's word to divide the food. **3** So then, brothers, you choose seven men who you know are good men. Choose men who are full of the Holy Spirit and are wise. We will give them the work to divide the food. **4** But we ourselves will keep on talking with God and telling his word.'

5 This pleased all the people. The men they chose were Stephen, a man who believed God and was full of the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus from Antioch who had joined the Jews. **6** These men were brought before the apostles. When the apostles had talked with God, they put their hands on them.

7 The word of God spread further and further, and many people in Jerusalem believed. Many of the priests also believed.

Stephen is caught

8 Stephen received much blessing and power from God. He did many wonderful things and signs among the people. **9** But some of the Jews argued with Stephen, and said he was wrong. (They belonged to the meeting place of the Free Men. They were Jews who came from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and Asia Minor.) They did not agree with Stephen. **10** But they could not say anything against his wise words and the Spirit by whom he spoke.

11 So they paid some people to say, 'We have heard him say wrong things about Moses and God.'

12 They talked to the people, the leaders, and the scribes, and made them angry. They went quickly and caught Stephen and took him into the court.

13 They brought in the men who told lies about him. They said, 'This man is always saying wrong things about this holy place and the laws.

14 We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will break down this place and that he will change the law which Moses gave us.'

15 Then all the judges who sat in the court looked at him and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

CHAPTER 7

Stephen speaks for himself

Then the high priest asked, 'Is this true?'

2 Stephen replied, 'Men, brothers and fathers, listen to me. When our father Abraham was in the country of Mesopotamia, before he lived in the country of Haran, the God who is great and wonderful came to him. **3** God said, "Leave your country and your family and come to the country that I will show you." **4** Then Abraham came out of the country of the Chaldeans and lived for a while in the country of Haran. After his father died, God led him from there to this country where you are living now. **5** But God did not give any of the land to Abraham, not even a small part. But he promised that the land would belong to him. After him it would belong to his children, even though he did not have a child then. **6** This is what God told Abraham. He told him that his children would travel and live in another land. They would be slaves to the people there. They would have a hard time for four hundred years. **7** And God said, "I will judge the people who make them slaves. After that, they will come out of that land and serve me here." **8** God made the agreement of circumcision with Abraham. Abraham had a son Isaac. He made the mark of circumcision on the child's body and circumcised him on the eighth day. Isaac had a son Jacob, and Jacob had twelve sons who were our fathers.

9 'Because they were jealous, they sold Joseph to be a slave in the country of Egypt. But God was with Joseph. **10** He took him out of all his troubles. He blessed him and made him wise in the eyes of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Pharaoh made him president in Egypt and a ruler over all the people of his house. **11** For a long, long time there was no rain in Egypt and Canaan.

And so there was very little food. This caused much trouble. Our fathers had nothing to eat.

12 Then Jacob heard that there was food in Egypt. He sent his sons on their first trip to buy some. They were our fathers of long ago.

13 The second time they went, Joseph told his brothers who he was. And Pharaoh found out who Joseph's family was. **14** Then Joseph sent for Jacob his father and all the family to come. There were seventy-five people. **15** So Jacob went to Egypt. There he and our fathers died.

16 They were taken back to the place called Shechem and buried. Abraham had bought a grave from the family of Hamor in Shechem. He had paid money for it.

17 'Then it was almost time for God to do what he had promised to Abraham. The family of Jacob had become very large in Egypt. **18** Then a new king who did not know Joseph ruled over Egypt. **19** This king was not kind to our fathers but he gave them a hard time. They had to put their babies outside to die.

20 'Moses was born during that time. He was a very fine baby. For three months he was raised in his own father's home. **21** When he was put outside to die, Pharaoh's daughter took him. She raised him as her own son. **22** Moses was taught all the things the Egyptians knew. He knew how to talk and could do great things.

23 'When he was forty years old he decided to visit his own family, the people of Israel.

24 There he saw one of them being hurt by an Egyptian. So he helped him. He fought for him and knocked down the Egyptian. **25** He thought his people would know that God wanted him to make them free. But they did not understand.

26 The next day he saw two of his own people fighting and he wanted to make peace. "You are brothers," he said. "Why are you fighting?"

27 But the one who was fighting his neighbour pushed Moses away. He said, "Who made you our ruler and our judge? **28** Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?"

29 When Moses heard these words, he left Egypt at once. He lived as a stranger in the country of Midian. While he was there, two sons were born to him.

30 'When forty years had passed, he was in the wilderness near the hill called Sinai. There he saw fire in a small tree. An angel of the Lord was in the fire. **31** Moses looked at it. He was very much surprised. He came closer to look at it better. Then he heard the Lord speak to him.

32 The Lord said, "I am the God of your fathers.

I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.” Moses began to shake. He was afraid to look. **33** Then the Lord said, “Take off your shoes. You are standing on holy ground. **34** I have looked and seen the trouble my people have in Egypt. I have heard them crying and I have come to make them free. Now come, I will send you to Egypt.”

35 “This is the same Moses the people would not accept when they said, “Who made you our ruler and our judge?” This is the one God sent to be their ruler and to make them free when he spoke through the angel in the small tree. **36** It was Moses who led the people out of Egypt. He had done wonderful things and signs there, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, for forty years.

37 “This is the same Moses who said, “God will raise up one of your brothers to be a prophet, as he did me. Listen to him.” **38** This is the same Moses who was with God’s people in the wilderness at the hill called Mount Sinai. He was with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers of long ago. It was he who received the words of life to give to us.

39 “Our fathers would not obey Moses. They did not want him to lead them. They wished they were back in Egypt. **40** They said to Aaron, “Make gods to lead us. We do not know what has happened to this Moses who brought us out of Egypt.” **41** They made a young cow at that time and gave sacrifices to this god which was not the true God. They were very happy. What they had made pleased them.

42 “Then God turned away from them. He let them worship the sun, moon, and the many stars in the sky. The prophets of God wrote about it long ago. They said, “You people of Israel, did you sacrifice animals to me forty years in the wilderness? **43** You carried the house of the god called Moloch and the star of the god called Rephan. You made gods of them to worship. I will carry you away to the other side of Babylon.”

44 “Our fathers had the tent for the laws of God in the wilderness. It was built the way God showed Moses to make it. **45** Our fathers brought that tent with them when they came to this country. Joshua was their leader. God put aside the people who lived here first. Our fathers kept that tent with them until the time of David. **46** God blessed David who asked God to let him make a better house for Jacob’s God. **47** But it was Solomon who built a house for

him. **48** But even so, God is above all. He does not live in houses that people make with their hands. The prophet says, **49** “The Lord said, ‘The sky is the big chair from which I rule. I put my feet on the earth. So then, what kind of house will you build for me? Or where will I rest myself? **50** I have made all these things myself.’”

51 “You hard-hearted people! You have hearts and ears like the people who are not Jews. You always fight against the Holy Spirit just as your fathers did long ago. **52** What did your fathers do to the prophets of God? They made a lot of trouble for every one of them. They killed the ones who told that the Right and True One would come. He is the One you gave up to be killed. You are the killers. **53** You received the law given by angels, but you have not kept it.’

Stephen is killed with stones

54 When the men heard what Stephen said, they were very angry. They made noises with their teeth to show they hated him. **55** But Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit. He looked at the sky and saw the greatness of God. He saw Jesus standing at God’s right side. **56** ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the sky open. I see the Son of man standing at God’s right hand side.’

57 Then the men shouted. They put their fingers in their ears. All together they ran at Stephen. **58** They put him out of the city and threw stones at him. (Those who had talked against him laid their clothes down by the feet of a young man named Saul.)

59 They kept on throwing stones at Stephen. He spoke to God and said, ‘Oh, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’

60 Then he kneeled down and said in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not punish them for this wrong thing they are doing,’ After he said this, he died.

CHAPTER 8

Saul troubles the church

Saul agreed to Stephen being killed.

At that time the church people at Jerusalem had much trouble. The church people all went into Judea and Samaria. Only the apostles stayed on at Jerusalem. **2** Good men buried Stephen. They were very sad because he died. **3** Saul made much trouble for the church people. He went into every house, pulled out men and women, and put them into prison.

The good news is told in Samaria

4 The people who left Jerusalem went all around telling the good news about Jesus.

5 Then Philip went to the city of Samaria and told people about Christ. **6** And all the people together listened to what Philip said because they heard and saw the big works which he did.

7 Many people who were held by bad spirits were made free from them. The spirits came out of them crying loudly. Many other sick people were healed too. People who could not stand, and others who were lame, were healed. **8** The people all over the city were very glad.

9 But there was one man named Simon, a witch-doctor, who fooled the people of Samaria. He tried to make people believe that he could do big things.

10 And all the people, young and old, listened to him. They said, 'This man is a big power of God.' **11** He had fooled them for a long time with his work as a witch. That is why they listened to him. **12** But Philip came and told them about God's kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ. The people believed him. Then both men and women were baptised. **13** Simon believed also. When he was baptised, he went with Philip. He was very much surprised when he saw the signs and the big works which were done.

14 Then the apostles at Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria believed God's word. So they sent Peter and John to them. **15** When they came to them, they prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit. **16** Until that time, none of the people there had received the Holy Spirit. They had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. **17** Then the apostles put their hands on the people and they received the Holy Spirit. **18** Simon saw that the people received the Holy Spirit when the apostles put their hands on them. Then he brought money to the apostles. **19** He said, 'Give me this power, too, so that anyone on whom I put my hands will receive the Holy Spirit.'

20 Peter said, 'May you and your money be destroyed! You thought that you could buy the gift of God with money. **21** You have no part in this matter. You cannot have any of this because God sees that your heart is not right.

22 Stop your wrong ways. Ask the Lord. Perhaps God will forgive you for the wrong things you wanted to do. **23** I see that you are very bitter. Your wrong ways control you all together.'

24 Simon said, 'Ask the Lord for me, so that none of the things you have talked about will happen to me.'

25 The apostles told the people the word of the Lord. Then they went back to Jerusalem. On the way they told the good news in many villages in Samaria.

Philip and the Ethiopian

26 The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip. 'Get up,' said the angel. 'Go south to the road that goes from Jerusalem to Gaza. It is desert there.'

27 So Philip went. He saw a man from the country of Ethiopia. This man was a servant of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopian people. She gave this servant much power. He took care of her money. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship. **28** Now he was on his way back. He sat in his carriage reading from the book which was written long ago by Isaiah, the prophet of God.

29 The Spirit of the Lord said to Stephen, 'Go over to that man in the carriage.'

30 So Philip went running to him. He heard him reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah. 'Do you understand what you are reading?' Philip asked.

31 'How can I? I have no man to teach me,' he answered. He asked Philip to get into the carriage and ride with him. **32** This is what he was reading: 'He was led as a sheep to be killed. A lamb says nothing while its wool is being cut, so he also says nothing. **33** He was put down very low. He was not allowed to have a proper trial. He had no children to follow after him. For his life is taken from the earth.'

34 Then the man from Ethiopia asked Philip, 'Please tell me, who is the prophet talking about, himself or some other man?'

35 Then Philip told him about Jesus. He began with what the man read in the book. **36** While they were going along, they came to some water by the road.

The man said, 'See, here is water. What is there to stop me from being baptised?'

37 Philip answered, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptised.'

The man said, 'I do believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'

38 The man told the driver to stop. Then both he and Philip went down into the water, and Philip baptised him. **39** When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip

away. The man did not see him again, but he went on his way and was very happy. **40** Next, Philip came to the town of Azotus. He told the good news in all the cities through which he passed. Then he came to Caesarea.

CHAPTER 9

Saul turns to God

Saul was still very angry with the Lord's disciples. He said he would kill them. He went to the high priest. **2** He asked him for letters to take to the meeting places at Damascus. In this way he was given the power to catch any men or women disciples. He could tie them and bring them back to Jerusalem.

3 He went on his way. All at once, near the city of Damascus, a light from the sky shone around him.

4 He fell to the ground and heard someone say, 'Saul, Saul, why are you troubling me?'

5 Saul said, 'Who are you, Lord?'

The Lord said, 'I am Jesus. You are troubling me. **6** But get up and go to the city. There you will be told what you must do.'

7 The men who had come with Saul stood there. They did not say a word. They heard a voice but did not see anyone. **8** Saul got up off the ground. When he opened his eyes, he was blind. They took his hand and led him to Damascus. **9** For three days he could not see, and he did not eat or drink.

10 A disciple named Ananias lived in Damascus. The Lord came to him in a vision and said. 'Ananias.' He replied, 'Here I am, Lord.'

11 The Lord said, 'Go into the street which is called Straight. At the house of Judas, ask for a man named Saul, from the city of Tarsus. He is there, talking with God. **12** In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming to him. He has seen him put his hands on him so that he may see again.'

13 Then Ananias replied, 'Lord, often I have heard of this man. He has brought much trouble to your people at Jerusalem. **14** The chief priests have given him power in this city to put into prison all those who call on your name.'

15 The Lord said, 'Go, I have chosen him to take my name to the people who are not Jews, to kings, and to the people of Israel also. **16** I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.'

17 Then Ananias went. He went into the house and put his hands on Saul. He said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus came to you on the road while you were coming here. He has sent me to you so that you may see again, and that you may be filled with the Holy Spirit.'

18 At once some kind of skin which had covered Saul's eyes came off. He was able to see again from then on. He got up and was baptised.

19 And when he had eaten food, he was strong again.

Saul tells God's word at Damascus

Saul stayed for some days with the disciples at Damascus.

20 Right away he went to the Jewish meeting places and told the people that Jesus is the Son of God.

21 All the people who heard him were surprised. They said, 'This man killed the people who called on Jesus' name in Jerusalem. He came here to catch them and tie them and take them to the chief priests!'

22 But Saul became stronger and stronger. He proved that Jesus is the Christ and made it so plain that the Jews at Damascus did not know what to say.

The Jewish leaders cannot catch Saul

23 Then sometime after that, the leaders of the Jews planned to kill Saul. **24** But he found out that they were waiting for him. The Jewish leaders watched the gates of the city night and day. They were waiting for a chance to kill him.

25 Then one night the disciples put him in a basket and let him down outside the city wall.

Saul at Jerusalem

26 When Saul came to Jerusalem, he wanted to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them, 'Saul has seen the Lord on the road. The Lord has talked to him. After that he told God's word in the name of Jesus, without fear at Damascus.'

28 So Saul stayed with the apostles and went around in Jerusalem. He told God's word in the name of the Lord Jesus without fear. **29** He talked to the Jews who spoke the Greek language. But they did not agree with Saul, and so they made plans to kill him. **30** When the Christian brothers knew that, they took him to Caesarea. Then they sent him to Tarsus [the city where he was born].

31 After that, the churches in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria were not troubled anymore and they believed more strongly. The people obeyed the Lord, and the Holy Spirit helped them to believe. And many more people joined them.

Aeneas is healed

32 While Peter was travelling through all the towns, he came to visit God's people who lived in the city of Lydda. **33** There he saw a man named Aeneas who was sick. He could not stand up. He had been on his bed for eight years. **34** Peter said to him, 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed!' The man got up at once. **35** All the people who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

Dorcas is made alive again

36 In the city of Joppa there was a disciple. Her name was Tabitha. That means Dorcas or Gazelle. She did much good work and she gave many things to the poor people. **37** She became sick and died. They bathed her body and put her in a room upstairs.

38 Lydda was near Joppa. When the disciples heard that Peter was at Lydda, they sent two men and asked for him to come quickly. **39** Peter got up and went with them. When he got there, they took him to the room upstairs. Women whose husbands were dead stood there crying. They showed Peter the clothes and coats that Dorcas had made for them while she was with them. **40** Peter put them all out. He knelt down and talked to God. He turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, get up.' She opened her eyes. When she saw Peter, she sat up. **41** He took her hand and helped her get up. Then he called in God's people and the women, and he gave her back to them alive. **42** All over Joppa people heard about this. Many people believed on the Lord.

43 Peter stayed in Joppa for many days. He was with a man named Simon, who made skins into leather.

CHAPTER 10

Peter and Cornelius

In Caesarea lived a man named Cornelius. He was a big captain in the army. His soldiers were called the Italian Group. **2** He was a good man. He and all the people of his house obeyed God. He gave many gifts to the poor. He always talked with God.

3 About three o'clock one afternoon, he clearly saw an angel from God coming to him in a vision. 'Cornelius,' said the angel.

4 Cornelius looked at him. He was afraid and asked, 'What is it, Sir?'

The angel answered him, 'God has heard what you said to him. He has remembered your gifts to the poor. **5** Send men to Joppa to call Simon, whose other name is Peter. **6** He is staying with Simon, the man who makes skins into leather. His house is by the sea. Peter will tell you what you should do.'

7 When the angel which spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his house servants. He also called one of the soldiers who believed in God and who always helped him. **8** He told them carefully all about his vision. Then he sent them to Joppa.

9 They went the next day. They were coming near to the city. About midday, Peter went up on the flat roof of the house to talk with God. **10** He became very hungry and wanted to eat. While food was being made ready, something like a dream came over him. **11** He saw the sky open. A bundle like a big blanket was tied by the corners. It was let down to earth. **12** In the bundle were all kinds of animals and snakes and birds.

13 Then Peter heard a voice saying to him, 'Get up, Peter. Kill some and eat.'

14 But Peter said, 'No, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is not holy or not clean.'

15 Then the voice spoke to him again, saying, 'What God has made clean you must not call unholy.' **16** This happened three times. Then the thing was taken up right away into the sky.

17 'I have seen a strange thing,' Peter said to himself. 'I wonder what it all means.'

He was thinking about all this. And the men whom Cornelius sent had asked the way to Simon's house. Now they stood at the gate.

18 'Is this where Simon Peter is staying?' they called.

19 Peter was still thinking about what he had seen. Then the Spirit of God said to him, 'Three men are looking for you. **20** Get up. Go down and go with them. Do not fear to go, because I have sent them.'

21 Then Peter went down to the men whom Cornelius had sent to him. He said, 'Here I am. You are looking for me. Why have you come?'

22 They answered, 'God sent a holy angel to Cornelius. He told him to call you to his house and hear what you have to say. Cornelius is a captain in the army. He is a good man. He does what is right and obeys God. All the Jews speak well of him.'

23 Peter said, 'Come in.' He had them stay as his guests.

The next day he and some of the Christian brothers from Joppa went with the men. **24** The day after that, they reached Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them. He had called his family and close friends together. **25** Peter was about to enter the house. Cornelius met him. He kneeled down at his feet and worshipped him.

26 But Peter raised him up and said, 'Please stand up. I too am only a man.' **27** Peter talked to him and went in with him. He saw many people who had come together. **28** He began to talk with them. He said, 'You yourselves know it is against our law for a Jew to visit and be friends with someone who is not a Jew. But God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. **29** So when you sent for me, I did not say "No". Now I ask, why did you send for me?'

30 Cornelius answered, 'Four days ago, it was just at this time, three o'clock. I was in my house talking with God. I had not eaten any food. A man stood in front of me wearing shining clothes. **31** He said to me, "Cornelius, God has heard what you said to him. He has remembered your gifts to the poor. **32** Send men to Joppa to call for Simon Peter. He is staying with Simon, the man who makes skins into leather. His house is by the sea." **33** So I sent for you right away. You have done well to come. Now we are all here before God to hear all that the Lord has told you to tell me.'

Peter's talk in Cornelius' house

34 Then Peter began to speak, 'I really understand now. God does not love some people more than others. **35** But he takes anyone who obeys him. He takes anyone who does what is right. It does not matter to what nation they belong. **36** To the people of Israel God has sent the good news. He gives peace through Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all! **37** You yourselves know the story of what happened all through Judea. It started in Galilee after the baptism which John talked about. **38** God gave Jesus of Nazareth the Holy Spirit and power. Jesus went about doing good deeds. He healed

all those who were held by the devil. God was with him. **39** We saw all the things which he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they hung him on a piece of wood and killed him. **40** On the third day, God raised him up to let people see him. **41** Not all the people saw him. But God had chosen us to see and to talk about him. We saw him. We ate and drank with him after he rose from death. **42** He told us to tell the people that God chose him to judge both the living people and the dead people. **43** All the prophets tell about him. They say, "Everyone who believes in him will have his wrong ways forgiven through his name".'

People who are not Jews receive the Holy Spirit

44 While Peter was saying this, the Holy Spirit came on all those who heard the message.

45 The believers who came with Peter were Jews. They were very much surprised that the Holy Spirit was also sent to those who were not Jews. **46-47** They heard them speak in tongues of other languages and praise God.

Then Peter said, 'These people have received the Holy Spirit just as we have. Can anyone say they may not be baptised in water?'

48 So he said they were to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. They begged him to stay with them for a while.

CHAPTER 11

Peter's report to the church at Jerusalem

The apostles and other Christian brothers were in Judea. They heard that some people who were not Jews had also believed God's message.

2 When Peter went back to Jerusalem, the leaders of the Jews found fault with him. **3** They asked, 'Why did you visit people who are not Jews? Why did you eat with them?'

4 Peter explained to them all that had happened from the beginning.

5 'I was in the city of Joppa talking with God,' he said. 'Something like a dream came over me. I saw a vision. I saw a bundle like a big blanket tied by the corners. It was let down from the sky. It came down to me. **6** When I looked at it, I wondered about it. I saw different kinds of tame animals, wild animals, snakes, and birds.

7 And I heard a voice say to me, "Get up, Peter. Kill some and eat." **8** But I said, "No, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is not holy or clean." **9** Then the voice spoke from the sky a second time, saying, "What God has made

clean, you must not call unholy.” **10** This happened three times. Then everything was taken up into the sky again. **11** Right then three men came to the house where we were. They had come from Caesarea for me. **12** The Spirit told me to go with them and not to fear. These six brothers went with me too. We went into the man’s house. **13** He told us that he had seen God’s angel standing in his house. The angel said to him, “Send men to Joppa to call Simon whose other name is Peter. **14** He will tell you and all your family how to be saved.” **15** And when I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them just as he had come on us at the beginning. **16** Then I remembered that the Lord said, “John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.” **17** God gave then the same gift as he gave to us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. If God gave them this gift, how could I stop him? I am only a man.’

18 When the people heard this, they were satisfied. They praised God saying, ‘God has allowed the people who are not Jews to turn to him and live.’

The church at Antioch

19 Some of the people had gone to other countries because of the big trouble when Stephen was killed. They went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. They told God’s word to the Jews only.

20 Some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene. They went to Antioch. They also spoke to those who were not Jews, and they told them about the Lord Jesus. **21** The Lord was with them. Many believed and turned to the Lord.

22 The people in the Jerusalem church heard this news. They sent Barnabas to go to Antioch.

23 When he reached there, he saw what had been done by the power of God. He was very glad. He talked to them. He begged them all to keep on following the Lord with all their heart.

24 Barnabas was a good man. He believed in God and was filled with the Holy Spirit. Many people came to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to get Saul.

26 When he found him, he took him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with all who believed in Jesus Christ. They taught many people. Antioch was the first place where the disciples were called Christians.

27 At that time, prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. **28** One of them named Agabus stood up. He told them the Spirit had shown him

that much trouble would come to all the world. There would not be much food for the people. (This trouble came when Claudius Caesar was ruler.) **29** Then the disciples decided to help the Christian brothers who lived in Judea. They would each one send what he could. **30** They did so. They sent Barnabas and Saul to carry it to the church leaders [in Jerusalem].

CHAPTER 12

James is killed and Peter is put in prison

At that time Herod the king caught some of the church people and troubled them. **2** He killed James the brother of John with a long knife or sword. **3** He saw that this pleased the leaders of the Jews, so he caught Peter also. This happened at the Jewish feast which they had each year to remember leaving Egypt. (It was called the Passover Feast.) **4** After Herod had caught Peter, he put him in prison. He told four groups of soldiers to guard him. There were four soldiers in each group. He planned to bring him out for trial before the people. But he would do it after the Passover Feast. **5** So Peter was kept in prison. And the church people asked God to help him.

Peter is taken out of prison

6 The night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. He was tied to them with two chains. Guards were at the door of the prison. **7** An angel from the Lord came to him and a light shone in the prison. He hit Peter’s side and woke him up. ‘Be quick,’ he said. ‘Get up!’ His chains fell off his hands. **8** ‘Put on your belt and your shoes,’ said the angel. Peter did so. ‘And now,’ said the angel, ‘put on your coat and follow me.’

9 Peter followed him out. He did not know that what the angel had done was true. He thought he was dreaming. **10** They passed the first and the second guard. Then they came to the iron gate out to the city. It opened for them by itself. So they went all the way down a street. Then the angel left him.

11 When Peter came to himself, he said, ‘Now I know truly that the Lord has sent his angel. He has saved me from Herod and from all that the Jewish leaders are hoping will happen to me.’

12 And when he thought about this, he went to Mary’s house. Mary was John Mark’s mother. Many people were meeting there, talking to God [about Peter]. **13** Peter knocked at the outside

door. A young servant woman named Rhoda went to answer. **14** When she knew it was Peter's voice, she was very glad. She did not open the door. But she ran in and told the people that Peter was at the door.

15 They said, 'You are crazy.' But she kept on saying that Peter was really there.

Then they said, 'It must be his angel.' **16** Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the door and saw him, they were very much surprised.

17 He put out his hand for them to be quiet. Then he told them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. He said, 'Tell James and the brothers about this.' Then he went away to another place.

The death of Herod

18 In the morning the soldiers tried hard to find Peter. **19** Herod had looked for him and had not found him. So he questioned the guards and ordered them to be taken away and killed. And then Peter went from Judea to Caesarea to live for a while.

20 Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. But they got Blastus to speak to the king for them. Blastus was one of the men who worked in the king's house. They came to Herod together. They wanted to make peace with him because their country got its food from his country. **21** On a certain day Herod put on his king's robes and sat on his chair and made a speech.

22 The people shouted, 'A god is talking to us. He is not a man.' **23** At once an angel from God put a bad sickness on Herod because he did not give God the praise. Worms ate him and he died.

Barnabas and Saul

24 The word of God spread further and further and more people believed.

25 Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had finished their work. They brought John Mark with them.

CHAPTER 13

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers. They were Barnabas, Simeon Niger, Lucius from Cyrene, Manaen who grew up with Herod the ruler, and Saul. **2** They were worshipping the Lord and fasting [not eating food for a time]. The Holy Spirit said, 'Give me Barnabas and Saul to do the work for which I have called them.'

3 The men fasted and talked to God. Then they laid their hands on Barnabas and Paul and sent them on their way.

The apostles tell God's word in Cyprus

4 Barnabas and Saul left Antioch. The Holy Spirit sent them to the town of Seleucia. From there they went in a boat to the island of Cyprus.

5 When they reached the town of Salamis, they told God's word in the meeting places of the Jews. John was with them to help.

6 They went through all the island to the town of Paphos. There they met a witch doctor. He was a Jew named Bar-Jesus. He was not a true prophet. **7** This witch-doctor was with Sergius Paulus, the ruler of the country. Sergius Paulus was a wise man. He wanted to hear God's word, so he called for Barnabas and Saul. **8** The witch-doctor was also called Elymas. He tried to stop them. He did not want the ruler to believe the truth. **9** Then Saul, who is also called Paul, being filled with the Holy Spirit, looked at him.

10 'You son of the devil!' he said. 'You do nothing but tell lies and make much trouble. You hate everything that is right. The Lord's way is right. Will you not stop spoiling his way? **11** See now, the Lord's hand is upon you. You will be blind and will not be able to see the sun for a while.'

And right then something like a dark cloud came over Elymas' eyes. He went around begging someone to take his hand and lead him. **12** The ruler saw what had happened. And he was very much surprised at the teaching about the Lord. He believed it.

Paul and Barnabas at Antioch

13 Paul and his friends left Paphos in a boat. They went to the town of Perga in the district of Pamphylia. There John left them and went back to Jerusalem. **14** The others went on from Perga. They came to Antioch in the district of Pisidia.

On the Sabbath day they went into the meeting house and sat down. **15** First, someone read from the books of the law and the prophets. Then the rulers of the meeting house called Paul and Barnabas and said, 'Men and brothers, have you something to say that will help us? Please say it.'

16 Then Paul stood up and put out his hand.

He said, 'Men of Israel and you who worship and fear God, please listen to me. **17** The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers. He

made the people into a large tribe when they were strangers in the land of Egypt. God brought them out of Egypt by his power. **18** For forty years in the wilderness God cared for them like a father. **19** God took seven tribes out of the land of Canaan. Then he divided the land among our people. **20** God gave judges to rule over them until Samuel the prophet came. About four hundred and fifty years had passed. **21** Then the people asked for a king. God gave them Saul. He was the son of Kish, a man from Benjamin's family. Saul was their king for forty years. **22** Then God took him away. He made David king over them. This is what God said about him, "David, Jesse's son, is the kind of man I love. He will do all that I want him to do." **23** God has given Israel a Saviour from David's family, as he promised to do. His name is Jesus. **24** Before he came, John [the baptiser] talked to all the people of Israel. He said they should stop doing wrong things and be baptised. **25** When John was finishing his work, he said, "Who do you think I am? I am not the one. But wait, someone else will come after me. I am not good enough to untie his shoe strings." **26** 'Men and brothers, sons of Abraham, and all of you who worship God, the news of this way to be saved has been sent to us. **27** The people who live in Jerusalem and their rulers did not know who this Jesus really was. They did not understand the words of the prophets of God long ago which were read every Sabbath day. But even so, they did what the prophets had said they would do. They judged him. **28** They could not prove that he did anything wrong for which he should die. Yet they begged Pilate to kill him. **29** They did all the things that the prophets had written about him. Then they took him down from the cross made from a tree. They laid him in a grave cut from the rock. **30** But God raised him from death. **31** People had come with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem. They saw him many days. Now they tell people what they saw. **32** And we are bringing you this good news. God made a promise to our fathers long ago. Now he has made his promise come true. **33** We, their children, have now received the promise. He sent Jesus just as it was written in the second psalm, "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father." **34** 'God raised Jesus from death. His body did not go back to the grave to be spoiled. Here is what God said about it. "I will give to you the blessings which I promised David."

35 'In another psalm it says, "You will not let the body of your Holy One be spoiled."

36 'As for David, he did the work God wanted him to do for the people in his time. Then, after that, he died. He was buried with his fathers. His body spoiled. **37** But God has raised one from death. His body did not spoil.

38 'Men and brothers, understand this. It is because of this Jesus that we tell you your wrong ways will be forgiven you. **39** The law of Moses could not make you free. But this man makes you free. You will not be judged if you believe in him. **40** Be careful then, so that what the prophets said will not happen to you. **41** They said, "Look, you people who despise everything. You will look in wonder before you die. I will do something in your time. I will do something that you will not believe even if someone told you what it is".'

42 As Paul and Barnabas left the meeting house the people said, 'Tell us these things again next Sabbath day.' **43** The meeting was finished. There were many Jews, also those who were not Jews but worshipped God. They followed Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas kept talking to the people and told them to keep on living in the way that will bring God's blessing.

44 The next Sabbath day almost all of the people in that city gathered to hear God's word.

45 The leaders of the Jews saw that many people came. They were very jealous. They talked back to Paul and said he was not telling the truth. They also said wrong things about him.

46 But Paul and Barnabas did not fear the Jewish leaders. They said, 'We had to tell God's word to you first but you will not listen to it. By that you are saying you Jews are not good enough to live for ever. So we will go to the people who are not Jews. **47** That is what the Lord told us to do. He said, "I have made you to be a light to the people who are not Jews. You will tell people everywhere in the world how to be saved".'

48 Those who were not Jews heard this. They were glad and they thanked God for his message. All those who had been chosen to live for ever believed. **49** The word of the Lord was told through all that part of the country. **50** But the leaders of the Jews talked to the leading women who worshipped God and to the chief men of Antioch. They made plenty of trouble for Paul and Barnabas. They made them leave that part of the country. **51** So Paul and Barnabas

shook the dust off their feet and left them. They went on to Iconium. **52** And the followers were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 14

Paul and Barnabas at Iconium

In Iconium Paul and Barnabas did as they had done before in other places. They went into the Jews' meeting place and spoke. Many of the Jews and the other people believed. **2** But the Jews who did not believe said wrong things about them. They spoiled the minds of those who were not Jews so that they hated the Christians. **3** Paul and Barnabas stayed there a long time anyway. They did not fear to talk about the Lord. The Lord proved that the message about his blessing was true. He worked through Paul and Barnabas. They did signs and wonderful things. **4** The people of the city were divided. Some of them agreed with the Jewish leaders. Some of them agreed with the apostles. **5** Then some of those people who were not Jews joined together with the Jews and their leaders. They made a plan to give the apostles much trouble and to kill them with stones. **6** Paul and Barnabas found out about this. So they left quickly. They went to Lystra and Derbe in the district of Lycaonia and the country around. **7** There they told people the good news.

The people at Lystra throw stones at Paul

8 At Lystra a man was sitting. He was not able to walk because he had no strength in his feet. He had never walked since he was born. **9** This man heard Paul speak. Paul looked at the man. He saw that the man believed he would be healed. **10** Paul said, 'Stand up on your feet!' The man jumped up and walked.

11 When the people saw what Paul had done, they shouted in their own language, 'The gods have become like men! They have come down to visit us.' **12** They named Barnabas, Jupiter. And they named Paul, Mercury, because he was the one who talked. **13** There was a temple of Jupiter in front of the city. The priest of the temple brought animals and flowers to the gates to make a sacrifice. All the people were with him.

14 But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothes and ran in among the people shouting. **15** They said, 'Why are you people doing this? We are only men like you. You should leave these gods which cannot

help you. You should turn to the living God. He made the sky, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. **16** In the time that is past, God allowed all people to do what they wanted to do. **17** But even then he had some ways to make himself known. He did things that were good. He gave us rain from the sky and good harvests. And he gives you all the food you need and makes you very happy. Surely these things speak for him.' **18** By saying these things they stopped the people from making sacrifices to them.

19 Some of the Jewish leaders from Antioch and Iconium came to Lystra and won the people to their side. They threw stones at Paul. Then they carried him out of the city because they thought he was dead. **20** But as the disciples gathered around him, he got up and they went back into the city.

The next day Paul and Barnabas left and went to Derbe. **21** They told the good news to the people in Derbe. Many people believed what they taught.

Then they went back to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch. **22** They talked to the disciples to help them. They told them to keep on believing. They said, 'We must go through much trouble to get into God's kingdom.' **23** They chose leaders for them in every church. They talked with God and fasted. When they were finished, they gave the leaders over to the Lord's care, because they believed in him.

The return to Antioch in Syria

24 They went through the district of Pisidia to Pamphylia. **25** They told the good news to the people in Perga. Then they went to the town of Attalia. **26** From there they went in a boat to Antioch. It was there that the people had given them over to God's care. They had asked him to bless them in this work. Now they had finished the work. **27** When they reached the city, they called all the church people together. They told them all that God had done for them. They said, 'Now God has opened the way to believe for those who are not Jews.' **28** Paul and Barnabas stayed a long time with the disciples at Antioch.

CHAPTER 15

The apostles gather to talk at Jerusalem

Some men came from Judea and taught the Christian brothers. They said, 'You must be circumcised with the mark made on your body in the way Moses taught us. If you are not

circumcised you cannot be saved.’ **2** Paul and Barnabas did not agree with them. There was much talking about it. Then they decided that Paul and Barnabas and some of the other men should go to Jerusalem. They would ask the apostles and church leaders there about it.

3 So the church people sent them on their way. They passed through the districts of Phoenicia and Samaria. They told them that some who were not Jews were believing in God. This news made all the Christian brothers very happy.

4 When they reached Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church people, the apostles, and the church leaders. They told all that God had done as he worked with them. **5** But some of the believers who belonged to the Pharisee group stood up and said, ‘They must be circumcised [like the Jews]. We must tell them to keep all the laws of Moses.’

6 The apostles and the church leaders met together to talk the matter over.

7 After much talking about it, Peter stood up. He said, ‘Men and brothers, you know what happened in the first days. God chose me to tell the good news to those who are not Jews. They believed. **8** God knows what is in a person’s heart. He proved that they believed. He gave them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us. **9** God made no difference between them and us. He made their hearts clean when they believed.’

10 So now why are you doing what God did not do? You give the disciples a hard thing to do. Our fathers could not do it. And we cannot do it.

11 We believe that the Lord Jesus saves us because he is kind. And that is why he saves them.’

12 Then all the people stopped talking. They listened to what Paul and Barnabas had to say. They told them about all the signs and wonderful things that God had helped them to do among the people who were not Jews.

13 When they had finished talking, James said, ‘Men and brothers, listen to me. **14** Simeon has told us how God came the first time to the people who are not Jews. God chose some of them to belong to him and be his people.’

15 This is what the prophets of God said long ago. **16** They said, ‘After this, I will come back and build up again the house of David which has fallen down. I will take the broken pieces and build a house again. **17** Then all the other people will find God, even those who are not Jews but who belong to me. So says the Lord, who is doing all these things.’

18 ‘He told us these things long ago. **19** So now, this is what I think. We should not trouble those who are not Jews but who have turned to God. **20** We should write them a letter and tell them what they must not do. They must not eat food that has been given to idols. They must not have sex with someone who is not their husband or wife. They must not eat the meat of animals that are killed by choking. They must not taste blood. **21** Since the times of long ago there have been men who told about Moses in every city. They read his laws in the meeting places every Sabbath day.’

A letter is sent from Jerusalem

22 Then the apostles, and the leaders, and all the church people chose men from among themselves. They sent them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas, whose other name was Barsabbas, and Silas. They were leaders among the Christian brothers.

23 They sent a letter with them. It said, ‘The apostles, the church leaders, and the Christian brothers send greetings to the Christians who are not Jews in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.’

24 We have heard that some of our people visited you and talked to you. They taught things that troubled you and made you believe wrong things. They said, ‘You must be circumcised like the Jews and keep the law.’ We did not tell them to teach you this. **25** All of us gathered here have chosen some men. We are sending them with our dear brothers, Barnabas and Paul. **26** Barnabas and Paul have been willing to die for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. **27** We are sending Judas and Silas. They will tell you the same things that we have written in the letter. **28** The Holy Spirit and we thought it was not good to give you a hard thing to do. But here is what you must not do. **29** You must not eat food that has been given to idols. You must not eat the meat of animals that are killed by choking. You must not taste blood. You must not commit adultery. If you keep away from these things, you will do well. Goodbye.’

30 So the men left and went to Antioch. There they called the people together and gave them the letter. **31** When the people read the letter, they were very glad. It helped them to become stronger in what they believed. **32** Judas and Silas were prophets. They said many things to the Christian brothers and helped them to believe more strongly. **33** They stayed there for a while. Then the brothers sent them back to those who had sent them. They sent a greeting

of peace with them. **34** But Silas thought it was good to stay at Antioch.

35 Paul and Barnabas stayed there too. They taught the people and told them the Lord's message. Many other men did this also.

Paul leaves Barnabas

36 Some days later, Paul said to Barnabas, 'Let us go back and visit the brothers in every city where we have told the Lord's message. Let us see how they are doing.'

37 Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them. **38** But Paul did not think that they should take him. John Mark had left them when they were at Pamphylia. He had not gone along with them to do the work. **39** The feeling about this matter was very strong between Barnabas and Paul, so they did not go together. Barnabas took Mark and went in a boat to Cyprus. **40** Paul chose Silas. The Christian brothers asked the Lord to bless Paul. Then he went on his way. **41** Paul travelled through Syria and Cilicia. He helped the church people to believe more strongly.

CHAPTER 16

Timothy goes with Paul and Silas

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. A disciple named Timothy was there. His mother was a Jew, a believer, and his father was a Greek. **2** The Christian brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke very well of Timothy. **3** Paul wanted him to go with him. He circumcised him because all the Jews in those places knew that his father was a Greek.

4-5 They went from town to town and talked to the people. They told them what the apostles and church leaders at Jerusalem had said should be done. So the church people became stronger in what they believed. Every day more people joined the church.

Paul is called to Macedonia

6 Paul and Silas went through the district of Phrygia and Galatia. The Holy Spirit said they should not tell God's word in the country of Asia Minor.

7 After they came to the district of Mysia, they wanted to go to the country of Bithynia but the Holy Spirit did not allow them. **8** So they went by Mysia and came to the city of Troas.

9 In the night Paul had a vision: he saw a picture like a dream. He saw a man of

Macedonia standing and calling to him, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us.'

Lydia turns to God

10 After Paul had seen the vision, we tried to leave for Macedonia right away. We believed that the Lord had called us to tell the people there the good news.

11 So we left Troas in a boat and went straight across the water to the town of Samothrace. The next day we went to Neapolis. **12** From there we went to Philippi. This was the big city of the district of Macedonia. It was a free city. We stayed there for some time.

13 On the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the river. We thought this was a place where people met to talk with God. So we sat down and talked to the women who had come there.

14 One woman named Lydia listened to us. She was from the city of Thyatira, and she sold red cloth. She worshipped God. He worked in her heart and she believed what Paul said. **15** She and all the people in her house were baptised. Then she begged us and said, 'If you really feel that I believe in the Lord, come and stay at my house.' And she would not allow us to say no.

In prison at Philippi

16 One day we were going to the meeting place where people talked with God. We met a girl who had a bad spirit. She used to tell people what was going to happen. Her masters received much money when she did this.

17 This girl kept on following Paul and us. She was shouting, 'These men are servants of the High God. They are telling us how to be saved.'

18 She did this for many days. This troubled Paul. He turned and said to the spirit in her, 'In the name of Jesus Christ, I say to you, come out of her!' And the spirit came out at once.

19 Her masters saw that they had lost this way of getting money. They caught Paul and Silas and took them by force to the rulers in the court. **20** When they had brought them before the judges, they said, 'These men are Jews. And they are making much trouble in our city.'

21 They are teaching people laws which we may not obey because we are Roman people.' **22** All the people standing around were against Paul and Silas. The judges tore off the clothes of Paul and Silas. They gave orders that they should be beaten.

23 They beat them very hard. Then they put them in prison. 'Take care,' they said to the

prison guard. 'Be sure that these prisoners do not run away.' **24** And so the guard put them in the back room in the prison. They locked their feet in holes cut in heavy pieces of wood.

The earthquake

25 At midnight, Paul and Silas were talking with God. They were singing and praising God. The other prisoners were listening to them. **26** Then all of a sudden the earth shook very much. Even the floor of the prison was shaking. All the doors came wide open. The things that held the prisoners all came off. **27** The prison guard woke up. He saw all the prison doors open. So he took a long knife and was going to kill himself. He thought that all the prisoners had run away.

28 Paul shouted, 'Stop! Do not hurt yourself. We are all here!'

29 The guard called for a light and went in quickly. He knelt down before Paul and Silas, trembling with fear. **30** He brought them out of the prison and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'

31 They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. All the people in your house must do the same.' **32** They talked to him and all the people in the house. They told them the word of the Lord. **33** Paul and Silas had sores from the beating in prison. So that same hour of the night the guard washed them. Then he and all the people of his house were baptised. **34** He took Paul and Silas to his home and gave them food to eat. He and all the people in his house were very happy. They now believed in God.

Paul is set free

35 In the morning the judges sent soldiers to the guard with a message. 'Let those men go free,' they said.

36 The guard told Paul. He said, 'The judges have sent a message that you may go free. So now, come out and go on your way. You will have no more trouble.'

37 But Paul said, 'We are Romans. And they have beaten us outside where people can see. They have put us in prison without proving we have done wrong. Now, are they going to take us out of prison secretly? No, they themselves must come and take us out.'

38 The soldiers told this to the judges. They were very much afraid when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans. **39** So they came

to Paul and Silas. They said they were sorry for what they had done. They brought them out of prison and asked them to leave the city. **40** When Paul and Silas came out of prison, they went back to Lydia's house. They saw their Christian brothers and talked to them. This helped the Christians to believe more strongly. Then Paul and Silas went on their way.

CHAPTER 17

Fighting and trouble in Thessalonica

Paul and Silas went through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia. Then they reached the town of Thessalonica. Here the Jews had a meeting place. **2** As he had done in other places, Paul went into it. On three Sabbath days he explained what was written in the holy writings. **3** He proved these things from the writings. He said, 'It was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again from death. And this Jesus, whom I am talking about, is the Christ.' **4** Some of the people believed him and they followed Paul and Silas. Some of them were Greek people who worshipped God. And some were leading women.

5 But some Jews did not believe, and they were jealous. So they called some of the bad men together and made a crowd. They started to fight and to make plenty of trouble and noise in the city. At Jason's house they went in by force to find Paul and Silas. They wanted to bring them outside to the people. **6** But they did not find them. So they took Jason and some of the Christian brothers to the rulers of the city. They shouted, 'These men have turned the world upside down. Now they have come here also. **7** Jason has taken them into his house. None of them obeys the laws of Caesar. They say there is another king named Jesus.'

8 All the people and the rulers of the city became angry when they heard this. **9** They made Jason and the other Christians pay much money. Then they let them go.

The apostles at Berea

10 That night the Christian brothers sent Paul and Silas to the town of Berea. When they reached there, they went into the Jews' meeting place. **11** The people in Berea were better than the people of Thessalonica. They were glad to listen to Paul's words. Every day they studied the holy writings to see if what Paul said was right. **12** Through this, many of them believed. Some of the leading women of the Greek people

and some of the men also believed. **13** The leaders of the Jews in Thessalonica heard that Paul told the word of God to the people at Berea. They came to Berea and talked to the people. They said things that made the people very angry against Paul. **14** The Christian brothers sent Paul to the seaside right away. But Silas and Timothy stayed on at Berea. **15** The men took Paul to the city of Athens. Paul told them to tell Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as they could.

Paul at Athens

16 Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy at Athens. He saw that the city was full of idols. His spirit was troubled about this. **17** In the meeting place he talked with the Jews and those who believed in the true God. In the market every day, he talked to people he met there. **18** There were some wise men who believed the teachings of Epicurius. They believed the teaching of other wise men called Stoics. Some of them began to talk with Paul. And some said, 'What does this talker have to say?' Others said, 'He seems to be talking about new gods.' This was because he was telling them about Jesus and how he was raised from death. **19** So they took Paul and brought him to a meeting at the hill called Areopagus. They said, 'We want to know what this new teaching is that you are talking about. **20** You are telling us things we never heard before. We want to understand them.' **21** All the people of Athens and the strangers who lived there passed their time in one way. They liked to tell and to hear some new thing.

22 Then Paul stood up in the court and said, 'You men of Athens, I see that you are very religious and worship many gods. **23** As I walked about, I looked at the things you worship. I saw one place where you make sacrifices. You have written on it, "To the God we do not know." You are worshipping that God, but you do not know him. I will tell you about him. **24** He made the world and everything in it. He is the Lord of the sky and the earth. He does not live in houses that people make with their hands. **25** Men cannot worship him by things they make with their hands because he does not need anything. He is the one who gives life and breath and everything else to all people. **26** God made one man. From that one man he has made all the nations of men to live on the whole earth. He has given to each nation a certain time and a certain place to live. **27** He did this

so they would look for him. He wanted them to reach out and find him. But he is not far from each one of us. **28** In him we live, and move, and are alive. Some of your own writers have said, "We have come from him".

29 'Therefore we have all come from God. So we should not think that God is something made of gold, or silver, or stone. He is not made by men's hands. **30** In times past God did not look at what people did. They did not know any better then. But now he is calling all people to stop doing those things. **31** God has set a day when he will judge the whole world in the right way. He has chosen a man to do this. He has proved to all people who the man is. He has raised him from death.'

32 When the people of Athens heard that someone had been raised from death, some of them laughed. Others said, 'We want to hear you talk about this matter again some time.'

33 So then Paul left them. **34** But some men followed him and believed. Among those who believed was Dionysius. He was a judge in the Areopagus court. And a woman named Damaris believed. There were others also.

CHAPTER 18

Paul at Corinth

After this Paul left Athens and went to the city of Corinth. **2** There he met a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus. A short time before this he and his wife Priscilla had come from the country of Italy. They left Italy because Claudius the ruler had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. This was the big city in Italy. Paul went to the house of Aquila and Priscilla. **3** Paul's work had been the making of tents, and that is what they did. So he stayed with them. They worked together. **4** Every Sabbath day he talked with the people in the meeting place for the Jews. He tried to talk so that the Jews and the Greeks would believe.

5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul felt in his heart that he must prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. **6** But the people talked back to Paul. And they said wrong things about him. Paul shook his clothes and said to them, 'If you are lost, it is your own fault, not mine! From now on I will go to those who are not Jews.'

7 So he left. He went to the house of a man named Justus who worshipped God. His house was next to the meeting place. **8** Crispus was

the head ruler of the meeting house. He and his whole family believed in the Lord. Many of the people in Corinth heard and believed. And they were baptised.

9 The Lord said to Paul in a vision in the night, 'Do not fear. Keep on speaking. Do not stop.

10 I am with you. nobody will hurt you. I have many people in this city.' **11** So Paul stayed there for one year and six months. He taught the people God's word.

12 When Gallio was the ruler of the province of Achaia, the Jews got together to stop Paul. They took him to court. **13** They said, 'This man is talking to the people. He is trying to make them worship God in a way that is against our law.'

14 Paul wanted to speak. Then Gallio said to the Jews, 'You Jews, if it were a matter of wrong or of doing something very bad, I would listen to you. **15** But this is a matter about words and names and about your own law. So you must go and take care of it yourselves! I will not judge such things.' **16** And he drove them out of the court. **17** They caught a man. His name was Sosthenes. He was the head ruler of the meeting house. They beat him in front of the judge, but Gallio did nothing about it.

Paul goes back to Antioch

18 Paul stayed there for many days. Then he said goodbye to the Christian brothers and went in a boat to the country of Syria. Priscilla and Aquila went with him. In the town of Cenchrea he cut his hair off. This was because he had made a promise to God.

19 When they reached the city of Ephesus, Paul left the others there. He himself went to the meeting place and talked with the Jews. **20** The Jews begged him to stay longer but he would not stay.

21 'Goodbye,' he said. 'I will come back to you again if it is God's will.' Then he got in a boat and left Ephesus.

22 When he reached Caesarea, he went to greet the church people. Then he went on to Antioch.

23 He stayed there for a while. Then he left and went through all the countries of Galatia and Phrygia. He helped the disciples to believe more strongly.

Apollos preaches at Ephesus

24 A Jew came to Ephesus. His name was Apollos. He was born in Alexandria. He spoke with power and was able to explain the holy writings well. **25** This man had been taught the

way of the Lord. He was strong in spirit as he talked to people. What he taught them about the Lord was true. But he knew only about the baptism of John. **26** He began to speak without fear in the meeting place.

When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him to their house. They explained the way of God so that he knew more about it.

27 Apollos decided to go into Achaia. The Christian brothers wrote to the disciples there and asked them to receive him.

When he reached Achaia, he helped very much those who believed. They believed because God was kind to them. **28** He talked strongly with the Jews before the people. He proved to them from the holy writings that Jesus is the Christ.

CHAPTER 19

Paul at Ephesus

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul went over land and came to the city of Ephesus. There he met some disciples. **2** Paul asked them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?'

They said, 'No. We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.'

3 Paul asked them, 'How were you baptised?'

They said, 'We were baptised in John's way.'

4 Then Paul said, 'John baptised people when they stopped their wrong ways. He told people that they should believe on the one who would follow him. That one is Jesus.'

5 When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** Paul put his hands on them. Then the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues of other languages and spoke words from God. **7** In all, there were about twelve men.

8 Paul went into the meeting place. For three months he talked without fear to the people there. He tried to talk so that people would obey God. **9** Some of them were fixed in their minds and would not believe. They said, 'The Christian way is not good' They said this in front of all the people. So Paul left them and took the disciples away. He talked and answered the questions of the people every day in the school of a man named Tyrannus. **10** This went on for two years, and all the people who lived in the province of Asia, both the Jews and the Greeks, heard the Lord's word.

The sons of Sceva

11-12 God did big works through Paul. Even some pieces of cloth he had touched were carried to sick people and they were healed. Also, people who had bad spirits in them were made free.

13 Some Jews were there who travelled about from place to place. They had power over bad spirits like witch-doctors. They tried to make people free from bad spirits by using the name of the Lord Jesus. They said to the spirits, 'I tell you, in the name of Jesus, the one Paul talks about, come out!'

14 There was a Jew named Sceva. He was a chief priest. He had seven sons who did this.

15 But the bad spirit answered, 'I know Jesus and I know Paul. But who are you?'

16 And the man who had the bad spirit in him jumped on them. He beat them all because he was stronger than they were. Their bodies were bleeding and their clothes were torn. They ran out of the house.

17 When all the Jews and the Greeks at Ephesus knew about this, they all feared. And they had great respect for the name of the Lord Jesus. **18** Many of the people who believed, told God all the bad things they used to do. **19** Many had been witch-doctors. They brought their books and burned them in front of all the people. All the books together had cost about 50,000 silver coins.

20 God's word spread with power. It reached more and more people.

The big trouble at Ephesus

21 After this, Paul decided he would go through Macedonia and Achaia and then to Jerusalem. 'After I have been there,' he said, 'I must go to see the city of Rome also.' **22** He sent Timothy and Erastus, two of his helpers, into Macedonia. But he himself stayed in Asia Minor for a while.

23 About that time there was much trouble because of the Christian way. **24** A man named Demetrius made things from silver. He made little silver houses like the big house of the idol-god Diana. He and other men got much money from this work. **25** Demetrius called them all together. He said, 'Men, you know that we get our money from this work. **26** Now you see and hear how this man Paul has talked. He has turned away many people in Ephesus. Not only that, but he has turned away the hearts of many people in almost all of Asia Minor. He says that

things made by men's hands are not really gods.

27 This will spoil our work. Not only that, but people will not respect the house of the great idol goddess Diana any more. All the people in Asia and in the whole world worship her now. But they will despise her!'

28 When they heard this, the men were very angry and shouted, 'Great is Diana of Ephesus!'

29 All the people in the city were excited. They caught two men from Macedonia. Their names were Gaius and Aristarchus. They had travelled with Paul. Then they all rushed to the big meeting place with them.

30 Paul wanted to go in and talk to the people, but the disciples would not let him. **31** Some of the leaders in Asia Minor liked Paul. They sent word to him and begged him not to go into the meeting place.

32 Some of the people were shouting one thing and some another. They were all stirred up. Most of the people did not know why they had come together.

33 The Jews pushed Alexander forward. Some of the people put him in front. He put up his hand and wanted to talk to the people. **34** But when they saw that he was a Jew, they all shouted together for two hours, 'Great is Diana of Ephesus!'

35 At last the city chief stopped the shouting. He said, 'Men of Ephesus, everyone knows that all the people of Ephesus take care of the house of the great Diana. And they take care of the stone which fell from the sky. **36** No person can say it is not true. So you should be quiet and not do anything foolish. **37** The men whom you have brought here have not taken anything from the house. They have not even said anything wrong about our goddess. **38** Now then, if Demetrius and the men who work with him have any complaint, let them take it to law. We have a court and we have judges. **39** If you want anything more than that, it must be done in a meeting which has been called by law. **40** We may have trouble because of what has happened today. There is not one good reason for it.' **41** When he had said this, he closed the meeting.

CHAPTER 20

Paul's journey to Macedonia and Greece

When everything was quiet, Paul called the disciples. He talked to them so they would not be afraid. Then he said goodbye and left. He

went to Macedonia. **2** He went through that country and talked to the people. He helped them to believe more strongly. Then he went to Greece. **3** He stayed there for three months. When he was ready to go to Syria by boat, he heard that the Jewish leaders were planning to catch him. So he said, 'I will go back through Macedonia.' **4** Some men went with him as far as Asia Minor. They were Sopater from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, and Timothy, and also Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia Minor. **5** These went on ahead and waited for us at Troas. **6** After the days of the Passover Feast, we left Philippi by boat. Five days later we met them in Troas. We stayed there for seven days.

7-8 On the first day of the week the disciples met together to break bread. Paul was ready to leave the next day. He talked a long time to the people at the meeting until long into the night. They were gathered in an upstairs room with many lights. **9** A young man named Eutychus sat in the window. He became very sleepy. When Paul kept talking so long, Eutychus was very deep in sleep and fell down from the third floor. When the people picked him up he was dead. **10** Paul went down stairs. He lay on him and put his arms around him. 'Do not fear,' he said. 'He is alive.' **11** Then Paul went upstairs again. He broke bread and ate some food. He talked for a long time, until daybreak. After that, he left. **12** The people took the young man. They were very glad because he was alive.

Paul travels from Troas to Miletus

13 We went by boat to the town of Assos. We were going to meet Paul there and take him on the boat. He told us to do that because he wanted to walk. **14** We met him at Assos, took him on the boat, and went to Mitylene. **15** Then we went by boat the next day and came to Chios. The next day we passed the town of Samos. We reached Miletus on the third day. **16** Paul decided not to stop at Ephesus. He did not want to spend time in Asia Minor. He kept going as fast as he could, because he hoped to be at the feast in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

Paul talks to the leaders at Ephesus

17 He sent a message from Miletus to Ephesus to call the leaders of the church to come to him. **18** When they came, he said, 'You know how I have lived all the time that I have been with you. I lived that way from the first day I came

into Asia. **19** You know how I have served the Lord without being proud. And I have even cried for you. I served the Lord when I had troubles and when the leaders of the Jews tried to catch me. **20** I have not feared to tell you everything that would help you. I have taught you in meetings and in your homes. **21** I have told both the Jews and the Greeks to stop doing wrong things. I have told them to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 'And now I feel in my spirit that I must go to Jerusalem. I do not know what will happen to me there. **23** But in every city the Holy Spirit tells me I will be put in prison. I will have much trouble. **24** But none of these things trouble me. I do not try to save my life. All I want is to finish what I must do with joy. The work which the Lord Jesus gave me is to tell the good news that God is kind. **25** I know that you all will never see me again. I have told you about God's kingdom. **26** So I tell you today that if anyone is lost, it is not my fault. **27** I have not feared to tell you all that God wants you to know.'

Looking after God's people

28 'The Holy Spirit has made you leaders over his people. Watch yourselves. Like one who takes care of his sheep, so you must take care of the church people. They are the Lord's people. He gave his blood for them. **29** I know this, that there are people as bad as wild animals. After I leave you, they will come to you. They will trouble God's people. **30** Also, some men will come from among you. They will teach things that are not true. They want people to follow them. **31** So then, watch and remember this. For three years, through the night and in the day, I told every one of you to be careful. I even cried as I told you.'

Paul says goodbye

32 'And now, my brothers, I give you to God. I leave with you his word which brings blessing. That word is able to make you strong. It will give you your share in the good things of God promised by him. He gives these good things to people who are pure and holy. **33** I did not want anyone to give me money or clothes. **34** You yourselves know that I worked with my own hands to pay for the things that I and my friends needed. **35** I have always shown you that you must work hard, as I have. You must help those who cannot work. By so doing you are remembering the words of the Lord Jesus.

He said, "It makes you more happy to give something than to get something".'

36 When Paul had said this, he knelt down and talked to God with them all. **37** They all cried much. They put their arms around his neck and kissed him. **38** They were sad most of all because he had said they would not see him again. And they went with him to the boat.

CHAPTER 21

Paul goes to Jerusalem

When we had said goodbye to them, we left them. We went straight across the water to the island of Cos. The next day we came to the island of Rhodes. Then we went to the city of Patara. **2** There we found a boat going to the country of Phoenicia, so we went there. **3** When we saw the island of Cyprus, we went on the right side of it to Syria. We landed at Tyre because they unloaded the boat there. **4** We found some Christians and stayed for seven days. The Holy Spirit spoke through them to Paul, 'Do not go on to Jerusalem.' **5** When the seven days had passed, we left and went on our way. All of the men, women, and children went with us out of the city. There by the sea we knelt down and talked to God. **6** We said goodbye to each other. Then we got on the boat and they went back to their homes.

7 From Tyre we went to Ptolemais. There we greeted the Christian brothers and stayed with them one day. **8** The next day we left and came to Caesarea. We went into the house of Philip. He was a man who went out telling the good news. He was one of the seven helpers in the church. **9** He had four daughters who spoke words from God. They were not married.

10 While we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came from Judea.

11 When he came to us, he took Paul's belt. He tied his own hands and feet with it. Then he said, 'The Holy Spirit has told me that in the same way the leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem will tie the man who owns this belt. They will give him over to the people who are not Jews.'

12 When we heard this, both we and the people there talked to Paul and begged him not to go to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, 'Why are you crying and making me sad like this? I am ready to be tied and also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.'

14 So when we saw that he would not change his mind, we stopped begging him. We said, 'May the Lord do what he wants to be done.'

15 After that, we took our things and went to Jerusalem. **16** Some of the Christians from Caesarea went with us. One of them was Mnason, a man born in Cyprus. He was one of the first Christian believers. We stayed in his house.

Paul visits James

17 When we reached Jerusalem, the Christian brothers were glad to see us. **18** The next day Paul went with us to see James. All the church leaders were there. **19** First, Paul greeted them. Then he told them one by one the things God had done as he worked among the people who were not Jews.

20 When they heard it, they praised the Lord. They said to Paul, 'Brother, there are many thousands of Jews who believe. They all say we must obey the law of Moses. **21** They have heard that you teach all the Jews who live in other lands. They heard that you tell them not to obey Moses' law: that they need not circumcise their children like the Jews do; and they can leave the Jewish ways of living.

22 What should we do about it? Many people will gather together because they will surely hear that you have come. **23** Now then, do the thing we tell you. We have four men who have made a promise. **24** Take them with you. Make yourself clean with them, the way the law says to do. Pay the cost for having their hair cut. Then all the people will know that all the things they heard about you are not true. They will know that you live the way the law says you should live. **25** We sent a letter to those who are not Jews and have believed. Here is what we told them they must not do. They must not touch things that have been given to idols. They must not taste blood. They must not eat the meat of animals that were killed by choking. And they must not take part in any kind of wrong sexual behaviour between men and women.'

26 Then Paul took the men with him. The next day he made himself clean with them the way the law says to do. Then he went into the temple. He told the priests which day they would finish making themselves clean. On that day a sacrifice would be made for each one of them.

Paul is caught in the temple

27 The seven days were almost over. The Jewish leaders from Asia Minor saw Paul in the temple. They got all the people there excited. They caught hold of him. **28** They shouted, 'All you men of Israel, come and help us! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere not to respect our people. He says we need not obey the law or respect this temple. And what is more, he has brought Greek people into the temple. He has made this holy place unclean.'

29 They said this because they had seen a man from Ephesus named Trophimus. He was in the city with Paul. And they thought that Paul had brought him into the temple. **30** So all the people in the city were excited. They came running. They caught Paul and took him out of the temple by force. Then the doors were shut behind them.

31 They were trying to kill him. The officer in charge of the soldiers heard that all the people of Jerusalem were making trouble. **32** Right away he took some soldiers and officers with him and ran down to the people. When the people saw them they stopped beating Paul. **33** Then the officer came up and took Paul. He had him tied with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. **34** Some of the crowd shouted one thing and some of them shouted something else. The captain could not find out what was true. The people were shouting too much. So he told his soldiers to take Paul into their army house. **35** When Paul came to the steps, the soldiers carried him because the people were fighting to get him. **36** They were all following, shouting, 'Kill him!'

Paul speaks for himself before the people

37-38 Just as the soldiers were going to take Paul into their army house, he said to the officer, 'May I tell you something?'

'So, you speak the Greek language!' said the officer. 'I thought you were the man from the country of Egypt who made trouble a while ago. I thought you were the one who led four thousand bad men into the desert.'

39 Paul said, 'I am a Jew. I was born in the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. I belong to a great city. Please let me talk to these people.'

40 So the officer let him talk. Paul stood on the steps and put up his hand. Then all the people were very quiet. He talked to them in the Jews' language.

CHAPTER 22

Paul said, 'Men, brothers, and fathers, listen while I tell you my side of this matter.'

2-3 When the people heard him speak in the Jews' language, they were even more quiet. Then Paul said, 'I am a Jew. I was born in the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. But I was raised here in this city. Gamaliel was my teacher. He taught me very well in the law of our fathers. I was trying hard to obey God, just as you all are today. **4** I troubled very much the people who believed this Way. I even killed them. I had men and women tied and put into prison. **5** The high priest and all the leaders know that this is true about me. They wrote letters for me to carry to the leaders of the Jews in the city of Damascus. I went to have the Christians there tied and brought to Jerusalem to be punished.'

Paul tells how he turned to God

6 'I was on my way and was near Damascus. It was about midday. All at once a very bright light from the sky shone all around me. **7** I fell to the ground and heard someone say to me, "Saul, Saul, why are you troubling me?" **8** I said, "Who are you, Lord?" He answered, "I am Jesus of Nazareth. You are troubling me." **9** The men who were with me saw the light. They were afraid. But they did not hear the one who spoke to me. **10** Then I said, "Lord, what shall I do?" And the Lord said to me, "Get up and go to Damascus. There someone will tell you all you must do." **11** I could not see because the light was so bright. My friends led me by the hand to Damascus.

12 'A man named Ananias was there. He obeyed the law of Moses, and all the Jews who lived there spoke well of him. **13** He came to see me. He stood by my side and said to me, "Brother Saul, you can see again!" And right then I was able to see him. **14** He said, "The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will. He chose you to see the One who is right and to hear him speak. **15** You will speak for him. You will tell all the people what you have seen and heard. **16** Now, why do you wait? Get up and be baptised. Wash away your wrong ways by calling on the name of the Lord!'"

Paul is called to go to people who are not Jews

17 'After I went back to Jerusalem, I was talking to God in the temple one day. Something like a dream came over me. **18** I heard the Lord say to me, "Leave Jerusalem quickly, right away.

The people will not listen to the things you say about me." **19** And I said, "Lord, they know that I put in prison those who believed in you. I beat them in all the meeting houses. **20** And I stood by and let people kill Stephen. He was one who talked for you. I looked after the clothes of the men who killed him." **21** But the Lord said to me, "Go! I will send you far away to the people who are not Jews".'

Paul is kept in prison

22 The people listened to Paul until he said that. Then they shouted, 'Kill him and get him off the earth. A man like that should not live!' **23** The people shouted. They waved their clothes about and threw dust in the air.

24 The man in charge of the soldiers ordered Paul to be brought into the army house. He said that he should be beaten hard to make him tell why the people shouted so much at him.

25 When they had tied him with ropes, Paul said to the captain who was standing by, 'Is it right for you to beat a man who belongs to Rome without judging his case?'

26 When the captain heard this, he told the commanding officer. He said, 'What are you going to do? This man is a Roman!'

27 Then the commanding officer came to Paul and said, 'Tell me, are you a Roman?'

'Yes, I am,' replied Paul.

28 Then the officer said, 'I paid much money to become a Roman.'

Paul said, 'I was born a Roman.' **29** Then the men who were going to beat him left him. The officer was afraid when he knew Paul was a Roman, because he had tied him up.

Paul in court

30 The officer wanted to know the real reason why the Jewish leaders were angry with Paul. So the next day he had Paul untied. He called the chief priests and the leaders to hold a court meeting. Then he took Paul down and brought him in before them.

CHAPTER 23

Paul looked at the members of the court and said, 'My brothers, I have done what I thought God wanted me to do, right up to this day.'

2 Ananias, the high priest, said to those who were standing near Paul, 'Hit his mouth!'

3 Paul said, 'God will hit you down, you dirty wall painted white! You sit there to judge me by

the law and you break the law by telling them to hit me.'

4 The people who stood near Paul said, 'Do you say a wrong thing like that to God's high priest?'

5 Paul said, 'I did not know that he is a high priest. The holy writings say, "You shall not say anything wrong about a ruler of your people".'

6 Paul knew that some of the men were from the Sadducee group and some of them were from the Pharisee group. So he called out in the court, 'My brothers, I am a Pharisee. My fathers were Pharisees. I am being judged because I believe that the dead will be raised to life again.'

7 When he had said that, the Pharisees and the Sadducees began to talk back and forth. The men in the court were divided. **8** The Sadducees say the dead will not be raised again. They say there is no angel or spirit. But the Pharisees believe in all these three things. **9** There was much shouting. Some of the clever men who were Pharisees got up. They said, 'We do not think this man has done wrong. Perhaps some angel or spirit really did speak to him.'

10 The people started fighting. The commanding officer was afraid they would tear Paul into pieces. So he told the soldiers to take Paul and bring him into the army house.

11 The next night the Lord stood beside Paul. He said, 'Be glad, Paul. You have told people about me in Jerusalem. You must also talk about me in Rome.'

The plan to kill Paul

12 In the morning, some of the Jewish leaders planned together. They made a promise that they would not eat or drink until they had killed Paul. **13** There were more than forty Jews who made this secret plan together. **14** They came to the chief priests and leaders and said, 'We have made a promise for ourselves. We will not eat anything until we have killed Paul. **15** So now, you and the members of the court send word to the commanding officer. Tell him to bring Paul down to you. Make him think you want to find out more about Paul. We will be ready to kill him before he gets there.'

16 The son of Paul's sister heard about their secret plan. So he went into the army house and told Paul. **17** Paul called one of the officers and said to him, 'Take this young man to the commanding officer. He has something to tell him!'

18 So the officer took him to the commanding officer. He said, 'Paul, the prisoner, called me. He asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you.'

19 The officer took the young man by the arm. He went to one side so they could be alone. He asked, 'What do you want to tell me?'

20 The young man said, 'The leaders of the Jews have made a plan. They will ask you to bring Paul down to court tomorrow. They will say that they wish to find out more about him.'

21 But you must not do this. More than forty Jews are waiting for him. They have made a promise to themselves. They will not eat or drink until they have killed him. They are ready now and waiting for your agreement.'

22 So the commanding officer sent the young man away. He said, 'You must not tell anyone that you have told me about these things.'

Paul is sent to Felix the ruler

23 The commanding officer called two officers to him. He said, 'Get two hundred soldiers ready by nine o'clock tonight to go to Caesarea. Send seventy men with them who will ride on horses and two hundred men who will carry spears.'

24 Also have horses ready for Paul to ride. Take him safely to Felix, the ruler.'

25 The officer wrote a letter to Felix like this:

26 'Claudius Lysias sends greetings to you, great ruler Felix. **27** This man was caught by the Jews. They were ready to kill him. But I came with my soldiers and took him away, because I found out that he is a Roman. **28** I wanted to find out what complaint they had against him, so I brought him into their court. **29** I found out that their complaints were to do with their law. But he had not done anything wrong enough to die or to be put into prison. **30** When I heard that the Jewish leaders were planning to catch him, I sent him to you at once. I told those who are making complaints against him that they must bring the matter to you.'

31 So the soldiers took Paul as they had been told to do. They went with him that night as far as the town of Antipatris. **32** The next day the soldiers went back to the barracks. Only the men who were riding horses went with Paul.

33 When they reached Caesarea, they gave the letter to the ruler and brought Paul to him.

34-35 He read the letter. Then he asked Paul what country he came from. He heard that Paul was from Cilicia. Then he said, 'I will hear all

you have to say when the men who have made the complaint come here.'

He ordered Paul to be kept in the house which is called Herod's palace.

CHAPTER 24

The complaints against Paul

Five days later, Ananias the high priest came from Jerusalem. He brought with him some of the leaders and a lawyer named Tertullus. They told the ruler their complaint against Paul.

2 Paul was called in. Tertullus began to bring the complaints. 'Great ruler Felix,' he said, 'we have peace because of what you have done. These people have a better life because of you.'

3 We are always very glad for this everywhere we go. **4** I do not want to take much of your time. But please be kind and listen to a few words from us. **5** We have found this man to be a real trouble-maker. He talks to the Jews all over the world and causes them to disobey the laws. He is the leading trouble-maker of the Nazarene group. **6** He even tried to make the temple unclean. But we caught him and were going to judge him by our law. **7** But Lysias the commanding officer came. He took Paul away from us by force. **8** He told those who have complaints against him to come to you. Ask him yourself and you will find out from him about all these complaints we have brought against him.'

9 The Jews agreed with what Tertullus the lawyer said. They said, 'Yes, yes, he is telling the truth.'

10 The ruler made a sign for Paul to speak. So Paul said, 'I know that for many years you have judged matters for this people. **11** So I am happy to speak for myself. Not more than twelve days ago I went to Jerusalem to worship. If you ask the people, you will find this out.'

12 They did not find me quarrelling with anyone in the temple. I was not making trouble among the people in the meeting houses or in the city.'

13 They cannot prove the things they have said against me here. **14** But I myself tell you this. I worship the God of my fathers in the Christian way. They say this is not the right way. I believe everything that the law teaches. I believe everything that the prophets have written. **15** I believe that God will raise from death both the good people and the bad people. These people here believe the same thing. **16** I always try to do what is right to God and to men.'

17 'I was away for a few years and I had come to Jerusalem to bring gifts to my people, and to give offerings. **18** While I was doing this, they found me in the temple. I had made myself clean the way the law says to do. I did not have many people around me. I was not making trouble. **19** Some Jews were there from Asia Minor. They should be here before you and talk against me if they have anything to say. **20** Or let these men here tell if they found anything wrong with me when I stood in their court. **21** I did this one thing. I shouted while I was standing among them, "I am being judged today because I believe that the dead will be raised again".'

Paul is kept in prison

22 Felix sent them away because he knew many things about the Christian way. He said, 'When Lysias, the commanding officer, comes down, I will know everything about this matter.'

23 He said to the officer, 'Keep Paul in prison but let him have some freedom. Let his friends come to visit him and to do things for him.'

24 Some days after that, Felix came with his wife Drusilla. She was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to what Paul said about believing in Christ Jesus. **25** Paul talked about what is right, about living the right way, and about the time when all people will be judged. Felix was very much afraid when he heard these things. He said to Paul, 'You may go now. When I have time, I will call you again.'

26 He hoped that Paul would give him money to free him. And so he often sent for Paul and talked with him.

27 After two years, a man named Porcius Festus came to rule in Felix's place. Felix had wanted to please the Jewish leaders, so he left Paul in prison.

CHAPTER 25

Paul asks that Caesar judge him

Three days after Festus came to the country, he went to Jerusalem from Caesarea. **2** Then the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews told him what they had against Paul. **3** 'Please do something for us,' they begged. 'Send for Paul to come to Jerusalem.' They had made a secret plan to kill him on the road.

4 Festus said, 'Paul is being kept in prison in Caesarea. I myself am going there soon. **5** Let the men among you who are able come with

me. If Paul has done anything wrong, then they can talk against him.'

6 Festus stayed only eight or ten days more among them. Then he went to Caesarea. The next day he sat on his chair in the court and had Paul brought in. **7** When Paul came in, the Jewish leaders who had come from Jerusalem stood around Paul. They talked much against him. But they could not prove that the things they said were true.

8 Paul spoke for himself. He said, 'I have done no wrong to the law, or to the temple, or against Caesar the ruler of the Romans.'

9 Festus wanted to please the Jewish leaders, so he said to Paul, 'Will you go to Jerusalem and let me judge you there about these things?'

10 Paul said, 'I am standing in Caesar's court. That is where I should be judged. I have done nothing wrong to the Jews. You yourself know that well. **11** If I have done wrong things, or any wrong thing for which I should die, then I do not ask to live. But if the things these people say are not true, then no one has power to give me up to the leaders of the Jews. I ask to go to Caesar.'

12 So Festus talked the matter over with the court. Then he said to Paul, 'You have asked to go to Caesar. All right, you will go to Caesar!'

Paul is brought before Agrippa and Bernice

13 Sometime after that, king Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus.

14 They stayed for many days. Festus brought Paul's matter to the king. He said, 'Felix left a man in prison here. **15** When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priest and leaders of the Jews came to me. They talked against him, and they asked me to punish him. **16** I told them that the Romans do not do it that way. They do not punish a man until he has met those who talk against him. Then he has a chance to speak for himself. **17** So they came here with me. I did not wait. The very next day I sat on my chair in the court and had the man brought in. **18** When they stood up, they did not say the wrong things against him that I thought they would. **19** But instead, they had a quarrel with him about the things they believe in. The quarrel is about a man named Jesus who died. Paul said he is alive. **20** I did not know how to judge such things. So I asked if he would go to Jerusalem and be judged there about these matters. **21** But Paul asked to wait and let Caesar judge

his case. So I had him put in prison to be kept there until I can send him to Caesar.'

22 Agrippa said to Festus, 'I should like to hear the man myself.'

Festus said, 'Tomorrow you shall hear him.'

23 So the next day Agrippa and Bernice came, making a big show of themselves. They went into the room to hear Paul talk. Officers and the leading men of the city also went in. When Festus called for Paul, he was brought in.

24 Then Festus said, 'King Agrippa and all you men here with us, you see this man. All the Jewish leaders, both in Jerusalem and here, came together and talked about him. They shouted, "He must die!" **25** But I found out that he had not done anything wrong for which he should die. He himself asked to go to Caesar, so I decided to send him. **26** But I have no real complaint about him to write to my ruler. So I have brought this man before you all, and most of all before you, king Agrippa. When you have heard him, I hope I will have something to write about him. **27** I think that it does not make sense to send a prisoner and not say what wrong he has done.'

CHAPTER 26

Paul speaks before Agrippa

Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'You may speak for yourself.' So Paul put out his hand and began to speak.

2 'King Agrippa, I am happy to speak for myself before you today. I will talk about all the things the leaders of the Jews have said against me.

3 You know all the ways of the Jews. You know what they believe. So please take time to listen to me.

4 'All the Jews know the way I lived from the time I was young. From the beginning I lived with my own people at Jerusalem. **5** They have known me for a long time. They know, if they would tell it, that I lived like the Pharisee group. They obey the law better than any others who worship God the way we do. **6** I believe that God will keep the promise that he made to our fathers long ago. That is why I am standing here being judged today. **7** All the people of our twelve tribes serve God faithfully day and night. They do this because they believe they will receive what he has promised. Because I believe this, king Agrippa, the Jewish leaders are talking against me. **8** Why is it so hard for any of you to believe that God should raise the dead?

9 'I used to think that I must do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. **10** I did this in Jerusalem. The chief priests gave me power. I put many of God's people in prison. And when they were killed, I agreed to it.

11 Often I punished them in all the meeting places. I tried to make them say wrong things about Christ. I was very, very angry. I even went to other cities to trouble them.'

Paul tells how he turned to God

12 'And so I was on my way to the city of Damascus. The chief priests had given me power and a letter. **13** I was on the road at midday, king Agrippa, and I saw a bright light. It came from the sky and was brighter than the light of the sun. It shone all around me and the men who were travelling with me. **14** We all fell to the ground. I heard someone say to me in the Jews' language, "Saul, Saul, why are you troubling me? You hurt yourself when you kick against the sticks which guide you."

15 'I said, "Who are you, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus, the one you are troubling.

16 But get up. Stand on your feet. Here is why I have shown myself to you. I have chosen you to work for me. I have chosen you to tell people what you saw when you saw me today. You are to tell them also about the other times when I will show myself to you. **17** I will keep you safe from your own people, the Jews. And I will keep you safe from those who are not Jews. I am sending you to them. **18** I send you to them to open their eyes. Then they will turn from darkness to light. You are to take them out of Satan's power and turn them to God, to be forgiven of their wrong ways. Then they will be among those who are made clean and pure by believing in me.'

Paul speaks for Christ to Jews and those who are not Jews

19 'So, king Agrippa, I obeyed what the one from heaven told me to do. **20** I told the good news to the people of Damascus and Jerusalem. Then I told it all over Judea. I went to those who are not Jews. I told everyone that they must stop doing wrong things and turn to God. I told them they must show by the way they live that they have stopped doing wrong things.

21 That is why the leaders of the Jews caught me in the temple and tried to kill me. **22** God has always helped me up to today. I have stood and talked to both small people and great people. I have said nothing more than what the

prophets and Moses said would happen. **23** They said Christ must suffer. They said he would be the first person to rise from death. He would be the first person to bring news of light to the Jews and those who are not Jews.'

Paul begs Agrippa to believe

24 While Paul was saying these things Festus shouted, 'Paul, you are crazy! All your book learning is making you crazy.'

25 Paul said, 'No, great ruler Festus, I am not crazy. But what I say is true. It makes good sense. **26** The king knows about these things. I am not afraid to talk to him about them. I am sure that not one of these things happened without his knowing about it. This did not happen in secret. **27** King Agrippa do you believe the prophets? I know you believe them.'

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'You are trying to make me a Christian right away.' **29** 'Right away or later,' said Paul. 'I wish that all who hear me today might be what I am. That is, what I am without these chains.'

30 Then king Agrippa stood up. Festus and Bernice and those who were sitting there with them stood up also. **31** They left the room and talked the matter over. They said, 'This man is not doing anything wrong for which he ought to be in prison or die.'

32 Agrippa said to Festus, 'We could let this man go free if he had not asked to go to Caesar.'

CHAPTER 27

Paul starts to go to Rome by boat

It was planned that we would go by boat to Italy. An officer named Julius was put in charge of Paul and some other prisoners. Julius was an army captain in the Augustan group. **2** We got on a boat which was from the city of Adramyttium. This boat was going along the coast of Asia Minor. And so we went out to sea. A man named Aristarchus from the city of Thessalonica in Macedonia came with us also.

3 The next day we stopped at the city of Sidon. Julius was kind to Paul. He allowed him to go to see his friends so they could care for him.

4 Then we started out to sea again. We went near the island of Cyprus, because the wind was blowing against us. **5** We crossed the sea by the countries of Cilicia and Pamphylia. Then we reached the city of Myra in Lycia. **6** There the officer found a boat from the city of Alexandria

going to the country of Italy. So he put us on that boat.

7 We went slowly for many days. And after much trouble, we reached the city of Cnidus. The wind was blowing hard against us. We could not go on. So we went around the south side of the island of Crete, past Cape Salmone.

8 We had trouble going along near the coast, but at last we came to a place called Fair Havens. This was near the town of Lasea. **9** It was now so late in the year that it was a bad time to go by boat.

So Paul spoke to them about it. **10** He said, 'Sirs, I see that if we go on by boat, we will have much trouble. Something bad will happen to the things on the boat and to the boat itself, and also to us.'

11 The officer did not listen to what Paul said. But he listened to the captain and the owner of the boat. **12** This place was not a good place for the boat to stay through the winter months of the year. So most of the men wanted to go on. They thought they might be able to reach Phoenicia and stay there for the winter. Phoenicia is a good place on the island of Crete. Boats can stay there. The winds do not blow against them.

Much trouble on the water

13 When the south wind began to blow a little, they thought they had what they wanted. So they started off. They went along very close to the land of Crete. **14** But soon a very strong north-east wind blew from Crete. **15** The wind blew against the boat and it could not go into the wind. So they let the boat go where the wind took it. **16** We came close to a small island called Clauda. There we had a hard time to pull up the small boat. **17** However, at last they got it up. Then they put ropes around the boat to make it strong. They were also afraid they would get stuck in a bad place in the sand. So they took down the big sail cloth that was up to catch the wind. Then they let the boat go where the wind took it. **18** The next day the storm was very bad. They threw out the things that were in the boat. **19** And the third day they threw off the things they used on the boat, with their own hands. **20** For many days we could not see the sun or the stars. The bad storm kept on. We did not think that we would be saved.

21 The men of the boat had not eaten anything for a long time. Then Paul stood up and said, 'Sirs, you should have listened to me and not

left Crete. But you did leave. So you have had much trouble and have lost all these things. **22** Now I tell you to be glad. Not one of you will die. Only the boat will break and be lost. **23** I belong to God and worship him. Last night his angel stood before me. **24** He said, "Paul, do not be afraid. You must stand before Caesar. And see, God has given you the lives of all these men who are travelling with you." **25** So be glad, sirs. I believe God. It will be just the way he told me. **26** However, we will have to go on an island.'

27 On the fourteenth night we were being blown across the Adrian Sea. About midnight the boatmen thought that we must be near some land. **28** So they tested how deep the water was there. They found that the line went down twenty arm lengths. A little later they tested and found that it was only fifteen arm lengths deep. **29** Then they were afraid that we would hit the rocks. There were four heavy iron hooks called anchors. They let them down into the water at the back end of the boat. Then they wished that morning would come.

30 The boatmen wanted to get off and leave the boat. They even put down the small boat into the water. They said they were going to put more anchors out from the front of the big boat. **31** But Paul said to the officer and soldiers, 'If these men do not stay on the boat, you cannot be saved.'

32 Then the soldiers cut the ropes holding the small boat and let the water carry it away.

33 When it was almost morning, Paul begged them all to eat. He said, 'Today is the fourteenth day that you have been watching and have not eaten anything. **34** So now, I beg you, eat something. You need it to make you strong so you can save yourselves. Not one of you will lose even one hair from your head.' **35** When he had said this, he stood in front of them all. He took some bread and thanked God for it. Then he broke it and began to eat it. **36** Then they all were glad and ate some food themselves. **37** In all, we were **276** people on the boat. **38** They ate all they wanted. Then they threw the grain into the water, so that the boat would not be so heavy.

The boat is broken

39 In the morning they saw land. But they did not know what country it was. They saw a sandy place. So they talked it over and thought they would try to get the boat on it. **40** They cut

off the anchors and left them in the water. At the same time, they untied the wood that guided the boat. They put up the big sail to catch the wind and tried to get the boat onto that sandy place. **41** But they came to a place where there was sand under the water. The boat stuck in it. The front end stuck so badly that they could not make it go. The back end began to break up because the water beat it so hard.

42 The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners so that none of them would swim to land and run away. **43** But the officer wanted to save Paul, so he stopped the soldiers. He told the people, 'Those of you who can swim, jump into the water first and get to the land. **44** Then the rest of you jump in and go on planks and other pieces of the boat.' So in this way they all got to the land safely.

CHAPTER 28

Paul on the island of Malta

When we were safe on land, we found that the island we were on was called Malta. **2** The people there were very kind to us. They made a fire for us and took care of us. It was cold and raining. **3** Paul gathered some sticks of wood. He put them on the fire. A bad snake came out of the heat and hung onto his hand.

4 The people of Malta saw the snake hanging on his hand. 'Oh,' they said to each other. 'This man has no doubt killed someone. He did not die in the water, but it is not right for him to live.' **5** Paul shook the snake off into the fire. It did not hurt him. **6** The people thought surely he would swell up or would drop down dead at once. They waited a long time and saw that nothing bad happened to him. Then they said, 'We were wrong. He must be a god.'

7 The ruler of the island was a man named Publius. He owned some of the land there. He took us to his house for three days and was very kind to us. **8** The father of Publius was sick with fever, and blood was coming from his body. Paul went to see him. He talked to God and put his hands on the man. He healed him. **9** After this, other sick people on the island came to Paul. And they too were healed. **10** They gave us many things. When we went away, they put on the boat for us the things that we would need.

Paul reaches Rome

11 A boat from the town of Alexandria was at the island all through the winter time. It was marked with a sign of the Twin Brothers. After we had been on the island for three months, we went on that boat. **12** Then we went to the city of Syracuse and stayed for three days. **13** After that we turned the boat along the coast. We reached the town of Rhegium. When we had been there for a day, a south wind began to blow. On the second day we came to the city of Puteoli. **14-15** There we found some Christian brothers. They asked us to stay with them for seven days. Then we went to Rome. Some of the Christians at Rome had heard about us. They came to places called the Market Place of Appius and the Three Hotels. There they met us. When Paul saw them, he thanked God. It made him strong and glad to see these brothers. **16** When we came to Rome, Paul was allowed to stay in a house by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

Paul preaches in Rome

17 After three days, Paul called for the leaders of the Jews at Rome. When they had come, he said to them, 'My brothers, I have done nothing against our people. I have obeyed the laws of our fathers. And yet I was made a prisoner at Jerusalem and was given over to the Romans. **18** When the Romans judged my case in court, they wanted to let me go free. They said there was no reason to kill me. **19** But the Jewish leaders did not agree to let me go free, so I had to ask to be brought before Caesar. I did not have anything to say against my people. **20** Now, here is why I have asked to see you and to talk to you. I am a prisoner tied with chains because I believe the same promise the Jews believe.' **21** They said to him, 'The people of Judea have not written us any letter about you. When our

brother Jews have come here, not one of them has told or said anything wrong about you. **22** But we want to hear from you what you think. We know that people everywhere are talking against this Christian group.'

23 So they chose a certain day. On that day many of them came to the house where Paul was staying. He told them about God's kingdom. He tried to make them understand about Jesus by the things that were written in the law of Moses and in the books of the prophets. He talked from morning until evening. **24** Some of the people were ready to believe what he said, but others did not believe. **25** They did not agree among themselves. So they started to go away.

But before they left, Paul said one more thing. 'What the Holy Spirit said was right. He spoke to your fathers long ago through Isaiah, the prophet of God. **26** He said, "Go to these people and say, 'You will hear but never understand. You will look but never see. **27** The hearts of these people have become hard. They do not hear with their ears. They have shut their eyes. They do not want to see with their eyes. They do not want to hear with their ears. They do not want to understand with their hearts. If they did, they would turn back to me and I would forgive them.'"

28 Paul said, 'Therefore know this. The message that God will save them has been sent to those who were not Jews. They will listen to it.' **29** When Paul had said these words, the Jewish leaders went away. They were talking amongst themselves about these things.

30 Paul stayed in Rome for two whole years in a house he paid money to live in. He was glad to see all who came to him. **31** He told them about God's kingdom and taught them about the Lord Jesus Christ. He did this freely without fear. No one stopped him.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Paul was a great teacher in the first days of the Christian church. He wrote this letter to the Christians who lived in Rome. This was the chief city in those days. Paul had never been there. He wanted to give the Christians some good teaching. They had some wrong ideas. Some of them wanted to keep only to the old Jewish rules. In this letter, Paul shows that they are wrong. Christians must trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This is the only way to be put right with God. We should all learn to follow him and not a set of rules.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ. He called me to be an apostle and to tell God's good news. **2** Through his prophets long ago God promised this good news to people, in the holy writings. **3** The good news was about his Son.

He is Jesus Christ our Lord. He was a man born in David's family. **4** He came alive from death. That showed he was God's Son. He had God's power. God's Holy Spirit did all this.

5 This same Jesus Christ was kind to me. And he made me an apostle. I am sent in his name so that people in all nations will obey him. **6** You are some of them. You were called to belong to Jesus Christ.

7 I send greetings to all the Christians who live in the city of Rome. God loves you and has called you to be his people.

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you. In their kindness may they give you peace.

Paul wants to visit Rome

People in all the world have heard that you believe. I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you. **9** God knows that I always talk to him about you. I worship him in my heart while I tell the good news about his Son. **10** I ask God that in some way now I may be able to visit you, if he wishes me to do it. **11** I want very much to see you. I want to give you some gift from the Holy Spirit to make you stronger. **12** I mean to say that we will both be helped. I will be helped because you believe, and you will be helped because I believe. **13** My brothers, I want you to know that I have often planned to come to you. But something has stopped me until now. I planned to come so that I might see good things happen among you. I have done this in the other nations which are not Jewish. **14** This is something I must do for the Greek people and for all other people. I must do it for people who

are wise and for people who are not wise. **15** That is why I want so much to tell the good news to you people in the city of Rome also.

The power of the good news

16 I am not ashamed of the good news of Jesus Christ. The good news is the power God uses to save everyone who believes. The good news was for the Jews first, but also for those who are not Jews. **17** The good news shows how God puts a person right. God puts a person right when that person believes in his Son and keeps on believing. The holy writings say, 'A person who is put right because he believes, will live for ever.'

People are not right with God

18 God is angry. He has shown it from heaven. He is angry because of all the bad and wrong things people do. These people hold back God's truth by the wrong things they do. **19** They know about God. God himself has shown them. **20** People cannot see that God has power which lasts for ever. They cannot see that he is really God. But ever since he made the world, he has clearly shown this by the things he made. So they cannot say, 'I did not know about God.' **21** Even though they knew he was God, they did not worship him as God. They did not thank him. Their thoughts were no good. Their foolish minds became dark. **22** They said they were wise people, but they were foolish people. **23** They did not worship God who cannot die. But they worshipped things made to look like a man who does die. They worshipped things made to look like birds and animals and snakes. **24** So God left them to do the things their hearts wanted to do. They did the things that are not right to do with their bodies. They did not respect their own bodies. **25** They would not believe what was true about God. They believed a lie. They worshipped and worked for something that was made by God. They did not worship God - God who made all things. He is the one to worship for ever. Amen. May it be so!

26 That is why God left them to do the wrong things they wanted to do. Their women left the right way for women and did things that are wrong for women to do. **27** Their men also left the right way with women. They wanted to have sex with one another. They did wrong things with other men. Their own bodies were punished because of the wrong things they did.

28 They did not want to know God. So he left them to their wrong thoughts and to do things that are not right. **29** They were very bad. They did every kind of wrong thing. They were greedy. They hated people. They were very jealous. They killed many people. They fought. They fooled people. They told lies about people. They carried stories from one person to another. **30** They said wrong things about people. They hated God. They did not respect people. They were proud. They talked big. They even thought of new wrong things to do. They did not obey their parents. **31** They were foolish. They did not do what they said they would do. They did not love people. They were not kind. **32** They know that God says that people who do such things should die. Even so, they not only do them, but they praise other people who do them.

CHAPTER 2

God will judge people

Do you judge another people? You yourselves have done wrong things. So when you judge others, you judge yourselves, because you do the same things. You judge them and yet you do the same things.

2 We know that God judges people who do such things. And he judges them by what is true. **3** Man, you judge people who do such things and yet you do them yourself. Do you think that God will not judge you? **4** Or do you not respect him for being kind, very patient, and for waiting a long time? Do you not know that God is kind, and he wants to lead you away from doing wrong things? **5** But your hearts are hard. You will not stop. That is why God will be angry with you. He will be angry on the day when people will see that he judges in the right way. **6** He will pay every man for what he has done. **7** He will give life for ever to people who keep on doing good. These people want to have glory and honour from God, and to live for ever. **8** But God will be very angry with the people who think of themselves first before others. They do not obey what is right. They do wrong things.

9 Every one who does what is wrong will have much trouble and a hard time. This will happen to the Jews first, then to those who are not Jews. **10** And everyone who does what is good, will be made great. He will have honour and peace. This will happen to the Jews first and then to those who are not Jews. **11** God does not love some people more than others.

12 All those who do not know the law [of God given to Moses] and did what was wrong, will die. But they will not be judged by the law. All those who know the law and did what was wrong will be judged by the law. **13** (God does not say people are good because they have heard the law. But people who obey the law will be called good people. **14** Some people do not have the law. But they do what the law says because their own hearts tell them to. They have a law of their own, even though they do not know the law. **15** They show that the law is written in their hearts. They know what is right to do and what is wrong to do. Their own thoughts tell them they have done what is wrong or what is not wrong.) **16** This will be on the day when God judges the things men have kept secret. Jesus Christ will be the judge. That is part of the good news I tell people.

The Jews and the law

17 But you call yourselves Jews. You believe the law. You are proud of your God. **18** You know what he wants people to do. You know the thoughts that are good because you have been taught the law. **19** You are sure that you can lead people who are like blind men. You are like a light for people who are in the dark. **20** You are sure that you can tell foolish people what is right. You can teach people who are like children. You know what you need to know and you know what is true because you have the law.

21 You teach another person. Do you not teach yourself? You say people must not steal. Do you steal? **22** You say people must not commit adultery. Do you commit adultery? You hate idols. Do you steal things from the houses of idols? **23** You are proud that you have the law. Do you break the law, and in that way show you do not honour God? **24** The holy writings say, 'People who are not Jews say wrong things about the name of God. They do it because of what you Jews do.'

Circumcision of the heart

25 Circumcision of the body is a good thing if you obey the law. But if you break the law, you are like a man who has not been circumcised with this mark of the Jew. **26** So if a man who has not been circumcised obeys the law, will he not be like a man who has been circumcised? **27** Some people have not been circumcised, but they obey the law. They will show that you should be punished. You have the written law and you have been circumcised, and yet you break the law. **28** If a person is a Jew only on the outside, he is not really a Jew. And true circumcision is not something that is done on the outside of the body. **29** If a person is a Jew inside, he is really a Jew. It is God who praises him, not people. True circumcision is done in the heart. It is in the spirit, not in the body. Such people are not praised; but God praises them.

CHAPTER 3

Then what does a Jew have that others do not have? Or what good is it if a person has been circumcised? **2** It is much better in every way. First, God's law was given to the Jews. **3** But some Jews did not keep his law. Does that mean that God cannot be trusted? **4** No, it does not mean that. God must be true, even if every man is not true. The holy writings say this about God: 'People will see that you are right in what you say. You will be without fault when you are judged.'

5 When we do wrong things, we show that God is right. What shall we say about that? Does God do wrong when he punishes us? (I speak the way people would think about it.) **6** No, he does not. If he did wrong, how could he judge the world?

7 Maybe I say what is not true. And that makes people praise God more because he is true. Then why does God still judge me and say I have done wrong? **8** Some people say wrong things about us. They say that we say, 'Let us do wrong things so that good things will happen.' People who say such things should be punished.

No one is good

9 So what shall we say? Are we Jews any better than other people? No, we are not! I have already shown that all men, both Jews and people who are not Jews have done wrong things. **10** The holy writings say, 'No one is good. No, not one person. **11** No one is wise.

No one wants to know God. **12** They all have turned away from the straight road. Together they have gone the wrong way. No one does good, not even one person! **13** Their mouth is like an open grave. They have used their tongues to fool people. The poison of bad snakes is under their lips. **14** Their mouths are full of cursing and saying bad words to people. **15** Their feet run quickly to kill people. **16** Death and trouble are on the ways they go. **17** They do not know the way of peace. **18** They do not fear God.'

19 We know that everything the law says, it says to the people who have the law. Then no one can say a word for themselves. All the people in the world will be brought to God to be judged. **20** No one will be put right with God because he has tried to obey the law. The law only makes people know what they have done wrong.

How people are made good

21 So now God has shown how people can be put right with him without the law. The law and the prophets said he would do it. **22** God puts people right with himself when they believe in Jesus Christ. He does this for all who believe. They are all alike. **23** All have done wrong and all are far from being as good as God. **24** But God is kind and makes them right with himself. It is a gift. He does it because Christ Jesus paid the price to set them free. **25** God gave him as a sacrifice. When people believe in him, his blood pays for the wrong things they have done. This shows that God is good and right. He was right when he forgave the wrong things that people did long ago. **26** God also shows that he is right now. He does this when he makes right any person who believes in Jesus.

27 Then what have we to be proud of? Nothing at all. Why not? Does God put us right with himself because of anything we have done? No. He does it because we believe. **28** We know that if a person believes in Christ, God makes him right again. It is not because that person has obeyed the law.

29 Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of other people also? Yes, he is. There is only one God of all peoples. **30** He will put right people who have been circumcised [the Jews] because they believe. And he will also put right people who are not circumcised when they believe. **31** When we believe, does that make the law no good to us? No. That is not so. When we believe, we show that the law is right.

CHAPTER 4**The example of Abraham**

So what shall we say about Abraham? He is the father of our family on earth. **2** If Abraham was put right with God, because of what he did, he has something to be proud of. But he has nothing to be proud of when he stands before God. **3** What do the holy writings say? It says, 'Abraham believed God. And God said that he was a good man.' **4** When a person works, his pay is not a gift to him. His pay belongs to him. **5** But no person can work to put himself right with God. It is God alone who makes a bad person right. The one who believes in him - even a bad person is put right.

6 David also says that God blesses a man. God calls him a good man but not because he has kept the law. **7** David said, 'God blesses people who have been forgiven the wrong things they have done. God covers over the wrong things they have done.' **8** The Lord blesses people when he forgets the wrong things they have done.' **9** Does God bless only people who have been circumcised? Or does he also bless those who are not? We say, because Abraham believed God, God called him a good man. His faith made him right with God. **10** When did God say that? Was it when Abraham was circumcised? Or was it before? It was not when he was circumcised: it was before. **11** Abraham was circumcised as a sign. It was a sign that he was a good man, because he believed when he was not yet circumcised. That makes him the father of all people who believe, even those who are not circumcised. God says they are good people. **12** That makes him also the father of those who are circumcised. I mean people who are circumcised and do as our father Abraham did. Even when he was not circumcised, he believed.

Abraham believed God's promise

13 God promised Abraham and his family that the world would belong to them. God did not make the promise because Abraham obeyed the law. But he made the promise because Abraham believed him and was put right with God. **14** If the world will belong to people who obey the law, it is of no use to believe God. And the promise is no good. **15** Because of the law, God is angry. Where there is no law, no one breaks the law.

16 That is why people must believe. Because God is kind, he makes the promise sure for all of

Abraham's children. The promise is for those who have the law and also for those who believe as Abraham did. He is the father of us all. **17** the holy writings say, 'I have made you the father of many nations.'

Abraham was made the father of many nations by God. He believed God. He believed that God could make dead people live. He believed God when he said that things were true even though they had not happened yet. **18** Abraham believed and hoped, though there was nothing to give him hope. He believed that he would become the father of many nations. God had told him this would happen. **19** He did not stop believing when he thought about his own body. It was almost dead. He was about one hundred years old. He did not stop believing when he thought about Sarah, even though she had never given birth to any children. **20** He did not stop believing God's promise. He believed God very much. He did not praise God for his own faith, but for God's promise. **21** He was sure that God was able to do what he had promised to do. **22** He was put right with God because he believed the promise. **23** The holy writings do not say that for Abraham only. **24** They say it for us too. God will say we are put right if we believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from death. **25** He was killed because we did wrong things. He was raised from death in order that we might be made right with God.

CHAPTER 5**What happens when God makes people good**

We are made good people and put right with God when we believe in Jesus Christ. So now we have peace with God because of what our Lord Jesus Christ did. **2** Because we believe, Christ has brought us to the place where God can do us good. We are in that place now. We are very happy because we have the hope that we shall see God's greatness. **3** And not only is that true, but we are very happy in our troubles, because we know that trouble makes us stronger. **4** When we are strong to take trouble, we prove that we believe. When we prove that we believe, we have hope. **5** We will not be disappointed by this hope. God has given us the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit has put God's love in our hearts.

6 We could not help ourselves. So at the right time, Christ died to save us bad people.

7 Almost no one would die to save even a good

man. But perhaps someone would die to save a very good man. **8** God shows his love for us in this way: Christ died to save us while we were bad people. **9** The blood of Christ has now put us right with God. So even more, he will save us from God's strong anger. **10** When we were enemies, the death of his Son brought us back to God. Now that we are made right with God, it is the life of Jesus that will save us. **11** Not only is that true, but it is through our Lord Jesus Christ that we can enjoy God. This is for all who have been brought back to God by him.

Adam and Christ

12 One man [Adam] did a wrong thing. And the wrong thing he did made him die. So all men die because all have done wrong things. **13** People in the world were not right with God before he gave the law. But wrong things are not punished when there is no law. **14** Yet death ruled over people from Adam's time to Moses' time. It even ruled over the people who were not as wrong as Adam. Adam was like a person who would come later.

15 But the free gift is not like the wrong thing. Many people died because one man did a wrong thing. This is sure. God was very kind and he gave a free gift. This gift was given to many people because one man, Jesus Christ, did a very kind thing. **16** The free gift is not like the wrong thing one man did. Because of that one man people were judged. And they were punished. Because many people did wrong things, God gave his free gift and many people were made right with him. **17** One man did a wrong thing. And so death ruled over people because of that one man. God has been kind to people and given them his free gift. That gift is to make people right with God. People who take that gift will live and rule because of one man, Jesus Christ.

18 One man did a wrong thing. And so all people were punished through him. But Christ did the right thing. And so all people can have the free gift of life through being put right with God. **19** One man did not obey. And so many people were bad people. One man obeyed. And so many people will be made right with God. **20** When the law came, it showed how wrong people really were. But when people were really bad, God was even more kind. **21** The wrong things people did ruled over them, and they died. Now God has been very kind. He has made people right with him. So now God's blessing will rule over them, and they will live

for ever. Jesus Christ our Lord has done this for them.

CHAPTER 6

Death stopped our wrong ways

What shall we say then? Shall we keep on doing wrong things so that God will be more kind to us? **2** No, surely not! We died to our wrong ways and no longer live in them. **3** All of us have been baptised in water. This means we are joined to Christ Jesus. We were baptised into his death. Do you know that? **4** We were buried when he was buried because we were baptised into his death. Christ was raised from death by the wonderful power of the Father. So we also must live a new life. **5** Have we shared with Christ and died as he died? Then we shall share with him by rising from death as he arose. **6** We know this is true. The old person we used to be was nailed to the cross with him, so that our bodies which do wrong things would die. Then we will no longer be like slaves to the wrong things we used to do. **7** Anyone who has died no longer does wrong things. **8** If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. **9** We know that Christ was raised from death and will not die again. Death has no power over him anymore. **10** He died. And he died once for all time, so that people would stop their wrong ways. But now he lives. And he lives for God.

11 So you also must think you are dead, and stop your wrong ways. And you must think you are living for God along with Christ Jesus our Lord.

12 Do not let wrong things rule over your bodies that are going to die. Do not do the things your bodies want. **13** Do not use your bodies to do wrong things. But give yourselves to God like men who have been raised from death to life. Give your bodies to God and use them to do good things. **14** Wrong ways will not be your masters. The law does not rule over you now, but God's loving kindness rules over you.

Slaves to what is right

15 What then? The law does not rule over us now. God's loving kindness rules over us. So, shall we do wrong things? No, never! **16** If you give yourselves to be slaves and obey your master, you are not free. You are his slaves. Do you not know this: you may be slaves to wrong things? But you will not live for ever. Or you may be slaves to obey God. Then you will be

made good people and live with him. **17** You were at one time slaves to wrong things. But I praise God that you obeyed what your teachers taught you. And you obeyed because you wanted to obey. **18** You were made free from doing wrong things. You were made slaves to good things. **19** I speak the way people would think about such things, because your minds are weak. At one time you gave your bodies to be slaves to your unclean ways, and to do more and more wrong things. So now give your bodies to be slaves to doing what is right, and to being good. **20** When you were slaves to wrong things, you were free from doing good things. **21** You are now ashamed of those things. What good did they do you? For the end of those things is death. **22** But now you have been made free from wrong ways and you have been made God's slaves. You are made good and you will live for ever. **23** The reward that wrong ways give is to die. But the gift which God gives is to live for ever. Christ Jesus our Lord has done this for us.

CHAPTER 7

It is like marriage also

My brothers, I am saying this to you people who know the law. Do you not know that the law is master over a person only while he lives? **2** A married woman belongs to her husband by law as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law that made her belong to her husband. **3** So if she belongs to another man while her husband is living, she commits adultery. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law. Then if she belongs to another man, she does not commit adultery. **4** In the same way my brothers, you died when Christ died. And you are free from the law. Now you belong to another person. You belong to the one who has been raised from death. Because of that, we are able to do what God wants us to do. **5** One time we lived in the way our bodies wanted to live. The law made us think about doing wrong things. And we did things that made us die. **6** But now we have been made free from the law. We died, and so we are no longer slaves to the one who was our master. Now we are slaves to God in our new life. This new life is ruled by the Spirit. We do not work for the old written law.

Wrong things in people's hearts

7 So what shall we say? Shall we say that the law is bad? No! I would not have known what is

wrong if there had been no law. The law says, 'Do not want to take other people's things.' That is how I know it is wrong to want another person's things. **8** My wrong ways used the law to make me want all kinds of things. When there is no law, the thing within me that wants to do wrong is dead. **9** Once I had no law, and I lived. But when the law came, that which wanted to do wrong things came to life, and I died. **10** The same law which was meant to make a person live, made me die. **11** My wrong ways used the law to fool me and kill me.

12 So the law is holy. And what the law says is holy and right and good. **13** So did that good thing make me die? No. The wrong things I did made me die, because that good thing showed they were wrong. And the law shows that the wrong things are very, very bad. **14** We know that the law came from the Holy Spirit. But I am a weak man. I have been sold like a slave to do wrong things. **15** I do not know why I do the things I do. I do not do what I want to do. But I do the things I hate. **16** And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. **17** So now it is no longer I who do it, but my wrong ways in me. **18** I know that no good thing lives in me. I mean, no good thing lives in my body. I want to do what is good, but I cannot do it. **19** I do not do the good thing I want to do, but I do the wrong thing that I do not want to do. **20** If I do the thing I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but the wrong thing in me that does it.

21 So there is a law I find that it is at work in me. When I want to do what is right, I can only do what is wrong. **22** In my own mind I am glad to obey the law of God. **23** But I see that in my body there is another law fighting against the law in my mind. And that makes me like a prisoner to the law of wrong things in my body. **24** I am a very sad man. Who will save me from this body that will make me die? **25** Thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord who will do it!

So this is the way it is. In my mind I am a slave to do the law of God, but in my body I am a slave to do the law of wrong things.

CHAPTER 8

Living in the Spirit

So now those who belong to Christ Jesus will not be judged. **2** The Spirit gives life in Christ Jesus. And the law of the Spirit has set me free from the law of wrong things, and the law of death. **3** God has done what the law could not

do. The things people did made the law weak. God sent his own Son in a body of man. His body was like the bodies which others use to do wrong things. He sent him because people have done wrong things. And he judged the wrong things people have done in their bodies. **4** He did this so that we might be good people as the law said we should be. We are good people if we live the way the Spirit wants us to live, not the way our bodies want to live. **5** Some people live the way their bodies want to live. They think only about the things their bodies want to do. Other people live the way the Spirit wants them to live. They think about the things the Spirit wants them to do. **6** If you keep your mind on the things your bodies want to do, you will die. But if you keep your mind on the things the Spirit wants, you will live and have peace. **7** People who think about the things of this life are God's enemies. They do not obey God's law. They cannot obey it. **8** People who do what their bodies want cannot please God. **9** Does God's Spirit live in you? If he does, then you are not living the way the body wants, but you are living the way the Spirit wants. If anyone does not have Christ's Spirit, he does not belong to Christ. **10** But if Christ is in you, your bodies are dead because of the wrong things you have done. But your spirits live because you have been made right with God. **11** God raised Christ Jesus from death. Does God's Spirit live in you? Then God will also give life to your bodies which die. He does this through his Spirit who lives in you.

12 So, my brothers, we must not live the way our bodies want us to live. We must not be ruled by our wrong ways. **13** If you live the way your bodies want to live, you will die. But if, by the help of the Spirit, you stop doing the wrong things your bodies want to do, you will live. **14** All who do what God's Spirit leads them to do are God's sons. **15** The Holy Spirit you have received does not make you a slave again so that you are afraid. But the Spirit you have received makes you sons of God. **16** So we say, 'Father! Father!' The Spirit himself also, along with our own spirits, tells us that we are God's children. **17** If we are his children, God will give us the good things that children receive. He will give us these blessings along with Christ. He will give it to us if we suffer with Christ. If we suffer with Christ, we will also be made great with him. **18** I think that the troubles we have in this life are nothing when we think of the great things

that we shall have. **19** The whole world is waiting for the time when the sons of God will be seen. **20** The world was spoiled. It did not want to be spoiled, but God allowed it. **21** And it hoped to be free like God's children when they are made great. **22** We know that the whole world has been crying. It has had much pain until now. **23** And not the world only, but we ourselves also cry out. We have the first blessing God gives of his Spirit. But we cry out in our hearts. We are waiting for God to finish making us his sons. Then our bodies will be set free. **24** That is what we hoped for when we were saved. When the thing hoped for is seen, there is no more hoping. When a person sees a thing, how can he hope for it? **25** But if we hope for something we do not see, we keep on waiting for it.

26 Also the Spirit helps us because we are weak. We do not know how we should talk to God. But the Spirit himself talks to God for us, while we cry and cannot say any words. **27** God looks to see what is in people's hearts. And he knows what the Spirit is going to do. The Spirit talks to God for God's people. And he asks for them what God wants them to have.

A great victory

28 We know that God works out everything for the good of those who love him. They are the people who are part of his plan. **29** He knew all along that he would choose them. He chose them to be made like his Son. Then his Son would be the first one of many brothers. **30** He chose them and he also called them. He called them to himself as if they had never been bad people. He made them right with himself and he also made them great in heaven. **31** So what shall we say about this? If God is on our side, who can be against us? **32** He did not keep his own Son, but gave him up for us all. Because he has given him to us, will he not also give us all other things? **33** Who will say anything against God's chosen people? For it is God himself who says they have been put right with him. **34** Who will say they are not right? Jesus Christ died. Yes, he was raised from death. He is at the right side of God. And he talks to God for us.

35 Who can take us away from Christ's love? We may have trouble. We may have hard times. People may make us suffer because we believe. We may have no food to eat and no clothes to wear. We may be in danger. We may be killed with big knives. Can any of these things take us away from Christ's love? **36** The holy writings

say, 'For your sake we are killed all day. We are like sheep ready to be killed.'

37 But Christ loved us. He has helped us to win great victory in all these things. **38-39** I know this. Death, life, angels, rulers, things happening now, things that will happen, high things, low things; nothing else in all the world can come between us and God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER 9

Israel is chosen

What I say is true and Christ knows it is. I do not tell a lie. My heart tells me it is true. And the Holy Spirit knows this. **2** I am very sad. I am always troubled. **3** I could almost wish I were taken away from Christ for the sake of my brothers, the people of my own nation. **4** They are Jews. God gave them the right to be his sons. He showed them how great he is. He made agreements with them. He gave them the law. He told them how to worship him. He gave them the promises. **5** The great men were their fathers. Christ was born a Jew. He is God over all. Praise him for ever! Yes, he is!

6 God will do what he said he would do. Not all who are Jews belong to the real Israel. **7** Not all the people in Abraham's family are his children. But the holy writings say, 'It is Isaac's family who will be called your family.' **8** This means that not all who were born in Abraham's family are God's children. God promised Abraham a son [Isaac]. His children [the Jews] are the ones that God called Abraham's true family. **9** For this is what God promised, 'About this time next year I will come and Sarah shall have a son.'

10 And that is not all. Rebecca also had children. Their father was Isaac, our father.

11 When the children were not yet born, they had done nothing good or bad. God chooses the people he wants. He does not choose people because of what they have done. He chooses people who will answer his call. **12** So he said to Rebecca, 'The older one will be a slave of the younger one.' **13** The holy writings also say, 'I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau.'

14 So what shall we say? Does God do what is not right? No, never! **15** He says to Moses, 'I will be kind to a person if I choose to be kind to him. I will share in the suffering of others if I choose to be sorry for them.' **16** God is not kind to a person because the person wants God to be kind to him. God is not kind to him because the

person runs to him to ask him for help. God is kind because he chooses to be kind. **17** In the holy writings it says to Pharaoh, 'That is why I made you live. I wanted to show my power through you. I wanted people to know about me all over the earth.'

18 So God is kind to any person if he wants to be kind to him. And God makes a man's heart hard if he wants to do that.

19 So you will ask me, 'Why does God still blame us? Who can fight against what God has planned?' **20** But you are only a man. Will you tell God what to do? Can the pot say to the man who made it, 'Why did you make me like this?'

21 The person who makes pots has power over the mud. He can make two different pots out of one pile of mud. One pot will be fine and another will not be fine. Can the potter not make them so? **22** God has a right to be very angry if he wants to be. He has the right to show his power. God was very angry with some people who deserved to die. And yet he waited a long time before he did anything to them. **23** He did it to show how very great he is. He was kind to some people. He planned for them to be made great. **24** That means he also called us. He called not only those who are Jews, but also those who are not Jews. **25** In the book written long ago by the prophet Hosea, God says 'They were not my people. But I will call them "my people". I did not love her, but I will call her "the one I love."' **26** And in the very place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," they will be called "sons of the living God".'

27 Isaiah the prophet of God said long ago about Israel, 'Even if the people of Israel are as many as the sand by the sea, only some of them will be saved. **28** The Lord will do what he said he will do on the earth. He will do it all and do it soon.' **29** And Isaiah also said, 'The Lord who has power, left some of our children. If he had not, we would have been like Sodom. We would have been destroyed like Gomorrah.'

Being good by believing

30 So what shall we say? The people who are not Jews have been put right with God. They did nothing to make themselves right with God. But they were put right because they believed God.

31 But the Jews tried to obey the law that could make them good people. But they did not obey it all. **32** Why was that? They did not trust in God. They only trusted in doing the things of the law. They therefore hit their feet on the

stone on which men hit their feet. **33** That is what the holy writings say, 'I put in Zion a stone on which people will hit their feet. It is a rock that will make them fall down. Anyone who believes in him will not be ashamed.'

CHAPTER 10

My brothers, with all my heart I want the Jews to be saved. And I ask God to save them. **2** I can say this about them, they want very much to obey God. But they do not know the right way. **3** They did not know the way God makes people right with him. They tried to make themselves good people. So they did not obey God's way to become right with him. **4** Christ has made an end to the law as a way of getting right with God. Everyone who believes in him is put right with God.

5 Moses wrote this: 'A man who obeys the law will live by it.' **6** But the holy writings also speak about those who are put right by believing: 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will go up into heaven?"' (That means, 'Who will go up to heaven to bring Christ down?') **7** 'Do not say, "Who will go down into the hole that has no bottom?"' (That means, 'Who will go down to bring Christ up from the dead people?') **8** But what do the holy writings say? They say, 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.' That means, the word to believe which we tell people. **9** If you say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and if you believe in your heart that God has raised Christ from death, you will be saved. **10** A person believes with his heart, and he is made right with God. He speaks with his mouth and so is saved from his wrong ways. **11** The holy writings say, 'Anyone who believes in him will not be let down.'

Jews and other people are alike

12 The Jews and other people are alike. The same Lord is Lord of all people. He richly blesses all who call out to him. **13** The holy writings say, 'Everyone who calls out to the Lord will be saved.' **14** But how can people call someone if they have not believed in him? And how can they believe in him if they have not heard about him? And how can they hear about him if no one tells them about him? **15** And how can people tell about him if no one sends them?

The holy writings say, 'How good are the feet of those who bring the good news of peace and happiness.'

16 But they have not all obeyed the good news. It is as Isaiah said it would be, 'Lord, who has believed what we have told them?'

17 So people believe because they hear. They hear because people tell them about Christ.

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Yes, they have. The holy writings say, 'Their voice has gone out all over the earth. And their words have gone out all over the world.'

19 But I ask, did not the Jews know? First the book of Moses says, 'I will make you jealous through people who are not a nation like the Jews. I will make you angry through people who do not even know or understand these things.'

20 But the book of Isaiah says even stronger words. 'The people who did not look for me have found me. I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.'

21 But he says about the Jews, 'All day I held out my hands to a people who did not obey me, who said wrong things against me.'

CHAPTER 11

The chosen Jews

So I ask, has God left his people? No, he has not! I myself am a Jew. I was born in Abraham's family. I belong to the tribe of Benjamin. **2** God has not left his people whom he knew from the first. Do you not know what the holy writings say about the prophet Elijah? He talked to God against the people of Israel. **3** He said, 'Lord, they have killed your prophets. They have pulled down your holy places. I am the only one that is left, and they are trying to kill me.' **4** But what did God answer him? He said, 'I have seven thousand men who have not kneeled down to the idol god Baal.' **5** So now some are left because God was kind to them, and chose them. **6** But if it was a gift because he was kind to them, then it was no longer because of the things they did. Or else a gift would no longer be a gift.

7 So what does that mean? The Jews did not get what they tried to get. Only the people God chose got it. The hearts of the rest of the people became hard. **8** The holy writings say, 'God made them dull with sleep. He gave them eyes that could not see, and ears that could not hear. They have been like that until today.'

9 And David said long ago, 'May the table where they eat be like a net and like a trap. May it make them fall down. May it punish them.'

10 Make their eyes become blind so that they cannot see. Make their backs bent all the time.'

People who are not Jews will be saved

11 So I ask, 'Have their feet been caught so that they have really fallen down?' No. But because they began to fall, the people who are not Jews were told how to be saved. That would make the Jews jealous. **12** The people who are not Jews have been richly blessed because the Jews failed. So it will be even better for them when the Jews no longer fail God.

13 Now I say this to you who are not Jews. I am an apostle to those who are not Jews, so I think highly of the work I have been sent to do.

14 I want the people of my own nation, the Jews, to be jealous. Then I may be able to save some of them. **15** God turned away from the Jews in order to bring the world back to himself. Then if that is true, when he takes the Jews back to himself, will not that be like making dead people live?

The story of an olive tree

16 If the first piece of bread is holy, so is all the rest which came from the same bread mix. If the root of a tree is holy, the branches are holy also.

17 Maybe some of the tree's branches were broken off. And you, a branch from a wild olive tree, were made to grow on the tree among the branches. You then have the good water that comes from the root of the olive tree. **18** But do not think that you are better than the tree's own branches. If you do, remember it is not you that holds the root in place. But it is the root that holds you. **19** Then you will say, 'The branches were broken off so that I might be joined to the tree.' **20** That is true. They were broken off because they did not believe. And you have your place only because you believe.

So do not be proud, but fear. **21** If God punished the tree's own branches, he will punish you also. **22** See how kind God is. And see how hard he is. He is hard on those who have fallen. But God is kind to you if you go on following in his ways. If you do not, you also will be broken off. **23** God will also put back the other branches if they believe. God is able to put the Jews back where they belong. **24** You were cut off from a wild olive tree. And you were put on a good olive tree. That is not the way trees grow. But it can be done. And so, even more, the Jewish branches will be put back on their own olive tree.

God will bring back the Jews

25 My brothers, I want you to know something that has been a secret. Then you will not be proud of yourselves. The secret is this. Some Jews will have hard hearts until the right number of other people have come in. **26** Then all the Jews will be saved. The holy writings say, 'Someone will come from Zion to save people. He will take away the wrong ways of our father Jacob.' **27** This will be my agreement with them when I take away the wrong things they have done.

28 The Jews make themselves enemies of God because they do not want the good news of Jesus Christ. That helps you since the good news has then come to you. But God still loves the Jews because of the promise he made to their fathers long ago. **29** God does not change his gifts or his call to people. **30** At one time you did not obey God. But now he has been kind to you because the Jews did not obey him. **31** So now, they also have not obeyed him. But he will also be kind to them because he was kind to you. **32** God allowed people to disobey him. He did it so that he might be kind and forgive all people.

33 God is very kind. He is very wise. He knows much. No one can understand why he judges the way he does. No one can find out why he does the things he does. **34** The holy writings say, 'Who has known what the Lord thinks? Who has ever told him what to do? **35** Who has given a gift to God first, so that God would give him something also?'

36 All things come from God, through God, and return to God. Praise him for ever! Yes, it is so!

CHAPTER 12

What Christians should do

God has been kind to you. So I ask you, brothers, give your bodies to him like a living sacrifice. That is, a holy sacrifice. It will please God. And it is what you should do for him. **2** Do not be like the people of this world, but have a new mind. Then you will prove for yourselves what God wants you to do. That will be good. It will please God. And it will be all right.

3 God has given me this gift. So I say this to every one of you. Do not think you are better than you really are. But think of yourself as you are. You are what you are because God has given you something when you believed. **4** In a body there are many parts, but all the parts do

not do the same thing. **5** In the same way, we are many people. But we are one body because we are all joined together in Christ. Each one of us is a part of all the others. **6** We have different gifts because God has blessed us in different ways. If a person can speak words from God, he must say what he believes he should say. **7** If a person can help others, he must help others. If a person can teach, he must teach. **8** If a person can talk to others, he must talk to others. If a person can give something, he must give it gladly. If a person can be a leader, he must try to be a good leader. If a person can help someone, he must do it gladly.

9 Your love must be real love. Hate what is wrong. Hold to what is good. **10** Love one another very much, like brothers. Honour other people more than you honour yourself. **11** Do not hold back in what you do. Let the Spirit burn in you. Work hard for the Lord. **12** Be very happy because you have a hope. Be strong when you have trouble. Keep on talking with God. **13** Give to God's people who need it. Be glad to take care of strangers in your house.

14 Bless those who do wrong things to you. Bless them. Do not curse them. **15** Be happy with people who are happy. Cry with people who cry. **16** Agree with one another. Do not be proud, but be friends with anybody. Do not think you are wiser than you are. **17** When people do wrong things to you, do not do wrong things to them also. But try to do good things for all people. **18** As much as you can, live in peace with everyone.

19 My dear brothers, do not punish people who do wrong to you. But let God's anger punish them. In the holy writings the Lord says, 'I myself will punish people. If they have done wrong things, I will do wrong things to them also.'

20 But, 'If your enemy is hungry, give him food. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. When you do that, it will be as if you put a pile of coals from the fire on his head.' **21** Do not let wrong things win a victory over you. But win a victory over wrong things by the good things you do.

CHAPTER 13

Obey your rulers

Every person must obey the rulers over him. Every ruler has his power from God. And the rulers are put there by God. **2** So anyone who

fights against the ruler, fights against what God put there. And those who fight will be punished. **3** The rulers do not bring fear to a good man, but they bring fear to a bad man. If you do not want to be afraid of a ruler, do what is good and he will praise you. **4** Such a person is God's servant and will do what is good for you. But if you do what is wrong, you should fear him. He has great power and he will use it. He is God's servant and will punish those who do wrong.

5 So you must obey, not only because of the punishment, but because you know it is right.

6 That is why you also pay taxes. The rulers serve God and they give all their time to their work. **7** Pay them all that they should have. Pay taxes to the person who should have the taxes. Pay money to the person who should have the money. Respect the people who should be respected. Honour a person who should be honoured.

8 Do not have any debts, but love each other. Anyone who loves his neighbour has done all that the law says we should do.

9 The law says, 'Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not want things that belong to other people.' These laws and others are all in this one law: 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' **10** Anyone who loves his neighbour will do no wrong to him. So love does all that the law says to do. **11** In all this you know what a special time it is. It is time now for you to wake up from your sleep. The time when we will be saved is nearer to us now than when we first believed. **12** The night is almost past. Morning is near. Let us stop doing the wrong things people do in the dark. Let us do the good things that people do in the light. **13** Let us live in the right way like people who are in the light. We must not take part in noisy feasting with dancing, or get drunk. We must not do any kind of wrong thing with sex. We must not quarrel or be jealous. **14** But you must take the Lord Jesus Christ into your hearts. And do not plan to do the wrong things your bodies want to do.

CHAPTER 14

People who do not believe alike

Be ready to take a person into the church even if he does not know and believe all you believe. Do not judge what he thinks about things.

People who do not eat meat

2 One person believes he may eat anything. Another person, who does not believe that, eats

only things that grow in the garden. **3** The one who eats anything must not despise the one who does not eat everything. And the one who does not eat must not judge the person who does. God has accepted him as he is.

4 Why do you judge another person's servant? He stands or he falls before his own master. But he will stand because the Lord can give him power to stand.

5 One man thinks, 'This day is better than that day.' But another man thinks, 'All days are alike.' Every man should be sure in his own mind what he believes. **6** One man honours the day to honour the Lord; another man does not honour the day to honour the Lord. The person who eats everything, eats it because he honours the Lord. And he thanks God. And the person who will not eat every kind of food also does so to honour the Lord. And he still gives thanks to God. **7** Not one of us lives for himself. And not one of us dies for himself. **8** If we live, we live for the Lord. And if we die, we die for the Lord.

So then, if we live or if we die we belong to the Lord. **9** Christ wanted to be Lord, both of dead people and of living people. That is why he died and lived again.

10 Why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? We shall all stand before God to be judged. **11** The holy writings say, 'The Lord says, "As sure as I live, every knee will bow to me. Every tongue will praise God".' **12** So each of us will tell God about what he has done.

13 So we must not judge each other any longer. But it is better for us to judge this. Never put anything in a brother's way that will hurt him or that will make him fall down.

14 As a Christian, I know and believe that nothing in itself is not right to eat. But it is not right for anyone to eat who thinks it is not right to eat. **15** Does what you eat trouble your brother? If it does, you are no longer living in love. Do not destroy the faith of someone because of what you eat. Christ died for him.

16 What is good for you must not be something that other people say is wrong. **17** The kingdom of God is not about what a person eats and drinks. But it is about living in a way which is right with God. It is peace. It is joy because a person has the Holy Spirit. **18** A person who does the work of Christ in this way pleases God. And people like him. **19** But we must do the things that make peace and that help each other to do better. **20** Do not spoil what God has done

because you want some food. Everything is right. But it is wrong for anyone to eat anything if that will make his brother fall. **21** The right thing is to eat no meat, and drink no wine, and not do anything that makes your brother fall.

22 Keep to yourself and God what you believe about these things. God blesses a man who does not feel he has done wrong when he did what he thought was right. **23** But a man who is not sure that he should eat something, does wrong if he eats it. That is because he does not believe the thing he is doing is right to do. And it is wrong to do what you do not believe is right.

CHAPTER 15

Please your neighbour, not yourself

We who are strong must help those who are not strong. We must not do what pleases us. **2** But each of us must please his neighbour. He must do what is good for him and what will help him do better. **3** Christ did not please himself. But the holy writings say, 'I took upon myself the wrong things that people said against you.' **4** Everything that is in the holy writings was written to teach us. They give hope and strength when we have troubles. The holy writings comfort our hearts. **5** God gives people power to take their troubles and he comforts their hearts. I ask him to help you to think the same way as Christ did. **6** Then, together you will praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Good news for those who are not Jews

7 So, accept one another, as Christ has accepted you. Then people will know that God is great.

8 What I say is this. Christ came to serve the Jews. He did this to prove that what God said was true. He proved that God kept his promises to the fathers. **9** He did this so that people who are not Jews would praise God because he is kind. The holy writings say, 'So I will praise you among the people who are not Jews. I will sing songs to your name.' **10** The holy writings also say, 'People who are not Jews, be glad with those who are God's people.' **11** And they also say, 'People who are not Jews, praise the Lord. All peoples should praise him.' **12** Also, Isaiah says, 'Someone from Jesse's family will come. He will come to rule the people who are not Jews. People who are not Jews will have hope in him.'

13 God gives hope. May he make you very happy. May he give you peace because you believe. Then the power of the Holy Spirit will give you much hope.

14 My brothers, I myself believe that you are very good people. I believe that you know many things and are able to teach one another. **15** I have written strong words to you. There are some things I want you to remember. I have written because of the gift God has given to me.

16 I am a servant of Christ Jesus to the people who are not Jews. I am like a priest to them, to tell them God's good news. Then I offer the people to God. That pleases God. They have been accepted by him and made holy by the Holy Spirit. **17** So, because of Christ Jesus, I am proud of my work for God. **18** I will speak only of what Christ has done through me. People who are not Jews have obeyed the good news. They have obeyed because of what I told them and because of what I did. **19** I had the power to do signs and wonderful things through the power of the Holy Spirit. So I have told the good news of Christ all the way from the city of Jerusalem to the country of Illyricum. **20** I have wanted to tell the good news where people have not heard the name of Christ. I did not want to work where another man had started to work. **21** The holy writings say, 'They were not told about him, but they will see him. And the people who have not heard of him will understand.'

Paul plans to visit the city of Rome

22 So I have been stopped many times from coming to you. **23** But now, I am no longer needed to work in these places. And I have wanted for many years to come to you. **24** When I go to the country of Spain, I hope to see you on my way there. I hope you will help me on my way to that place. But first I will be happy to be with you for a little while. **25** But now I am going to Jerusalem with a gift to help God's people. **26** The people of Macedonia and Achaia wanted to send a gift to help God's people in Jerusalem who are poor. **27** They wanted to do it, and they should do it for them. The Jews gave the people who were not Jews the good things their spirits need. So the people who were not Jews should give the Jews the good things their bodies need. **28** I will finish doing this, and I will give them what the people send them. Then I will go by you on my way to Spain. **29** And I know that when I come to you, I will bring great blessings from Christ.

30 My brothers, I ask you to do this for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ and because the Spirit has given you love. Talk to God for me. And I also will talk to him. **31** Ask him to save me from the people in Judea who do not believe. Ask him that the gift I take to Jerusalem may please God's people there. **32** Ask him to let me come to you and have a good time with you. **33** God gives peace. I ask that he will be with you all. He will!

CHAPTER 16

Personal greetings

I want to tell you good things about our sister Phoebe. She helps in the church in Cencrea.

2 I want you to take her in because she is a Christian. That is what God's people should do. Help her in any way she needs help. She has helped many people and has helped me too.

3 I send greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, who worked with me for Christ Jesus. **4** They almost died to save me. I am not the only one who thanks them. All the churches who are not Jews thank them also. **5** Give my greetings also to the church in their house. Give my greetings also to dear Epaenetus. He was the first person in Asia Minor to believe in Christ.

6 Give my greetings to Mary. She worked hard to help us.

7 Give my greetings to Andronicus and Junia. They belong to my family. We were in prison together. The apostles think they are good men. They were Christians before I was.

8 Give my greetings to Amplias. I love him because he is a Christian. **9** Give my greetings to Urbanus. He worked with us for Christ. Give my greetings to dear Stachys also. **10** Give my greetings to Apelles. He has proved himself to be a Christian. Give my greetings to the family of Aristobulus. **11** Give my greetings to Herodion. He belongs to my family.

Give my greetings to the family of Narcissus. They are Christians. **12** Give my greetings to Tryphena and Tryphosa. They worked for the Lord. Give my greetings to dear Persis. She has worked hard for the Lord.

13 Give my greetings to Rufus. The Lord chose him. Give my greetings also to his mother who is like a mother to me. **14** Give my greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brothers who are with them. **15** Give my greetings to Philologus, Julia, Nereus, and

his sister, and Olympas, and all God's people who are with them.

16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the Christian churches send greetings to you.

17 Brothers, I ask you to do this. Watch the people who make quarrels. They make people do wrong because they teach things you have not been taught. Have nothing to do with those people. **18** Those people do not work for our Lord Jesus Christ. They work only for themselves. With their words of praise they fool people who do not know what is wrong.

19 People everywhere know that you obey. I am very happy about you. I want you to be wise and know what is right. I want you to know nothing about what is wrong. **20** God gives peace. He will soon crush Satan under your feet. May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you.

21 Timothy sends you greetings. He worked with me. Luke, Jason, and Sosipater send you greetings. They belong to my family.

22 (I, Tertius, send you Christian greetings. I am writing this letter for Paul.)

23 Gaius sends you greetings. I am staying in his house. The whole church that meets in his house sends you greetings too. Erastus sends greetings to you. He takes care of the money for the city. Our brother Quartus sends you greetings.

24 I ask our Lord Jesus Christ to show you his loving kindness. He will!

Praise to God

25 Praise God! He is able to make you stand firm. That is the good news that I tell. That is what the message about Jesus Christ says. The message was kept secret for a long time in the past. But it has now been made known. **26** The books of the prophets have told this message. The God who lives for ever told the prophets to write this message so that all the people who are not Jews will believe and obey.

27 God is the only one who is wise. Praise him for ever because of Jesus Christ. Yes, it is so!

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

Paul the apostle (a Christian teacher) wrote this letter to the Christians who lived in Corinth (a town in Greece). Many people in Corinth lived very wrong (sinful) lives. Some of the Christians lived the same way. Paul tells them how their lives must change. They now belong to Christ, and must live like Jesus did. He explains how this affects life in families and life in the church. He teaches about gifts of the Holy Spirit. He tells about life after our bodies die. But the most important thing is to love other people the way God loves us.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul. God called me to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. He did this because he wanted to.

2 Our Christian brother Sosthenes and I send greetings to the people who are the church of God in the city of Corinth. You are people whom Christ Jesus has made holy. You, too, are chosen to be God's people.

And we send greetings to all the people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is their Lord, just as he is our Lord.

3 May God show you his kindness and peace which come from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul thanks God for the blessings of the Spirit

4 I am always thanking God for the blessings he has given you through Jesus Christ. **5** He has made you rich in all ways, in all that you say and in all you know. **6** Christ has done for you just what he promised to do. **7** You have every blessing you need while you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to come again. **8** And right to the end Jesus Christ will surely keep you safe. Then no one will find anything wrong about you on the day our Lord Jesus Christ comes. **9** God never fails anyone. It is he who called you to belong to his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 My Christian brothers, I beg you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, agree in what you say. Do not divide into groups. You should all think in the same way and decide to do the same things. **11** My brothers, I say this because I have been told by some of Chloe's family that you are quarrelling. **12** This is what I mean. Some of you say, 'I belong to Paul.' Others say, 'I belong to Apollos.' And others say, 'I belong to Cephas'. And yet others say, 'I belong to Christ.'

13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul nailed to the cross for you? No! Were you baptized in Paul's

name? No! **14** I thank God that I did not baptize any of you but Crispus and Gaius. **15** So no one can say you were baptized in my name. **16** (However, I also baptized the people of the house of Stephanas. I do not know of anyone else that I baptized.) **17** Christ did not send me to baptize people, but he sent me to tell the good news. I must not tell it with the clever words of this world. That would not show what the death of Christ on a cross truly means.

Christ, the power and wisdom of God

18 When people who are turning away from God hear about the cross, they say, 'That is foolish!' But for us who are being saved, the cross is the power God uses to save us. **19** God says in the holy writings, 'I will fool the wise people. I will bring to nothing the understanding of the clever people.' **20** Where are your wise people, the men who know books, the men who like to talk about the things of this world? God has shown that the clever things of this world are nothing. **21** God is wise. But the people of the world were not wise enough to know God. So he chose to save people who believe the good news that we tell them, even though the good news may seem to be foolish. **22** The Jews say, 'We must see a sign.' Those who are not Jews say, 'We want something we can understand.' **23** But we tell people about Christ who died on a cross. The leaders of the Jews do not like this, and those who are not Jews laugh at it. **24** But some have been called by God. They are chosen, both Jews and other people. Christ is God's power to save them. This shows how wise he is. **25** When God seems foolish, he is more wise than men. When God seems weak, he is stronger than men. **26** My brothers, remember what you were when God chose you. Not many of you were wise by the way people look at it. Not many of you had power. Not many of you came from a family with a big name. **27** But God chose things that look foolish to the people of the world. He has used those foolish things to put the wise people to shame.

God chose the weak things to put to shame the strong people. **28** And God chose the small things, things that people despise. Yes, he chose even the things which seem to be nothing. He did this to destroy the big things. **29** He did this so that people would not be proud before God. **30** You are God's children through Christ Jesus. Christ came from God and made us wise. He put us right with God. He made us holy. He set us free from our wrong ways. **31** Just as the holy writings say, 'No one should be proud of anything but of the Lord.'

CHAPTER 2

Telling about Christ's death on a cross

So, my brothers, when I came to you, I did not come to tell you God's message in big or wise words. **2** I made up my mind that I would talk about only one thing while I was with you. That one thing was Jesus Christ and his death on a cross. **3** I was weak, afraid, and trembling when I visited you. **4** My words and my message were not in wise words to win you. But the power of the Spirit of God proved my words to be true. **5** I did this so that you would not believe because of man's wise words, but you would believe because of God's power.

God's Spirit gives understanding

6 However, our words are wise words to those who really believe. But they are not the kind of wise words that the people of this world speak. They are not the kind of wise words that the rulers of this world speak. Those rulers will die. **7** Our wise words are God's wise words about things people do not understand. Before God made the world he planned those things for our glory and blessing. **8** None of the rulers of this world knew about these things. If they had, they would not have killed on a cross the Lord who was full of God's glory. **9** The holy writings say, 'No eye has seen the things God has made ready for those who love him. No ear has heard about them. No person's heart has ever thought of them.'
10 God has shown these things to us by his Spirit. The Spirit understands everything, even the things that God has kept secret. **11** The only one who really knows what a person is thinking is the spirit of the person himself. So also, no one knows what God is thinking, only the Spirit of God. **12** We have not received the spirit of the world. But we have received the Spirit of

God. In this way we may understand the blessings which God has freely given to us.

13 We do not tell you these things in wise words which men taught us. But the Holy Spirit taught us. We teach things about the Spirit which we know about through the Spirit. **14** The person who does not have the Spirit does not receive the blessings of the Spirit of God. He thinks they are foolish. He cannot understand them because only people who have the Spirit of God can test them. **15** He who has the Spirit of God tests all things. But others cannot test him.

16 The holy writings say: 'Who knows the mind of the Lord so that he may teach him?' As for us, we really do have the mind of Christ.

CHAPTER 3

People working together for God

My brothers, I could not talk to you at first as to people who have the Spirit of God. But I talked to you as people who have the spirit of this world. I talked to you as people who are very newborn, baby Christians. **2** I gave you milk to drink, not food to eat. You were not ready for food. And even now you are not ready for it. **3** You still have the spirit of this world in you. You are jealous of each other and you are quarrelling. The spirit of this world is still in you and you live like people of this world. **4** One says, 'I belong to Paul.' Another says, 'I belong to Apollos.' Does not that show that you have the spirit of this world?

5 After all, who is Apollos? And who is Paul? We both work for God. You believed because of the work we did. The Lord gave each of us our work to do. **6** I planted the seed. Apollos put water on the seed. But God made the seed grow. **7** So then the man who plants is nothing and the man who waters is nothing. God alone makes the seed grow. **8** The man who plants and the man who waters are equal. Each one will be paid for his own work. **9** We work together for God. You are God's farm. You are God's house.

10 I built the lower walls of the house because God showed me the best way to do it. Now another man builds on top of this foundation. Each man must take care how he builds on it. **11** Jesus Christ himself is the foundation. No one can make another one. **12** People build with gold, silver, very fine stones, wood, grass, or straw on top of the foundation. **13** But the day will come when everyone's work can be seen.

Their work will be tested by fire and the fire will show what kind of work each one did. **14** If the work a man did is not burned up in the fire, he will be paid for his work. **15** But if a man's work is burned up, he will lose everything. He himself will be saved, like a man pulled out of the fire.

16 You know that you are God's house. The spirit of God lives in you. **17** God will punish anyone who spoils his house. His house is holy, and you are the house. **18** Do not be fooled. If any one of you thinks that he is wise in the things of this world, he should count himself as not being wise. Then he would really be wise. **19** The things that look wise to the people of this world look foolish to God. The holy writings say, 'He catches the wise people in their own tricks.' **20** It also says, 'The Lord knows that the wise men's thoughts are good for nothing.' **21** So do not be proud of men. Everything belongs to you. **22** Paul, Apollos, Peter, the world, life, death, the things which are now, and the things which are to come, everything is yours! **23** And you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God!

CHAPTER 4

The work of the apostles

People should look at us as men who are servants of Christ. We take care of the secret things of God. **2** A man who takes care of things must be a person his master can trust. **3** As for me, I care very little what you think about me or how any man judges me. I do not even judge myself. **4** I do not know of anything wrong in me, but that does not say I am right. The Lord is my judge. **5** So do not judge me before it is time. Wait until the Lord comes. The things which have been kept hidden in the dark he will bring out into the light. He will show what is in people's hearts. At that time God will tell each man how good his work is.

6 My brothers, I have said these things about Apollos and myself so that you will learn from us to live the way the holy writings say. Then you will not be proud and say, 'This teacher is better than that one.' **7** If you are better, who made you that way? Everything you have was given to you. So then, why are you proud of it? Was it not given to you? **8** So you think you now have everything you need and are rich! You think you are kings and do not need us! I wish that you really were kings. Then we would be kings along with you.

9 It seems to me that God has put us apostles at the end of the line. We are like men who are to be put to death. The whole world, angels and men, look at us. **10** We are fools for Christ's sake! But you think Christ has made you wise. We are weak, but you are strong! You have glory, we have shame! **11** Even now we are hungry and thirsty. We need clothes. We are beaten and we have no home. **12** We work hard with our hands. People curse us, but we bless them. They trouble us much, but we must take it. **13** They talk behind our backs, but we still try to win them. People treat us as a dirt pile, the rubbish of the world. And they still do these things. **14** I do not write these things to make you ashamed. But you are my dear children and I want to teach you. **15** Even if you have ten thousand people to take care of you as Christians, yet you do not have many fathers. I am your Christian father because I brought you the good news.

16 So I beg you, do as I do. **17** That is why I am sending Timothy to you. I love Timothy very much. He is my Christian son. I can trust him. He will tell you again my Christian ways of living. I teach these same ways in every church meeting everywhere. **18** Some of you are proud of yourselves. You think I am not coming to visit you. **19** But I will come soon if it is the Lord's will. Then I will find, not the talk of those proud people, but their power. **20** The place where God rules is not a matter of talk, but of power. **21** Which do you want? Shall I come to you with a stick to beat you, or shall I come with love and a kind spirit?

CHAPTER 5

Wrong living will be judged

I have heard a very bad report about you. I hear there are wrong sexual ways among you. Even the people who are not Jews do not allow wrong sex such as this among them. A man is living with his father's wife! **2** Can it be that you are still proud? This should make you very sad. The man who has done this should be put out of the church meeting. **3** My body is not with you, but my spirit is. Just as if I were right there, I have decided what to do about the man who did such a thing as this. **4-5** Do this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When you meet together my spirit will be with you. Then, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, give this man over to Satan. Let Satan punish his body. By this the

man's spirit may yet be saved when the Lord Jesus comes.

6 Surely it is not right for you to be proud. Do you not know that only a little yeast in the bread will make all the bread rise? **7** Clean out the old yeast so that you will become like new bread. You are free from the old things. Christ, the Passover Lamb, has been killed for us. **7** Let us then remember the feast of Passover and have our bread. But let us not have our feast with old yeast in the bread. To do bad and wrong things is like that old yeast. But let us have it with new bread that has no old yeast in it. To be honest and true is like the new bread.

9 I wrote a letter to you. I told you not to be friends with people who use sex the wrong way [with a person they are not married to]. **10** I did not mean the people of the world [people who are not Christians] - some of them use sex the wrong way; or always want more things; or steal; or worship idols. To keep away from them altogether would mean you would have to go out of the world. **11** But I wrote to you not to be friends with anyone who says he is a Christian and uses wrong sex, or always wants more, or has idols, or curses, or drinks too much strong drink, or steals. I told you not even to sit down to eat with such a person. **12** Why should I judge the people who are outside the church? You are to judge the church people. **13** God judges those who are outside. The holy writings say, 'Send the bad person away from among you.'

CHAPTER 6

Being judged by people who are not Christians

When one of you has some complaint against a Christian brother, why does he take him to be judged by those who are not Christians? Why does he not take him to God's people? **2** Do you not know that someday God's people will judge the world? If you are going to judge the world, can you not judge small things now? **3** Do you not know that we shall judge angels? Then we should surely be able to judge things in this life! **4** So if you have complaints about things in this life, why do you take them to those who are not church people? **5** Shame on you! Are none of you wise enough to judge between two Christian brothers? **6** But now one Christian brother takes another Christian brother to be judged by people who are not Christians. **7** It is wrong for you to take each other to court at all.

You should be willing to take wrong. It would be better to lose. **8** Instead, you are doing wrong to your own Christian brothers.

9-10 Do you not know that bad people will have no part in the kingdom where God rules? Do not be fooled. There are some people who will not have part in that place. They are those who commit adultery of any kind, those who have idols, or steal, or are always wanting more, or talk wrong things about people, or drink plenty of strong drink, or take things by force, or curse. **11** Some of you were like that. But now you have been washed and made holy. The Spirit of our God has made you right by the name of the Lord Jesus.

Giving God glory with the body

12 I am free to do anything I want, but some things are not good for me to do. I am free to do anything, but I will not become a slave of anything. **13** 'Food is for the body, and the body is for food.' But God will bring both to an end. The body is not made to be used for wrong sex behaviour, but for the Lord. And the Lord is for the body. **14** God raised up the Lord and he will also raise us up by his power.

15 Do you not know that your bodies belong to Christ? Shall I take parts of Christ and join them to a bad woman? No, never!

16 Do you not know that the person who joins himself to a bad woman becomes one person with her? The holy writings say, 'The two people shall be like one body.' **17** But the one who joins himself with the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

18 Run away from every kind of wrong sex! Every other wrong thing which a person does is done outside of his body. But the person who uses sex the wrong way does a wrong thing to his own body. **19** Do you not know that your body is the house of the Holy Spirit who lives in you? God gave the Holy Spirit to you. Remember, you do not belong to yourself. **20** But you were bought and paid for. So then, bring glory to God with your bodies.

CHAPTER 7

Marriage troubles

You wrote me a letter. Here is my answer to the things in the letter. It is good if a man has nothing to do with a woman. **2** But wrong sex is always a danger to us. So it is better for each man to have his own wife and each woman to have her own husband. **3** The husband should

give his wife what is right. So also, the wife should give her husband what is right. **4** The wife does not have full right over her own body. But her husband has a right to it. In the same way, the husband does not have full right over his own body. But his wife has a right to it. **5** Do not keep from the other what is right for them to have. It is all right to stay from each other for a while, if you both agree to it. Then you will have time for prayer. Afterwards, come together again. If you do not, Satan might tempt you to do wrong. **6** I say you may do this. I do not say that you must do it. **7** I wish that all men were like I am. But God has made everyone different. One man can live one way and another man can live another way.

8 Here is what I say to those who are not married and to those whose husbands are dead. It is good for them to stay the way I am. **9** But if they cannot keep themselves under control, then they should marry. It is better to marry than to burn with desire for sex.

10 And here is what I say to those who are married. (And yet it is not what I say. It is what the Lord has said.) The wife may not leave her husband. **11** But if she does leave him, she must not marry again, or she must come back to her husband again. And the husband may not send away his wife.

12 Here is what I say to other people. (This is my word, not the Lord's.) Perhaps a Christian brother has a wife who is not a Christian. If she wants to stay with him, then he should not send her away. **13** Perhaps a woman has a husband who is not a Christian. If he wants to stay with her, then the woman should not leave him. **14** The husband who is not a Christian is made holy by the wife. And the wife who is not a Christian is made holy by the husband. If this were not so, then your children would not be holy. But they are holy. **15** If the one who is not a Christian really wants to leave, let him go. The Christian husband or wife is free then. God has called us to live in peace. **16** Wife, you do not know. Perhaps you will win your husband to the Lord. Husband, you do not know. Perhaps you will win your wife to the Lord.

The life which the Lord has chosen

17 Only let me say this. Every man should go on living in the way which the Lord chooses for him. He should go on as he was when God called him to be a Christian. I say this to people in all the churches. **18** If a man was already circumcised when God called him, he should not

try to change the marks of it. If a man was not circumcised when God called him, he should not be circumcised. **19** It does not matter whether one is circumcised or not. The thing that matters is doing what God says we must do. **20** Everyone should stay the way he was when God called him. **21** If you were a slave when God called you, do not let that trouble you. But if there is some way for you to get free, then do so. **22** If a man was a slave when the Lord called him, he is the Lord's free man. So also if a man was free when he was called, he is Christ's slave. **23** You were bought and paid for. Do not become slaves of men! **24** So, Christian brothers, everyone should go on living as he was when God called him. But now he lives with God.

Those who are not married and those whose husbands have died

25 Here is what I say about those who are not married. (I have no law from the Lord about this. But here is what I think. You can trust me because the Lord has helped me.) **26** I think that, since there is now trouble in the world, it is good for each one to stay as he is. **27** If you have married a wife, do not try to be free from her. If you have no wife, do not look for one. **28** But, if you marry, it is not wrong. And if a woman marries, it is not wrong. People who marry will have trouble in this life. And I want to keep you out of it. **29** Here, my brothers, is what I mean. The time is short. In the time that is left, men who have wives should live as though they did not. **30** People who cry should live as though they were not sad. People who laugh should live as though they were not glad. People who buy things should live as though they did not own them. **31** And people who are busy with things in this world should not be too busy. The world as we see it is passing away.

32 I want your minds to be free. The man who is not married thinks about the things of the Lord. He tries to please the Lord. **33** But the man who is married thinks about the things of this world. He tries to please his wife. **34** In the same way, there is a difference between the woman who is married and the one who is not. The woman who is not married thinks about the things of the Lord. She wants her body and her spirit to be holy. But the married woman thinks about the things of this life. She tries to please her husband. **35** I say this to help you, not to make it hard for you. I want to show you what

is good. I do not want anything to stop you from serving the Lord.

36 And if a man feels that he is doing the right thing for the woman he is to marry, then let him marry her. That is, if she is no longer young, and if he wants her very much. Then he must do as he thinks best. It is not wrong for him to do it. **37** But the man who has made up his mind not to marry his woman will do well. That is, if he does not have to marry her, and is able to control himself, and if he is sure about it in his own mind. **38** So the man who marries his woman will do what is good. But the man who does not marry her will do better. **39** A wife may not leave her husband as long as he is living. But if he dies, she is free to marry any man she wants. Only this, he must be a Christian. **40** But I think that she is happier if she stays as she is and does not marry again. (I think too that I am saying what the Spirit of God wants me to say in this matter.)

CHAPTER 8

Food given to idols

Now here is what I say about food given to idols. We all know something about this matter. Yet knowledge makes us proud. Love is the real teacher. **2** If anyone thinks he knows much, then he does not know what he really should know. **3** But if anyone loves God, then God knows him. **4** So here is what I say about eating food that has been given to idols or false gods. We know that an idol really is nothing in this world. There is only one true and living God. **5** There are things in the sky and on earth which are called gods. Yes, there are many gods and lords. **6** Yet for us there is only one God. He is the Father. All things come from him. He is the one for whom we live. And there is only one Lord. He is Jesus Christ. He made all things. He is the one who gives us life.

7 But not every Christian knows these things. Some of them have always believed in idols. And when they eat food which has been given to an idol, they think the food belongs to the idol. And because they are weak Christians they feel they do wrong when they eat it. **8** One thing is sure, food will not bring us closer to God. If we eat it, it will not make us right with God. And if we do not eat, it will not make us wrong. **9** Perhaps you feel it is all right for you to do it. But be careful! It might make the weak Christian do wrong. **10** You know it is not wrong for you to eat these things. But if a weak

Christian sees you eating in the idol's house, he will also want to eat food that has been given to an idol. He will do what is against his own belief.

11 You know the truth, and yet your knowledge will make your weak brother do wrong. You have hurt the faith of a brother, for whom Christ died. **12** In this way you do wrong to your brother. You hurt him because he is weak. And in so doing you do wrong to Christ. **13** If eating such food makes my brother do wrong, I will never eat it. I do not want my brother to do wrong.

CHAPTER 9

The rights of an apostle

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you people not proof of the work I do for the Lord? **2** If other people do not call me an apostle, yet surely I am an apostle to you. You people are the proof that I am an apostle for the Lord. **3** Here is what I say to the people who say wrong things about me. **4** Do we not have the right to eat and drink?

5 Do we not have the right to have a Christian wife with us as do the other apostles, and the brothers of our Lord, and Cephas?

6 Must Barnabas and I work for our living though the other apostles do not? **7** What soldier pays for his own food when he goes to war? Who plants a garden and does not eat what grows in it? Who takes care of animals and does not get any of the milk?

8 Am I saying only what men say? Does not God's law also say the same? **9** Moses wrote in his books of the law of God, 'Do not tie shut the mouth of an ox when it is treading the grain.' Does God care about the oxen? **10** Does he not say this altogether for our sakes? Yes, he said it for our sakes. There are people who plough the ground and beat the grain. They do this work because they believe they will have a part of the food for themselves. **11** We have planted seed by teaching you the good things of the Spirit. So we should receive something from you to help us to pay for our living. **12** If it is right for other teachers to receive something from you, then we have more of a right to receive it.

But we did not use our right. Instead, we do anything we can so that we will not stop the good news of Christ from going out.

13 You know there are men who do the work in the temple. They get their food from the temple. Those who help to make sacrifices in the temple

get a part of the sacrifice. **14** It is the same with those who work telling the good news. The Lord said they should get their living from that work.

15 And I am not writing this to ask you to do these things for me. I would rather die! It is something I am proud of, and no one shall take it away from me. **16** My telling the good news is not something for me to be proud of. It is something I must do. Yes, it would be very, very wrong for me if I did not tell the good news. **17** If I do it because I want to do it, I get my pay. But if I do not want to do it, it is still my duty to do it.

18 So what is my pay? My pay is to tell the good news and not be paid for it! That is why I do not use my right to take pay for telling the good news.

19 Even though I am no one's slave, yet I have made myself a slave to everyone. I have done this so that I might win more people to Christ. **20** When I was with the Jews, I lived like the Jews, so that I might win the Jews to Christ. I was not under the law. But I lived as if I was under the law of the Jews. I did this so that I might win to Christ those who are under the law. **21** When I was with those who do not have the law of the Jews, I lived as if I did not have the law of the Jews. I did this so that I might win them also. Of course, I myself have laws. I follow the laws of Christ. **22** When I was with weak people, I lived like a weak person. I did this so that I might win weak people to Christ. I lived like all kinds of people to save some of them. **23** I do all this for the good news, so that I also will have some of its blessing.

24 You know when people are running a race, they all run. But only one man will win. The way you should run is to run to win.

25 Everyone who wants to show his strength must control himself in every way. They do it for a prize that will spoil. But what we do, we do for a reward that will never, never spoil.

26 So I do not run as if I did not know where I was going. And I do not fight like a man just beating the air. **27** But I control my own body really well. I make my body obey me. After telling others the good news, I myself do not want to be left out.

CHAPTER 10

Do not worship idols

My brothers, here is something you should know. Long ago, all our fathers were led by the

cloud of God over them. They all went through the Red Sea. **2** It was as if they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. **3** They all ate the same food from the Spirit. **4** They all drank the same water sent by the Spirit. The water they drank came from a Rock of the Spirit which went with them. That Rock was Christ. **5** But God was not pleased with most of them. They died in the wilderness.

6 This teaches us not to want wrong things as they did. **7** Do not worship idols, as some of them did. The holy writings say, 'The people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up and danced.' **8** We must not use sex the wrong way as some of them did. Twenty-three thousand people died in one day! **9** We must not test the Lord, as some of them did. They were bitten by bad snakes and died! **10** Do not grumble, as some of them did. They were killed by the Angel of Death! **11** These things happened to them to teach other people. They were written in the holy writings to teach us who are living in the last days of the world. **12** Therefore, when a person thinks, 'I am strong; I can stand,' let that person be careful, or he will fall. **13** No testing has come to you that other people do not have. But God will not fail you. He will not allow the testing to be too hard for you. No. When the testing comes, God will make a way out for you, so that you can go through the testing. **14** So then, my dear brothers, do not worship idols.

15 I talk to you as people with good sense. Decide for yourselves about what I say. **16** We ask God to bless the cup at the Lord's supper. When we drink from this cup it means that the blood of Christ is for us all. We break the bread. When we eat this bread, it means that the body of Christ is for us all. **17** The bread is all one loaf. In the same way, we are many people but we are one body. We all eat from the same loaf. **18** See what the Jews do. Those who eat the sacrifices all eat things that are sacrificed. **19** What do I mean by saying this? Is the food that has been given to idols really something holy? Or is an idol really something like God? **20** No. What I mean is this. Those people give the food to bad spirits and not to God. I do not want you to have anything to do with bad spirits. **21** You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of bad spirits. You cannot eat food at the table of the Lord and at the table of bad spirits. **22** Do we want to make the Lord jealous? Are we stronger than he is? No!

Do everything to the glory of God.

23 We are free to do anything we want to do. Yes, but some things do not make people better. It is better if we do not do such things.

24 A person must not think only of himself. But he should think of the other person as well.

25 Eat any meat that is sold at the market. Do not ask any questions about it because you think, 'Is it wrong to eat it?'

26 The holy writings say, 'The earth belongs to the Lord and everything that is in it.'

27 If one who is not a believer asks you to come and eat, if you want to go, then eat the food he gives you. Do not ask any questions about it because you fear it might be wrong to eat it.

28 But if anyone says to you, 'This food has been given to an idol,' then do not eat it. Do not eat it because of the one who told you and because it might seem wrong. I mean it might seem wrong, not to you, but to him. **29** Since I am free, is it wrong for me to eat just because someone else thinks it is? **30** I thank God for my food. So why should anyone say it is wrong for me to eat what I thank God for?

31 So, whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do everything to bring praise to God.

32 Do nothing that will make Jews, or Greeks, or those who belong to the church of God, turn away from God.

33 I, also, try to please everyone in all I do. I do not think of what will be good for me, but I think of what will be good for many people. I want them to be saved.

CHAPTER 11

The customs about covering heads

Do as I do, for I am doing as Christ did. **2** You are doing well. You remember everything I told you. And you are doing what I taught you to do.

3 But I want you to know this. Christ is the head of every man. The husband is the head of the wife. And God is the head of Christ. **4** Any man who talks to God or speaks words from God with his head covered brings shame on his head.

5 But any woman who talks to God or speaks words from God with her head not covered brings shame on her head. She is just the same as a woman who has cut off all her hair. **6** If a woman does not cover her head, she might as well cut off her hair. But if it is a shame for a woman to cut off her hair, or to shave her head, then she should have her head covered. **7** A

man does not need to cover his head because he was made like God is. Man is God's glory. Woman is man's glory. **8** Man was not made from woman, but woman was made from man. **9** And man was not made for woman, but woman was made for man. **10** She should show this by having her head covered, because of the angels. **11** But the Lord did not make woman without man, and he did not make man without woman. **12** As woman comes from man, so man is born by woman. And everything comes from God. **13** What do you think? Does it look right for a woman to talk to God in public with her head not covered? **14** It would be a shame for a man to have long hair. Everyone knows this. **15** But long hair is something for the woman to be proud of. Her hair has been given to her for a covering. **16** Does anyone still want to quarrel about this matter? This is what we do. And this is what the churches of God do also.

Wrong things done at the Lord's supper

17 In the next thing I have to talk about, I cannot say that you are doing well. Your meeting together is more bad than good.

18 First, I hear that in the church meeting you divide yourselves into groups. I think this may be true. **19** You also have groups of people who do not think the same way. Because of them you will soon learn which people please God the most. **20** When you meet together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. **21** People take their own food and eat it without waiting. One gets nothing to eat. Another person drinks too much. **22** Do you not have your own homes where you can eat and drink? Do you have no respect for the church of God? Do you want to make poor people ashamed? What shall I say to you? Shall I say you are doing well? No, you are not doing well in this matter!

The Lord's supper

23 The Lord gave me what I taught you. This is what it was. On the night when the Lord Jesus was sold to his enemies, he took bread. **24** He thanked God for it. Then he broke it and said, 'Take this bread and eat it. This is my body which is broken for you. Do this so that you will remember me.' **25** In the same way, after they had eaten, he took the cup. He said, 'This cup is the new agreement made by my blood. Every time you drink from this cup, do it to remember me.' **26** Every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup you tell about the Lord's death, until he comes again.

Eat the Lord's supper in the right way

27 So then, when anyone eats the bread and drinks from the cup in a way that is not right, he has done wrong to the body and blood of the Lord.

28 Each one must look into his own heart carefully. When he has done that, he may eat the bread and drink from the cup. **29** The person who eats and drinks in a wrong way will be punished. He does not take it as the Lord's body. **30** That is why many of you are weak and sick. Many have died.

31 But if we took time to look into our hearts first, then we would not be punished. **32** When we are punished, the Lord is teaching us to do right, so that we will not be punished with the rest of the people of the world.

33 So, my Christian brothers, when you come together to eat the Lord's supper, wait on your turn. **34** If a man is hungry, he should eat at home. Then when you meet, you will not be found in the wrong. There are other matters. I will talk about them when I come to see you.

CHAPTER 12

Gifts of the Spirit

Now, my Christian brothers, I want you to know something about the gifts given by the Holy Spirit. **2** You know that before you believed in God, you were led by other men to believe in idols that could not talk. **3** Therefore, I want you to understand this. No person who has the Spirit of God ever curses Jesus. And no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' if he is not controlled by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are different gifts, but there is only one Spirit.

5 There are different kinds of work, but there is only one Lord. **6** There are different ways of working, but there is only one God. He works in all people and does it all. **7** And the Holy Spirit gives each one a gift so that all people may be helped. **8** The Spirit gives one person wise words to say. The same Spirit gives another person words of good understanding. **9** To another person the same Spirit gives faith, and to another person he gives the power to heal people. **10** To another person the Spirit gives the power to do big works. Another can speak words from God. To another person he gives the power to know the difference between spirits. To another person he gives the gift to speak the words of God in other tongues or languages,

and to another the meaning of these different tongues. **11** And the same Spirit gives the power for all these things. He gives each person what he wants to give to them.

All are parts of one body

12 A person has only one body, and the body has many parts. It is the same with Christ.

13 The one Spirit baptized us all to make one body. It made no difference whether we were Jews or Greeks, whether we were slaves or free men. We were all given to drink of one Spirit.

14 I say again, the body is not all one part, but has many parts. **15** Perhaps the foot says, 'I am not the hand, so I do not belong to the body.' But it is still a part of the body. **16** Perhaps the ear says, 'I am not the eye, so I do not belong to the body.' But it is still a part of the body.

17 If all of the body were an eye, how could we hear? If all the body were an ear, how could we smell? **18** The way it is now, God has put each part in the body in the place he wanted it. **19** If they were all one part, how could it be a body?

20 The way it is now, there are many parts, but it is one body. **21** The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you.' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I do not need you.' **22** No, that is not so. Some parts of the body are not as strong as others. Yet we could not live without them. **23** And we look after some parts of our body more than others because they need it. The parts of our body that are not so fine in one way are made more fine in other ways. But the parts which are fine already do not need to be made fine. God made the body and has given more care to the parts that need it. **24** He did this so that the body would not be divided into groups, but all the parts would help each other.

26 If one part has trouble, then all the other parts are troubled too. If one part is praised, then all the other parts are glad with it.

27 Now, all of you together are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

28 God has given each person their right place in the church.

First, there are the apostles. Second, there are prophets who speak words from God. Third, there are those who teach. Then there are those who do big works. Then there are those who have the gifts to heal people, those who help in the work of the church people, those who lead and guide others, and those who speak God's words in different kinds of tongues or languages.

29 Are all the people apostles? Can they all speak words from God? Can they all teach? Can they all do big works? **30** Do they all have the gifts to heal the sick people? Can they all speak in different tongues? Can they all tell the meaning of these tongues? **31** You should seek after the best gifts.

Love

But I will show you a way that is much better than any of them!

CHAPTER 13

If I talk with the tongues of men and even of angels, but if I do not love people, then I am only like the sound of a big horn or a loud bell.

2 If I speak words from God, if I can understand all secrets, and know everything, if I can move mountains by believing, but if I do not love people, I am nothing, even though I can do all of these things. **3** If I give away all I have, and if I give my body to be burned, but if I do not love people, I get nothing out of it.

4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous. Love is not proud and does not boast. **5** Love does not do things that are not nice. Love does not just think of itself. Love does not get angry. Love holds no wrong feelings in the heart.

6 Love is not glad when people do wrong things. But it is always glad when they do right.

7 Love forgives everything. Love is always trusting, and always hoping, and never gives up.

8 Love never ends. The gift of speaking words from God will end. The gift of speaking in different tongues or languages will stop. The gift of knowing many things will end. **9** Now we know only a little, and we can speak only a little of God's words. **10** But when everything becomes perfect, that part will come to an end.

11 When I was a child, I talked like a child. I understood like a child. I thought like a child. But when I became a man, I stopped doing things like a child. **12** Now it is like looking in a looking-glass which does not make things clear. We cannot see and understand things plainly. But when things become perfect, then we shall fully know and understand everything, just as God knows.

13 These three things will remain for ever. They are faith, hope, and love.

And love is the greatest of them.

CHAPTER 14

Tongues and speaking words from God

Love is the thing you should want more than anything else. But you should also want other things the Spirit gives. You should want very much to be able to speak words from God.

2 The person who talks in tongues of a different language does not talk to people, but to God. People do not understand what he says. But he is saying secret things by the Spirit. **3** But the person who is a prophet speaks words from God to people plainly. He helps them to believe and to be strong, and he comforts them. **4** The person who talks in a different tongue helps himself. But the one who tells forth God's word helps all the people in the church. **5** I wish that you could all talk in different tongues. But I want even more that you should speak words from God for all to hear and understand. The person who speaks words from God is greater than the person who talks in tongues - unless he is able to tell the meaning of his words, so that he helps all the people in the church.

6 My brothers, if I come to you and talk in tongues of a different language, how can I help you? I cannot help you if I do not tell you something God has shown to me, or something I know, or God's word, or some teaching.

7 Such things as horns or harps have no life, but they make sounds. Now if they don't make the right noise, no one will know what the sound means. **8** If the war drum gives a sound that has no meaning, then no one will get ready to fight. **9** If you say words that people cannot understand, they will not know what you say. You talk for nothing! **10** There are no doubt many different languages in the world. And every one of them has a meaning. **11** But if a person talks in a language and I do not know the meaning of it, I will be like a stranger to him and he will be like a stranger to me.

12 So it is with you. You want the gifts of the Spirit. Then you should want the gift which will make you better able to help the church people.

13 So then, the person who talks in a tongue of a different language, should ask God to help tell the meaning of the tongue.

14 If I pray to God in a tongue of a different language, then I am talking with my spirit, but I do not use my mind. **15** What then shall I do? I will talk to God with my spirit and I will talk to God with my mind. I will sing with my spirit and I will sing with my mind. **16** If you thank God

with your spirit only, an ordinary person cannot say, 'Amen, it is so!' He does not know what you say. **17** The way you thank God is good, but it does not help an ordinary person. **18** I thank God that I can talk in tongues more than any of you. **19** But in the church meeting it is better for me to say five words with my mind, so that I will teach other people also. This is better than to say ten thousand words in a tongue of a different language.

20 My brothers, do not be like children in your thinking. When it comes to doing wrong things, be like small babies. But in your thinking be grown up people. **21** The holy writings say, 'I will talk to these people by strangers and by people who talk in strange tongues. And yet, they will not listen to me.' This is what the Lord says.

22 So then, tongues are a sign to people who do not believe God. They are not a sign to those who believe him. But speaking words from God like a prophet is a sign to those who believe. It is not a sign to those who do not believe.

23 Sometimes all the people of the church may be gathered together. If everyone talks in tongues, and if some people who do not know or believe come in, they will say that you are crazy. **24** But what happens if everyone speaks words from God? If such people come in, then the words from God will prove to them that they have done wrong. They will all speak to the heart. **25** Such a person sees everything that has been hidden in his heart. Then he will kneel down and worship God. He will say, 'It is true. God is here among you.'

The right way to do things in a meeting

26 What shall we do about it, my brothers? When you meet together, every one of you has something to help the other. One has a song to sing. One has something to teach people. One has something which God has shown to him. One has something to say in a tongue. One can tell the meaning of a tongue. Do all of these things to help one another. **27** If any people talk in a tongue, only two or not more than three should talk. They must talk one at a time and someone must tell the meaning. **28** But if there is no one to tell the meaning, a person must not talk in a tongue of a different language in the church meeting. He should talk to himself and to God. **29** Two or three prophets may speak words from God and the others should say what they think about it. **30** But if another person is sitting by and God gives him something to say,

then the first person should stop talking. **31** One by one you may speak words from God. In that way, all will learn something and all will be stronger in faith. **32** Those who speak words from God are able to keep their own spirits quiet. **33-34** God does not want things to be out of order. He wants peace in the church meeting. In all the churches of God's people, the women should be quiet in the church meetings. They must not be allowed to talk. They must obey. The holy writings say this also. **35** If the women want to know something, they should ask their own husbands at home. It is a shame for a woman to talk in a church meeting. **36** Do you think that you were the first ones to tell the word of God? Or do you think that you are the only people who have it?

37 Perhaps someone thinks, 'I am the one to speak words from God,' or, 'I have the Spirit.' Then know this, the Lord has told me to write these things. **38** If anyone does not know this, then God will not know him. **39** So, my brothers, the thing you should want is to speak words from God. But at the same time, do not stop anyone from talking in tongues. **40** But everything should be done in the right way and in good order.

CHAPTER 15

Christ is raised from death

Now, my brothers, I want to bring the good news to your minds again. I told it to you and you received it. You now believe it. **2** You are saved by it, if you hold on to what I told you. If you do not, then you have believed for nothing.

3 I told you first what was told to me. I told you that Christ died for the wrong things we did, as the holy writings said. **4** He was buried. He was raised on the third day, as the holy writings said. **5** Peter saw him, and then all the twelve disciples saw him. **6** After that, more than five hundred Christian brothers saw him at one time. Most of them are still living, but some have died. **7** After that, James saw him. Then all the apostles saw him. **8** Last of all, I saw him too. I was like one who was born at the wrong time. **9** The other apostles are all greater than I am. I should not be called an apostle because I troubled the people of God's church. **10** But God has been kind to me. He has made me what I am today. And he did not bless me for nothing. I did more work than any of them. Yet it was not I, but the loving kindness of God was working with me.

11 So it does not matter who gave the message, they or I. This is the message we gave, and this is the message you believed.

Dead people are raised from death

12 You have been told that Christ was raised from death. How can some of you say that dead people do not rise again? **13** If dead people do not rise, Christ did not rise. **14** And if Christ did not rise, then what we told you was not true, and what you believe is not true. **15** If this were so, we would have been telling lies about God, because we said that God raised up Christ. He did not raise up Christ if dead people are not raised up. **16** If dead people are not raised, then Christ was not raised either. **17** If Christ was not raised, then what you believe is no good. Your wrong ways have not been forgiven. **18** If that were true, then the people who believed in Christ who have now died, are lost. **19** And if we have hope in Christ for our life in this world only, then we are the most unhappy of all people.

20 But Christ really has been raised from death. He was the first one to rise of all who have died.

21 It was a man who first brought death. So it was also a man who was first raised from death.

22 All people who are of Adam die. And so also, all people who belong to Christ will live. **23** But each one has his turn. Christ rose first. Then those who belong to Christ will rise when he comes again. **24** After that the end will come. Christ will hand over the ruling power to God the Father. Christ will stop all other rulers, and everyone who has any rights and power.

25 Christ must rule until God has all power over all his enemies. **26** Death is the last enemy to be destroyed.

27 The holy writings say, 'God has put all things under Christ.' But it does not mean that God is under Christ. God is the one who put all things under him. **28** One day the Son will be over all things. And God will be over the Son. So in the end God will be over all things.

29 Another thing, what good is it for people to be baptized for dead people? If dead people are not raised, why are some people baptized for them? **30** And why are we in trouble all the time?

31 I face death every day! That is true. Just the way it is true that I am proud of you, my brothers. I am proud that you belong to Christ Jesus. **32** I fought against wild animals at Ephesus. If I was thinking only of life on earth,

why did I do this? If dead people do not rise, then we might just as well say, 'Let us eat and drink because we will die tomorrow.' **33** Do not be fooled. 'If good people keep company with bad people, the good people will become bad too.' **34** Wake up! Do what is right. Stop doing wrong things. Some of you do not know God at all. I say these things to you to make you ashamed.

The body that is raised from death

35 But someone will ask, 'How can dead people be raised? What kind of body will they have when they come back from death?' **36** What foolish questions! The seed you put in the ground must die before it can come to life.

37 You do not put a grown-up plant in the ground. You put in a seed, such as corn, wheat, rice, or something like that. **38** God gives the seed the body he wants it to have. He gives a different kind of body to every kind of seed. **39** Not all living bodies are alike. People have one kind of body. Animals have another kind of body. Fish another kind of body. Birds have another kind. **40** So too, there are bodies for the sky and bodies for the earth. The bodies for the sky are fine in one way, and the bodies for the earth are fine in another way. They are not alike. **41** The sun is fine in one way. The moon is fine in another way. The stars are fine in still another way. And one star is fine in a different way from another star.

42 So it is with the body that is raised from death. When it is put in the ground it is a body that dies. When it rises from death, it will never die again. **43** When it is put in the ground, it is not fine. When it rises, it is very fine. When it is put in the ground it has no strength. When it rises it is strong. **44** When it is put in the ground it is only a body for this world. When it rises it is a body for the spirit. If there is a body for this world, then there is also a body for the spirit.

45 The holy writings say, 'The first man, Adam, was of this world! The last Adam [Christ] is a Spirit who gives life.' **46** The body for the spirit does not come first. The body for this world comes first. Then comes the body for the spirit. **47** The first man came from earth. He was made from the dust of the earth. The second Adam is the Lord from heaven.

48 Those who are made of earth are like the man made of dust. Those who are for heaven are like the man from heaven. **49** We were made like the man of dust but we shall look like the man from heaven. **50** Now I tell you, my

brothers, our bodies of flesh and blood can have no place in the kingdom where God rules. A body which will die can have no room in the kingdom of God where people will never die.

51 Listen! I tell you a secret. We will not all die, but we will all be changed. It will happen very quickly, as fast as one can shut his eyes. It will be when the trumpet or horn is blown the last time. Someone will blow the trumpet, dead people will rise, and they will never die again. We ourselves will be changed. **52** This body which dies must become a body which will never die. **53** When this body which dies becomes one which will never die, what the holy writings say comes true. It says, 'Death is overcome by victory. **54** Death, you have lost the battle. Death, your power to hurt us is gone.' **55** Death hurts us because we are bad people. And our wrong ways are so strong because of the law. **56** But I thank God that he gives us power to stop being wrong through our Lord Jesus Christ. **57** So, my dear brothers, stand strong. Do not be moved from what you believe. Work hard for the Lord. You know that your work for the Lord will not be for nothing.

CHAPTER 16

The gift to God's people

Now I want to tell you about getting money together for God's people. I told the churches in the province of Galatia how to do it. And I want you to do the same. **2** On the first day of the week, every one of you should put aside and save as much money as you can. Then you will not have to get money together when I come. **3** When I get there, I will send to Jerusalem the men you all choose. They will carry your gift with your letters of approval. **4** And if it seems good for me to go too, they will go with me.

Plans for travel

5 I am going through the country of Macedonia. After I have gone through there, I will come to you. **6** Maybe I will stay with you for a while, or even for the winter. Then you can help me on the way to the next place I go. **7** I do not want

to stop off to see you just while I am going through. I want to spend some time with you, if it is the Lord's will. **8** I will stay in the city of Ephesus until the day of Pentecost. **9** A door has opened for me to do much good work here. But there are many people against me.

10 If Timothy comes to you, be good to him, so that his heart will not be troubled while he is with you. He is working for the Lord, just as I am. **11** So no one should despise him. But send him off with joy when he comes back to me. I will look for him to come with the other brothers.

12 Now about our brother Apollos. I have asked him many times to visit you with the others. But he does not want to come now. He will come when he has the time.

The last words and greetings

13 Be awake! Stand strong in what you believe. Show that you are men. Be strong. **14** Do everything with love.

15 You know that Stephanas and his family were the first people in the country of Greece to believe the good news. They have made up their minds to help God's people always. **16** So, my brothers, I ask you to obey men like that. And join happily with all others who are helpers and workers. **17** I am glad that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus have come. They have made up for your not being here. **18** They have made me happy and you also. Show that you know the value of such men.

19 The people in the churches of Asia send greetings to you.

Aquila and Priscilla and the Christians who meet in their house send you many Christian greetings. **20** All the Christian brothers send you greetings. Greet each other with a holy kiss.

21 And I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.

22 Anyone who does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, should be cut off from God. Come soon, Lord! **23** May the Lord Jesus bless you. **24** I send my Christian love to you all.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

This letter from Paul gives thanks for the church people at Corinth. But he also tells them how sad he is. He tells them to stop following wrong (sinful) ways. He tells them how to follow the good ways of Jesus. He also asks them to help others by bringing gifts.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul. I am called by God to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. My Christian brother Timothy and I send greetings to the church of God in the city of Corinth. We also send greetings to all of God's people in the country of Greece.

2 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you with their loving kindness and peace.

Paul gives thanks to God after his troubles

3 Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He is a very, very kind Father to us. He is a God who always comforts and helps people.

3 He helps us every time we have trouble. Then we are able to be strong and help other people every time they have trouble. We can do this with the same comfort that God gives us. **4** We have plenty of the same troubles that Christ had. But we also have plenty of comfort and help from him. **5** When we have trouble, it is for your sake so that you will be helped and saved. When we are comforted, this helps you. Then you will stand strong when you have the same troubles we have. **6** Our hope for you is strong. If you have the same trouble we have had, then you will also have the same comfort and help we have. This we know.

8 Brothers, we want you to know about the trouble we had in the country of Asia Minor. We were not strong enough to carry such a load of trouble. It was so heavy we thought we would die. **9** Yes, we really felt our time had come to die. This was to make us trust, not in ourselves, but in God. He brings people back to life. **10** He saved us from the death that was so near, and he still saves us. We believe that God will keep on saving us. **11** But you must help us also. You must talk to God about us. When many people ask God to help us, then many people will thank God for the way he has blessed us.

Paul's visit was put off

12 We want to say this about ourselves. Our hearts tell us that we have lived the right way in the world, and even more so toward you. We have lived a clean and true life as God wants us to. We have not trusted in the wise things of

men, but in the blessing of God. **13** We write you nothing but what you have been reading out to the people, and what you all know. I hope that you will really know what is right even to the end. **14** You already know something about us. I hope that you will come to know us fully. On the day when the Lord Jesus comes you will be proud of us. So too will we be proud of you.

15 Because I was sure of this, I wanted to visit you before. Then you would have had a double blessing. **16** I wanted to visit you and then go to Macedonia. I wanted to visit you again when I was on my way back from Macedonia. Then you would send me on my way to Judea.

17 That was what I wanted to do. Now then, did I act as if I did not know what I wanted? When I make my plans, do you think I make them like a man of this world? Do I say 'Yes' when I mean to say 'No'? **18** As surely as God is true, our message to you was not 'Yes' and 'No' at the same time. **19** Silvanus and Timothy and I told you about the Son of God, Jesus Christ. His word was not 'Yes' and 'No.' It was always 'Yes.' **20** To the many promises God has made Christ can say 'Yes'. He can make them all come true. So then, it is because of Christ that we can say, 'Yes, it is so!' when we praise God. **21** It is God who makes us stand strong with you in Christ. God has chosen us and put his mark on us. **22** He has put his Spirit in our hearts. This is the first part of what we are to receive, and it proves that we will receive all God has promised.

23 Let God take my life if what I say is not true. I did not go to Corinth because I did not want to make you sad. **24** We do not rule over what you believe. But we work with you to make you glad. You are strong already by believing as you do.

CHAPTER 2

I made up my mind that I would not go to visit you again if I had to make you sad. **2** For if I make you sad, who is going to make me glad? No one, but the one I made sad. **3** That is why I wrote the letter. I did not want to come and be made sad by those who should make me glad. I

am sure that what makes me glad makes you all glad too. **4** When I wrote to you, I was in great trouble and my heart was very heavy. I cried with many tears. I did not want you to be sad, but I just wanted to let you know that I love you very much.

Forgiving the one who has done wrong

5 Now, about the person who made me sad. It was not only me that he made sad. It was every one of you, in a way. I say 'in a way' because I do not want to be too strong in what I say. **6** That man has been punished enough by what most of you did to him. **7** So now, you ought to forgive him and comfort him. If you do not, then he may be so sad he cannot bear it. **8** So I beg you, show your love to him again. **9** Here is why I wrote to you. I wanted to test you to find out if you obey me in all matters. **10** Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. And if I have had anything to forgive, I have already forgiven it for your sakes, just as if we were standing before Christ. **11** I have done this so that Satan will not get ahead of us. We know his tricks.

Paul's mind was troubled at Troas

12 When I reached the city of Troas to tell the good news of Christ, the door was open for me to work for the Lord. **13** But my mind was troubled because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to the people there and went on to the country of Macedonia.

Christ gives the victory

14 But I thank God! He has given us Christ. And Christ leads us to victory every time. To know Christ is like a sweet smell. And God lets us carry that sweet smell of his truth everywhere. **15** We are like a sweet smell to God. It is the smell of Christ we have. We have this sweet smell among the people who are saved and among those who are lost. **16** To some it smells like death and brings death to those who are lost. To others it smells like life and it brings life to those who are saved. Who is good enough for such things? **17** We are not like some people. They tell God's message to make money. But we tell it with a true heart just as God told it to us. We tell it as if we stood before God. And we tell it with Christ's help.

CHAPTER 3

Workers of a new agreement

Do you think we are starting again to tell how good we are? Do we need letters to tell about

us, as some teachers do? We do not need letters to you or from you to praise us. **2** You yourselves are our letter. This letter has been written in our hearts. All people can read it and understand it. **3** All can see that you are a letter from Christ written by us. It is not written in ink, but it is written in the Spirit of the living God. It is not written on pieces of rock, but on the hearts of people.

4 We can say this because we trust in God. And we trust in God because of Christ. **5** We are not good enough to think we can do anything ourselves. But God makes us able to do it. **6** God has made a new start with people. He has given us a new way back to God. It is not a written law. The Spirit gives it to us. The written law brings death, but the Spirit gives life.

7 The old law that brought death was written on pieces of rock. There was a very bright light when God gave it to the people. The people of Israel could not look at Moses because his face was so bright. And even as they saw it, the light on his face was going away. **8** Now bringing the law was bright and wonderful. Will not bringing the Spirit be far more bright and wonderful? **9** Bringing the law was a wonderful thing even though it brought death. So bringing the good news that people can be put right with God is much more wonderful. **10** The law was so bright and wonderful at first but has no light now. There is something else that is so much more bright and wonderful. **11** The one which does not stay alive for ever came first in a great light. Does not the one which does stay alive have a much brighter light?

12 Because we believe this, we do not fear. **13** We are not like Moses. He put a cloth over his face so that the people of Israel would not see that the light from God was dying. **14** But their minds were made dull. Even today, when the old law of God is read, it is as if a cloth still covers it. It is Christ who takes the cloth away. **15** Yes, even today, when the books of Moses are read, it is as if a cloth covers their hearts and minds. **16** But when a man turns to the Lord, the cloth is taken away.

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, people are set free. **18** All of us have no cloth over our faces. People can see that we have some of the bright and wonderful light that the Lord has. And we are becoming brighter and brighter, more and more like him. It is the Lord, the Spirit, who does this.

CHAPTER 4**Things of great value in pots of earth**

God in his kindness gave us this work. So we do not give up. **2** We never do wrong things nor do things in secret. We do not fool people nor change God's message. No, we tell people the truth openly. We let every person judge us for himself. We know that God sees all we do. **3** If the good news which we tell is not clear to some people, it is because they are lost. They do not believe. **4** The god of this world has covered their minds so they cannot see. They cannot see with their minds the light of the good news of Christ. They cannot see how bright and wonderful Christ is. He is just like God himself. **5** We do not talk about ourselves, but about Christ Jesus our Lord. And we are your slaves for Jesus' sake. **6** God said, 'Let light shine in the darkness.' And he has let light shine in our hearts too. He gave us light that shows how bright and wonderful God is. We see this light when we look at the face of Christ.

7 This is something of great value within us, but we are like pots made of earth and clay. This power is greater than any other power. But it comes from God, not from us. **8** We have much trouble, but we do not give up. We are in hard places, but help always comes. **9** People trouble us, but God is always with us. We are beaten, but we are not killed. **10** We always feel as if our body is dying, just as Jesus died. Then the life of Jesus also can be seen in our body. **11** While we live we are always ready to die for Jesus. And so the life of Jesus is also seen in our bodies which will die. **12** So then, while death is at work in us, life is at work at the same time.

13 We believe the same way as the one who wrote, 'I believed, and so I talked.' We also believe, and so we talk to you. **14** We know this. God raised up the Lord Jesus, and he will raise us up also with Jesus. He will bring us all to stand together before God. **15** All this is happening for you so that the blessings of God will reach more people. Then more people will thank God. And this will make God's name greater.

Living by what we believe

16 So we do not give up. Our body gets weak, but our heart gets new strength day after day. **17** The load of trouble we carry now is a little heavy. But this trouble is getting something great and wonderful ready for us which will last for ever. **18** We are not looking at things that

can be seen, but at things that cannot be seen. The things which can be seen last only a little while. But the things which cannot be seen last for ever.

CHAPTER 5

Our body is the house in which our spirit lives here on earth. When that house is destroyed, then God will give us another house. That house is not made by man's hand. But God made it. It will last for ever in heaven. **2** While we are in the house we have now, we are always crying and wanting to have our house from heaven. **3** When we have moved into it, then we are sure that we will never be left without a house. **4** While we are in this house, we cry and are troubled. It is not that we want to move out of this house, but we want to move into the other one. Then this body which will die will be changed into one which will live. **5** God is the one who has made us ready for this change. He has already given us the Spirit. This is the first part of what we are to receive, and it proves that we will get more. **6** So we always feel sure. While we live in our bodies we are not in our house with the Lord. We know that. **7** We do not see these things, but we believe them. **8** We feel sure that we will want to leave this body and go to live with the Lord. **9** So it does not matter if we are living here or go to live there. Wherever we are we want to please the Lord. **10** We must all stand before Christ to be judged. Then we will receive pay. If we have done well, our pay will be good. If we have not done well, our pay will not be good.

The work of winning people to Christ

11 We know that the Lord must be feared, so we try to get people to believe. God knows what we are and what we do. And we hope that in your hearts you, too, know. **12** No, we are not praising ourselves again. But we are telling you this so that you may really be proud of us. Then you will be ready to answer people who are proud of themselves. They are proud of the things which can be seen. But in their hearts they have nothing to be proud of us. **13** If we are crazy, it is for God's sake. If we are right in our minds, it is for your sakes. **14** The love of Christ makes us do what we do to win men. We believe that one man died for all people. [To God] it is as if we all died with him. **15** He died for all, so that those who live would not live to please themselves. But they should live to

please him who gave his life for them and rose again from death.

16 So then we no longer know people by what we see on the outside. There was a time when we knew Christ that way, but now we do not know him that way any longer. **17** So, if any man belongs to Christ, he is a new person. His old life has gone. You see, he has begun a new life. **18** But it is God who has done all this. He sent Christ to make peace with us and to bring us back to himself. Now he has given us the work of bringing other people back to God. **19** God was in Christ. He brought the world back to himself. He forgave them for the wrong things they had done. And he gave us the message that will bring people back to himself. **20** So we are messengers for Christ. God is using us to call people. So we are standing here for Christ and begging people, 'Come back to God!' **21** Christ did no wrong thing. But for our sake God put the blame for our wrong ways on Christ. So now God sees us as good, because we are in Christ.

CHAPTER 6

We work with God. So we beg you, do not take God's blessing and get nothing from it. **2** Because God has said. 'I heard you call at the right time. And I helped you in the day when I saved you.' See, now is the right time. Now is the day to be saved.

3 We put nothing in anyone's way. So no one can say our work is bad. **4** In every way we try to show that we are good servants of God. We do not give up when there is much trouble, and things go wrong, and things are hard. **5** We are being beaten and put in prison. We are being knocked around. We work hard. We are awake at night and we go hungry. **6** We help you with our knowledge and by living a clean life, with the help of the Spirit. We are patient and kind. We help you by the Holy Spirit. We have shown true love. **7** We have told you the truth with the power of God. These are the right things to use in our fight, and we have used them with both hands. **8** Some people respect us and some do not. Some give us a good name and some a bad name. Some people say we fool people and yet we tell the truth. **9** Many people do not know us, and yet many people know us very well. We almost die and yet we live. People give us much trouble but they do not kill us. We are very sad and yet always glad. **10** We are poor, but we

make many people rich. We have nothing, but really we have everything.

11 We talk plainly to you people in Corinth. We love you with all our hearts. **12** We have not stopped loving you, but you do not love us. **13** I say this as to my own children. You should love us with all your hearts.

You are the house of the living God

14 Do not join your lives with those who do not believe. You and they are not equal. How can people who do right, work with those who do not obey God? How can light and darkness be in the same place? **15** How can Christ agree with Belial, the devil? How can a person who believes work with a person who does not believe? **16** Is there anything equal about a house of God and a house of idols? We are a house of the living God. God has said, 'I will live in them and walk in them. I will be their God and they will be my people.' **17** So the Lord says, 'Come away from among bad people. Stay away from them. Do not touch what is not clean. And I will receive you. **18** I will be your father. And you shall be my sons and daughters.' The Lord who is ruler of all says that.

CHAPTER 7

My dear people, since God has promised us these things, we should make ourselves clean. We should clean out everything that makes our lives or our spirits dirty. We should try to be altogether holy because we respect God with fear.

Paul's joy at the way the church people are sorry

2 Give us a place in your hearts. We have not done wrong to anyone. We have not hurt anyone. We have not taken anything from anyone. **3** I do not say this to bring something against you. I have already told you that we love you very much. If we live or if we die, we will be together with you. **4** I really trust you. I am very proud of you. I have received much comfort. Even in all of our troubles I am very glad.

5 When we came to the country of Macedonia, we had no rest for our bodies. We had all kinds of trouble everywhere. There was fighting around us and our hearts were full of fear. **6** But God comforts those who are in trouble, and when Titus came, we were comforted. **7** You comforted him, and that comforted us. He told us that you wanted very much to see us. He told

us that you were very sorry for what you had done. He told us that you want to stand with me. So now I am even more happy.

8 I know that what I wrote in my letter made you sad. But I am not sorry I wrote it. Perhaps I was sorry at first, but now I am glad I sent it. I see the letter made you sad for a while. **9** I do not like to make you sad, but I am glad that it made you sad and made you turn from your wrong ways. You took it all as from God. So then, we did not really hurt you. **10** When we are sad the way God wants us to be, we turn from our wrong ways. Then we are saved and we can never be sorry about that. But the sorrow of the world brings death. **11** See what happened. When you were sad, the way God wanted you to be, then you tried to do the right thing. You wanted to free yourself from wrong. You hated what is wrong. You were afraid. You wanted very much to do what is right. You stood for the right. You punished wrong doing. In every way you showed that you did right in this matter.

12 So, even though I did write to you, it was not for the sake of the man who did wrong. And it was not for the sake of the man who had the wrong done to him. But I wrote so that you would see for yourselves, in the sight of God, how much we care for you. **13** And so we have been comforted. Besides this, we were even more happy to see how happy Titus was. All of you really made his heart glad. **14** I told him how proud I was of you. And really, I had nothing to be ashamed of. Everything we have said to you has been true. So also, what we told Titus about you proved true. **15** He loves you even more when he remembers how you all obeyed him. You feared and trembled. **16** I am glad that I can always trust you.

CHAPTER 8

Giving money gladly

My brothers, let me tell you how God has blessed the churches in Macedonia. **2** They are being tested by much trouble. But they are always very happy. And they are very poor. Because of these two things, they give to others as if they were rich. **3** I can tell you because I saw it myself. They gave as much as they could and even more than that. They did it all because they wanted to. **4** They begged us to let them give something to help God's people. **5** And they did more than we thought they would do. First, they gave themselves to the Lord and to us,

because we were doing God's work. **6** That is why we asked Titus to see about your gift. He started you off in your giving. And so he is the one to see that you finish it. **7** We remember how well you do in everything. You do well in believing, in talking, in knowing things, in trying your best, and in the way you love us. So now, do well in giving this gift.

8 I am not saying that you must do it. But I want to prove how strong your love is. That is why I have told you how other people show their love. **9** You know how much love our Lord Jesus Christ had. He was rich, but he became poor for your sakes. Because he became poor, you can become rich. **10** I tell you what I think. It is best for you to finish what you started a year ago. You were the first to think of helping, and you started to give money. **11** So now, finish doing it. You wanted to do it, so now finish it. Give as much as you can. **12** If a man wants to give, he is judged by what he has to give. He is not judged by what he cannot give. **13** I do not want it to be easy for others and hard for you. **14** I want it to be equal for everyone. Right now, you have plenty and are able to help them. Another time, when they have plenty, they will help you when you need it. In that way things will be equal. **15** The holy writings say, 'The person who had plenty did not have too much. And the person who did not have much, had enough.'

Titus and his friends

16 I thank God that he has put the same care for you into the heart of Titus that I have. **17** He was glad to go when I asked him, but he is also coming to you because he himself wants to come.

18 We are sending another brother with him. This brother has a good name in all the churches because he tells the good news. **19** Not only that, but the churches have chosen him to travel with us as we take care of this gift. We are doing this so that the Lord will be praised. We want to help others. **20** We do not want anyone to say that we have not done the right thing. So we are taking care of this big gift in the right way. **21** We want to do what the Lord says is right, but also what people say is right.

22 And we are also sending another brother with them. We have found him to be glad to help us in many matters, many times. And now he is much more glad to help because he trusts you very much. **23** I want to say this. Titus is

my close friend and he works with me. And about our other brothers, they have been sent by the churches. They bring praise to Christ. **24** Now then, prove that you love them. Prove that what we have said about you is true. Then the churches will know it.

CHAPTER 9

The gift for God's people

Of course, I really do not need to write to you about the money to be given to God's people. **2** I know that you wanted to help. I am proud to tell the people of Macedonia about you. I tell them, 'The people in Greece have been ready for a year.' And what you did has made most of them want to do something too. **3** But I am sending these brothers so that what we have said about you will be true in this way. I want you to be really ready with the gift, just as I said you would be. **4** If some men from Macedonia come with me and see that you are not ready, then we will be ashamed, and you too. We will be ashamed that we were so sure. **5** So I thought it would be good to send these brothers to you first. They will get this gift ready which you promised. Then it will be ready like a gift, and not as if you were forced to give it.

6 Here is something to remember. 'The man who plants a little bit will get only a little from it. The man who plants much will get much from it.' **7** Everyone should give what he wants in his heart to give. He should be glad to give it, and should not give it because he was forced to give. 'God loves a person who gives gladly.' **8** God is able to give you even more blessings than you need. In all things you will always have all you need for yourselves, and you will have enough to help all others. **9** The holy writings say, 'A good man gives away many things. He gives to the poor people. He will always be a good man in the sight of God.' **10** God is the one who gives seed to plant and bread to eat. He will give you enough to give away and will make it become more and more. Of the good things you do he will give you a big harvest. **11** You will become rich in every way. And then you will have enough to give plenty to all people. And many people will thank God for your gifts which we will bring them. **12** This gift of money will help to give God's people what they need. It will also make many people thank God. **13** This gift will prove something to them. They will praise God because you obey the good news of Christ. They will praise God because

you have given this gift to help them and all the others. **14** They will love you and talk to God about you, because God has blessed you very much. **15** Thank God for his gift so great that no words can ever tell it all!

CHAPTER 10

Paul proves his work

Now I, Paul, beg you to do something since you know that Christ was kind and gentle. You say I am weak when I am face to face with you, but when I am not with you, then I speak to you with hard words. **2** I beg you, do not force me to talk hard words when I come. I have made up my mind to talk hard words against some people. They think we are living for the things in this world. **3** Of course we are living in bodies made for this world. But we are not fighting for the things in this world. **4** We do not use the things of this world in our fighting, but we use the power of God. This power can break down the walls where the enemy hides. **5** We can break down what people think and every big idea that tries to stop people from knowing God. And we can make every thought a prisoner to obey Christ. **6** Only when you all obey, then we are ready to punish anyone who will not obey.

7 Surely you can see this. If one person is sure that he belongs to Christ, then he should see that we too belong to Christ just as he does. **8** The Lord gave us power to build you up, not to break you down. Maybe I talk about it too much. But I feel I am right in talking about it. **9** I do not want you to think that I am trying to make you afraid by my letters. **10** Some people say, 'Paul's letters make us listen. They are strong. But he himself is weak and what he says is not worth listening to.' **11** People like that should know this. When we come we will do what we have said in our letters. **12** We do not want to be like those people who praise themselves. They measure themselves by their own ideas, and look at themselves to see how good they are. When they do that, they are foolish!

13 We will not talk of things we did not do. No, we will only be proud of those things which God has given us to do. And he has sent us even as far as you. **14** We are not going farther than we should when we come to you. We were the first to come all the way to you with the good news of Christ. **15** We will not be proud of other men's work which we did not do. We hope that you will believe more strongly, so that we can

do more work among you, as God gives it to us. **16** Then we hope to tell the good news in places far beyond you. We will not be proud of the work given to someone else to do - work that was done before we got there. **17** The holy writings say that the person who is proud should be proud only of the Lord. **18** A man who praises himself is not a man who is good. The man who is really good is the man whom the Lord praises.

CHAPTER 11

Paul and the men who are not true apostles

I want to say something a little bit foolish. But please listen to me! **2** I love you as God loves you. I see you as a woman who has not been married and I am giving you to be the wife of a husband. That husband is Christ. **3** But the snake fooled Eve by his trick. And I am afraid that your minds will be drawn away from a clean, pure love of Christ. **4** You listen to a new man when he comes to tell you about a different Jesus, which is not the one we told you about. And when you receive a spirit and a message which are not the ones you had first, then you listen too much. **5** But I really do not think that the chief apostles are any better than I am! **6** Maybe I am not a good talker, but I surely know what I am talking about! Yes, we made this plain to you in every way in all things.

7 Perhaps it was wrong for me to bring myself down in order to raise you up. Do you think that? Was it wrong for me to tell you the good news without pay? **8** I took pay from other churches. I made them poor so that I might help you. **9** When I was with you and needed money, I did not make any of you pay me. When the brothers came from Macedonia, they gave me what I needed. So I was not, and I will not be, any trouble to you. **10** Surely, the true word of Christ is in me. I will never stop being proud of this anywhere in Achaia [Greece]. **11** Why is this? Is it because I do not love you? God knows that I love you.

12 And I will keep on doing what I am doing now. Some teachers are praising themselves. They say they are like us. By doing this I prove they are not like us. **13** Men like that are not true apostles. They work to fool people. They try to make themselves look like apostles of Christ. **14** I am not surprised. Satan tries to make himself look like an angel of light. **15** So it is not strange if his workers also try to make

themselves look like God's workers who do right. They will come to an end like the work they do!

Paul's trouble as an apostle

16 I say again, no one should think that I am foolish. But if you do, then please listen to me as if I were foolish. I also want to do a little talking about myself. **17** I am not talking like the Lord when I say this. It seems foolish to say so much about myself. **18** Many people talk about themselves in the world. So I will too. **19** Since you are wise, you still agree to listen to foolish people. **20** You listen to a man even if he makes slaves of you, even if he spends all your money, even if he catches you in a trap, even if he is proud of himself, even if he slaps you in the face. **21** I am ashamed, but I must say that we were too weak to be like that!

Anything that others want to be proud of, I can talk about too. And yet it is really foolish to do so. **22** Are they Hebrew people? So am I. Are they Israel's people? So am I. Is Abraham their father? He is mine too. **23** Are they workers for Christ? (I talk like one who is not in his right mind.) I am a better worker. I have worked much harder. I have been in prison more often. I have been beaten many, many times. Often I have almost died. **24** The Jewish leaders five times gave me thirty-nine strikes with the rope. **25** Three times people beat me with sticks, and once they threw rocks at me. Three times I was in a boat when it broke in the sea. I have been in the water all one night and day. **26** I have travelled much. I have crossed bad rivers. I have gone where men might steal my things. The Jews and those who are not Jews have troubled me. I have been in hard places in the city. I have had hard times in the desert. I have had hard times on the water. I have had hard times among those who should have been my brothers and were not. **27** I have worked hard. I have been tired out. I have often had no sleep at night. I have been hungry and thirsty. I have often had nothing to eat. I have been cold and did not have enough clothes to wear. **28** Beside all other things, my heart is troubled about the churches. That is a load I carry every day. **29** When anyone is weak, I am weak too. When anyone is made to fall away, my heart burns within me

30 If I must talk about myself, I will talk about the things that show I am weak. **31** God knows I am not telling lies. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and he is to be praised forever.

32 In the city of Damascus a man ruled for king Aretas. He had the gates of the city guarded because he wanted to catch me. **33** But I sat in a basket. Then it was put out through a window in the wall and was let down. And so I got away from him.

CHAPTER 12

The visions and things which the Lord showed Paul

I must talk about myself even though it does no good. I will talk about visions and things which the Lord has shown me. **2** I know a Christian man. Fourteen years ago he was taken up into the place where God lives. I do not know if he was in his body when he went or not. God knows if he was. **3** I do know this. He was taken up into the place where God lives. And again I say, I do not know if he was in his body or not. God knows if he was. **4** This man heard things which cannot be told. No person on earth can speak them. **5** I will talk about such a man. But I will not talk about myself. If I do talk, it will be about the ways I am weak.

6 Now if I wanted to talk about myself, I would not be foolish. I would be telling the truth. But I will not say any more. This is why: I do not want anyone to think I am better than what he sees I am, or hears me teach. I want him to judge me only by what he can see in me and by what I say. **7** Because the things God showed me were so wonderful, I might have become too proud of myself. But something happened and stopped that. It was like a thorn in me. It came from Satan [the devil] to trouble me. It came to stop me from being too proud. **8** I begged the Lord three times that this trouble might leave me. **9** But he said to me, 'My kindness and strength is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is strong.' So then, I am very glad to talk about how weak I am so that the power of Christ may live in me. **10** So then, for the sake of Christ I am glad to be weak, to have people say wrong things about me, to be poor, to have people trouble me, and to have hard times. When I am weak, that is the time I am really strong.

Paul's heart is troubled about the Corinthian church

11 Now I have been acting like one with no sense, but you have made me do it. You should have been talking about the good things I have done. The very best apostles are not one bit

better than I am, even though I am nothing at all. **12** There are signs that show a true apostle. I did all these things when I was among you. There were signs, wonderful works, and other big works which I did. You saw the power of God, even though I was being tested. **13** In what way did you not receive as much as the other churches? Only this! I did not trouble you to pay me. Forgive me for the wrong I did you!

14 Now, I am ready to come to you for the third time. And I will not trouble you to pay me. I do not want what belongs to you, but I want you. The children should not save up for their parents, but the parents should do it for their children. **15** For my part, I am glad to spend what I have, and to spend myself for the sake of your souls. But it seems to me that the more I love you the less you love me! **16** All right then, I did not trouble you for any money. But some of you think that I have been mean and played a trick on you. **17** Did I send anyone to you to get something for myself? No! **18** I asked Titus to go and I sent our brother with him. Did Titus get anything for himself? No! Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?

19 Am I saying all this just to you? Are we just trying to make ourselves look right to you? No, we say this before God and in Christ. And my dear people, I have done it all to make you better Christians. **20** I want to be pleased with you when I come. But I am afraid I will not be. And I am afraid that you will not be pleased with me. I fear that I may find quarrelling, jealousy, anger, and that I will find you are enemies to each other, that you are spoiling each other's names, that you are telling stories about each other, that you are proud and do not obey rulers. **21** And I am afraid that when I come my God will make me ashamed of you. I am afraid that my heart will be very sad about you. Many have been doing wrong things for a long time. Many have not turned away from their dirty ways, their wrong use of sex, and the things they should be ashamed of.

CHAPTER 13

Last words and greetings

This is the third time I am coming to you. The holy writings say 'Any complaint must be proved by the words of two or three people.' **2** I have told you before, when I visited you the second time. And I tell you again now, while I am not there. When I come again, I will punish those

who did wrong before and the others who have done wrong since. **3** This will be the proof you want that Christ speaks through me. Christ is not weak when he deals with you. No, he shows his power among you. **4** It is true that he was weak when he died on a cross. But now he is alive by the power of God. We are weak as he was, but we will also be alive as he is by the power God has. You will see this.

5 Look at yourselves and check to see if you still believe. Test yourselves. Do you not know Jesus Christ is in you? If he is not in you, you do not pass the test. **6** I hope you will know that we pass the test. **7** We ask God to help you that you will do nothing wrong. That is not to show you that we pass the test. We want you to do what is right even if we do not pass the test. **8** After all, we have no power to work against what is true, but only for the truth. **9** We are glad to be weak, if you are made strong. And

we ask God for this too, that you may become perfect. **10** That is why I am writing these things to you the way I am, before I reach you. Then, when I come to you, I do not want to be hard on you. I do not want to use the power which the Lord has given me. He gave it to me to help to make you better Christians, not to break you down.

11 Now, my brothers, in closing I say, 'Goodbye.' Be what you should be. Listen to what I say. Be good to each other. Agree with one another. Live in peace with one another. And the God who gives love and peace will be with you. **12** Greet one another with a holy kiss. **13** All of God's people send greetings to you.

14 And to all of you I say, 'May the kindness and blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ be upon you. May God show you his love. May you all have the Holy Spirit with you.'

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Galatia in Asia Minor (part of the country now called Turkey). He tells them to keep to the true teaching of the Good News about Jesus Christ. They must not listen to people who give wrong teaching. They must keep on believing in Jesus, God's Son. This is the only way they can keep right with God.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul the apostle, a messenger from God. Men did not call me to be an apostle. Men did not make me an apostle. Jesus Christ and God the Father made me an apostle. It was the same God the Father who raised Jesus from death.

2 All the Christian brothers who are with me and I send greetings. To the churches in the province of Galatia:

3 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you with his loving kindness and give you peace. **4** Christ gave his life to pay for the wrong things we have done. He did this to set us free from the wrong ways of this world. This is what our God and Father wanted him to do.

5 All the praise for this belongs to God for ever and ever. Yes, it does!

There is no other good news

6 I am very much surprised. It is so soon, and you are leaving God who called you by the love of Christ. Instead you are listening to another good news. **7** There is really no other good news. But some people are making you think wrong things. They want to change the good news of Christ. **8** We are wrong if we tell you a different kind of good news. Even an angel from heaven is wrong to tell you something different. Let a punishment from God come upon us if we tell you a different kind of good news. **9** We have said it before, and I say it again now. A curse be on any one who tells you a kind of good news which is not the good news we have already told you.

10 Now, am I trying to please men or God? If I were still trying to please men, then I would not be the servant of Christ.

Paul becomes an apostle

11 My brothers, I want you to know this. The good news which I told you is not man's good news. **12** No man told it to me. No man taught it to me. But it was Jesus Christ who showed it to me. **13** You have heard how I lived while I

was still under the law of the Jews. I troubled the church of God very much. And I even tried to stop the church people altogether. **14** I knew more about the law of the Jews than many of my own age among my people. I wanted much more than they did to obey the laws which our fathers passed down to us, even the ones that were not written. **15** But God chose me to be an apostle before I was born. And he called me by his love. **16** God wanted to show his Son to me so that I might tell people who are not Jews about him. I did not go and ask any other person about the good news. **17** I did not go to Jerusalem to the men who were apostles before I was. But I went away into the country of Arabia. Then afterwards, I came back to the city of Damascus.

18 Three years later, I went to Jerusalem to visit Peter, and stayed with him fifteen days.

19 James, the brother of the Lord, was the only other apostle I saw. I did not see any of the other apostles. **20** God knows that what I am writing to you is not a lie. **21** After I had been at Jerusalem, I went to the countries of Syria and Cilicia. **22** At that time the churches of Christ in Judea did not know me. They had never seen me. **23** They only heard people say, 'This is the man who used to trouble us and he is now telling others to believe what he once tried to stop.' **24** And they praised God for what had happened to me.

CHAPTER 2

The other apostles receive Paul

Fourteen years later I went to Jerusalem again. This time I went with Barnabas and I took Titus with me. **2** God showed me that I should go. And I told them about the good news which I tell to people who are not Jews. I told those who seemed to be church leaders when I was alone with them. I did not want my work to come to nothing - the work I had done or the work I was doing. **3** Titus was with me. He was not a Jew, but they did not force him to be circumcised [have the mark of a Jew made on his body]. **4** But some men got in who were not true brothers. They came in secretly to spy on

us to find out things about us. They did not want us to be free the way Christ Jesus has made us free. But they wanted to make us obey the old laws again [which were given to Moses by God]. **5** But we did not let them tell us what to do, no, not even for one minute. In that way the real good news will be yours always. **6** Those men who seemed to be leaders did not teach me anything new. It does not matter to me who they were. God does not love some people more than others. **7** No, the leaders saw that God called me to take the good news to those who are not circumcised [not Jews], just as he called Peter to take the good news to those who are circumcised [Jews]. **8** The same God who made Peter an apostle to the Jews made me an apostle to those who are not Jews. **9** The leaders saw that God had blessed me. James, Peter, and John seemed to be leaders in the church. They saw that God had blessed me. So they accepted Barnabas and me as fellow workers. They agreed that we should go to the people who were not Jews and they themselves would go to the Jews. **10** One thing they asked us to do was to help the poor Christians. I was very glad to do this.

Paul talks to Peter at Antioch

11 One day Peter came to the city of Antioch. Then I had to tell him face to face that he had done wrong. He really was wrong! **12** Here is what happened. Peter ate with those who were not Jews. Then some men came whom James had sent. When they came he stopped eating with those who were not Jews. He was afraid of what the Jews might think. **13** All the other Jewish Christians did the same as Peter did. They acted as if it was not right to eat with those who were not Jews. Even Barnabas did the same. **14** But I saw they were not doing right. They were not obeying the true teaching of the good news. So I said to Peter in front of them all, 'You are a Jew. But you live the way people do who are not Jews. How then can you force those who are not Jews to live the way the Jews do?'

All people, both Jews and others, are saved by believing

15 We ourselves were born Jews. We are not of those who still follow wrong ways, those who are not Jews. **16** Yet we know that God does not call a man good because he tries to obey the law of the Jews. But we know that God puts a man right because he believes in Jesus Christ.

So we also believed in Jesus Christ. And we are put right with God because we believe in Christ and not because we obey the law. No person will ever be called good by God just because he tries to obey the law of the Jews.

17 We came to Christ to be put right with God. That showed us how much we had been bad men. Was it Christ who made us bad men? No, surely not! **18** If I build up again what I once broke down, I do wrong. **19** Through the law I died. Now the law has no power over me so that I may live for God. **20** I died when Christ died on a cross. I do not live now, but Christ lives in me. Now while I still live in my body, I live by believing in the Son of God. He loved me and gave himself for me. **21** So I do not make the love of God useless. But if a person can be made good by the law, then Christ died for nothing.

CHAPTER 3

Obeying the law, or believing God

O you Galatians, have you no sense at all? Who has fooled you? You knew, just as if you had seen him with your own eyes, that Jesus Christ was killed on a cross. **2** Here is one thing I want to ask you. You received the Holy Spirit. Was that because you obeyed the law [given to the Jews by Moses]? No, it was because you heard God's word and believed it. **3** Have you no sense at all? You began living your new life by the power of the Spirit. And are you now trying to finish living it by your own power [to keep the law]? **4** So many things happened to you. Was it all for nothing? Surely it was not for nothing. **5** God gives you the Spirit. He does wonderful works among you. Does he do this because you obey the law? No, he does it because you heard the word of God and believed it.

6 So it was with Abraham. The holy writings say 'He believed God, and that was why God called him a good man.' **7** You see then, the people who believe God are children of Abraham. **8** The holy writings say that he will put people right with himself if they believe him, even those who are not Jews. It was written down before God did it. The holy writings told the good news to Abraham ahead of time. It said, 'God will make you a blessing to all nations and people.' **9** Abraham believed God and was blessed. And so those who believe God are blessed too, along with him.

10 A curse is on all people who are trying to become good by obeying the law. The holy

writings say, 'Everyone is cursed who does not always obey everything that is written in the book of the law and do it.' **11** Now, you can see this. No man is called a good man by God because he obeys the law. The holy writings say, 'Those who are right with God shall live by faith.' **12** The law does not ask people to believe. It says, 'He who obeys the laws will live because of them.' **13** Christ has saved us from the curse which the law put on us. He took the curse on himself. It should have been on us. The holy writings say, 'A curse be on everyone who hangs on a tree!' **14** Christ Jesus did this so that those who are not Jews will have the blessing which Abraham had. He did this so that when we believe, we will receive the Spirit who was promised to us.

The law and the promise

15 My brothers, it is the same as when a man makes a promise. He makes it good and strong. Then no one can break it or add anything to it. **16** God made his promises to Abraham and to his Son. The promise does not have the words, 'and to his sons,' for that means many sons. But it says, 'and to his Son,' and that Son is Christ. **17** Here is what I mean. The law was given [to Moses] four hundred and thirty years after God gave that promise to Abraham. But it cannot break the strong promise which God made. And the law cannot change God's promise. **18** Do we get what God has promised us by obeying the law? If we do, then we are not getting it by his promise. But God gave it to Abraham by his promise.

19 Why then was the law made? God gave it after he made the promise, because so many people were doing what was wrong. The law was to be in power only until the Son came, the one to whom the promise was made. The law was handed down by God's angels with the help of a middle man. **20** To need the help of a middle man there must be more than one person making the agreement. But God is the only one who made the promise.

Why the law was given

21 Is the law against the promises of God? No, it is not! If a law had been given that could give people life, then surely people would have become good people by the law. **22** But the holy writings say it is like this. The whole world is in prison, kept there by the wrong things they have done. This was done so that people who believe in Jesus Christ would have the blessing.

This blessing was promised to those who believe.

23 Before one came for us to believe in, the law held us in prison like slaves. We were kept there until the one to believe in should come. **24** The law watched over us, as if we were children, until Christ came. Then God would put us right with himself through faith in Christ. **25** But now that one has come for us to believe in, the law does not watch over us any longer. **26** You are all God's children because you have believed in Christ Jesus. **27** All of you who have been baptised into Christ have taken Christ as your own. **28** There is no longer any difference between a Jew and one who is not a Jew; between a slave and a free man; between a man and a woman. When you are in the body of Christ Jesus, you are all alike. **29** If you belong to Christ, you are Abraham's children. And if you are Abraham's children, you will receive the blessing that God has promised.

CHAPTER 4

The right to become sons of God

Here is what I mean. When a man dies, his son is to receive his property. As long as the son is not grown up, he cannot have it. He has no more right than a servant, even though he really owns all the property. **2** He still has people who take care of him and he must obey them until the time set by his father. **3** So it is with us. Before we were grown up, we were like servants. We were just beginning to learn about the things of this world. **4** But when the right time came, God sent his Son to make us free. He was born by a woman during the time when men had to obey the law. **5** God sent him to set the people free who were under the law. God sent him so that we would receive our rights as sons of God. **6** Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts. The Spirit calls out, 'Father!' **7** So then, because of what God has done, you are no longer a slave but you are a son. And because you are a son, you will receive what he promised.

Paul wants to help the believers

8 At first, you did not know God. At that time you obeyed things which are not real gods. **9** But now you know God. That is, God knows you. Then why do you turn to things that are weak and can do no good? Do you want to obey them again? **10** You have holy days, holy

months, holy seasons, and holy years. **11** I fear that all my work for you has been for nothing.

12 My brothers, I beg you, be like me because I am like you. You did me no wrong. **13** You know that I was sick when I first told you the good news. **14** My sickness troubled you. But you did not think wrongly of me or turn away from me. You received me as if I were an angel from God, as if I were Christ Jesus. **15** Why are you not happy anymore? I saw myself that you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if you could do such a thing. **16** Do you hate me because I tell you the truth? **17** Other people are trying hard to get you on their side. But they do not mean to help you. They want to get you away from Christ so that you will listen to them. **18** Of course, it is good if someone tries to help you, but only if it is for a good reason. It is always good, not only when I am with you.

19 My dear children, I feel pain for you again, like a mother when her child is being born. I will feel pain until Christ lives in your heart. **20** I wish I could be with you now, and not have to talk this way. But I am troubled about you.

What we learn from Hagar and Sarah

21 Tell me, you people that want the law to control you, why do you not listen to the law? **22** The holy writings say that Abraham had two sons. One was the son of the slave woman. The other one was the son of the free woman. **23** The child of the slave woman was born as any child is born. But the child of the free woman was born because God promised he would be born. **24** These things have another meaning. These two women are like two agreements. One agreement came from Mount Sinai. The children are born slaves. That agreement is like Hagar. **25** So Hagar means Mount Sinai in the country of Arabia. She is like the city of Jerusalem today, because Jerusalem is a slave and her children are too. **26** But the city of Jerusalem in heaven is free, and that is our mother. **27** The holy writings say, 'The woman who has not had a child, be happy! You who do not feel the pain of bearing a child, open your mouth and shout. The woman who is left alone has more children than the woman who has a husband!'

28 My brothers, we are like Isaac. We are born because God made a promise. **29** Abraham's child who was born as any child is born, troubled the other child who was born by the Spirit. It is that way today. **30** But what does

the holy writings say? They says, 'Put away the slave woman and her son. The son of the slave woman will have nothing when the father dies. The son of the free woman will have everything.' **31** So, my brothers, we are not the children of the slave woman, but we are children of the free woman.

CHAPTER 5

Stay free!

Christ has made us really free. So, stay free! Do not let yourselves be made slaves again.

2 I, Paul, say to you again that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ is no help to you at all. **3** Again I say to every man who is circumcised, he must obey all the law. **4** Some of you are trying to obey the law, so that God will call you good. If you do this, you have been cut off from Christ. You have lost the blessing of God. **5** But we hope to be made right by believing in Christ. The Spirit helps us to do this. **6** So if a man belongs to Christ Jesus, it does not matter if he is circumcised or not. He must show by his love that he believes.

7 You were doing well. Who stopped you from doing what is right? **8** God calls you but he is not the one who made you change your minds. **9** Even a little yeast makes all the bread rise. **10** The Lord makes me sure that you will not think any other way. But the teacher who is troubling your minds will be punished. It does not matter who he is. **11** My brothers, am I still telling people to be circumcised? If I am, why are people still troubling me? If it were true, the cross of Christ, which they do not like, has lost its power. **12** These teachers are troubling your minds. How I wish they would cut themselves off!

13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not take that to mean that you can do as you please. But work for each other because you love each other. **14** This one law is the whole law: 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' **15** But if you bite and chew each other, be careful, or you will be killed by each other.

Doing what the Spirit wants us to do

16 So I say, let the Spirit tell you what you should do. Then you will not do the wrong things you yourselves want to do. **17** People want to do wrong things that the Spirit does not want them to do. And the Spirit wants people to do things they do not want to do. The Spirit and the wrong things you want to do are against

each other, so that you do not do what you yourself want to do. **18** If you do what the Spirit wants you to do, then you will be free from the law.

19 It is easy to see the wrong things people want to do. Both married people and those who are not married commit adultery. People make themselves unclean because of their wrong use of sex. They do things they should be ashamed of doing. **20** They worship idols. They use witch-power. They hate. They quarrel. They are jealous. They get angry. They want their own way. They do not agree together and they join different groups against each other. **21** They want what other people have. They even kill. They drink too much strong drink. They like to take part in loud drinking and dancing. They do other things like these. I have told you before and I tell you again. Those who do these things will not be in the kingdom of God.

22-23 But these are the things which the Spirit wants you to show: love, joy, peace, patience, being kind, being good, being true, being gentle, and keeping the body under control. There is no law that says, 'These things are wrong.' **24** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have stopped doing the wrong things they want to do. They have stopped them just as if they were killed on a cross. And they have even stopped wanting to do them.

25 The Spirit gives us life. And so we should do what the Spirit wants us to do. **26** We must not be proud of ourselves. We must not make one another angry. We must not want what other people have.

CHAPTER 6

Carry one another's loads

My brothers, perhaps a man has done something wrong. If so, you who are strong in the Spirit must help him to do the right thing again. Help him in a gentle way. Take care yourself, that you are not tried and will want to do wrong. **2** Help each other in your troubles. In that way you obey Christ's law.

3 A man who thinks that he is an important person when he is not, that man fools himself.

4 Let every man test his own work. Then he will be proud of his own work. He will not be proud because he thinks his own work is better than someone else's work. **5** Each man must carry his own load.

6 People are taught the word of God. They should give some of all the good things they have to those who teach them.

7 Do not be fooled about this. God cannot be fooled. A man gets what he plants. **8** The man who plants the wrong things he wants to do will get death, because of those wrong things. But the person who plants what the Spirit wants him to do will live for ever, because of the Spirit. **9** We must not get tired of doing good things. If we do not stop doing them, we will get something back when the right time comes. **10** So then, when we can, we should do good to all people. But most of all, we should do it to those who are in God's family.

Paul's last words and greeting

11 (See, I am writing this to you in big letters with my own hand.) **12** Some people want to do things that can be seen. They try to force you to be circumcised. They want to hide from trouble which would come to them if they talk about the cross of Christ. **13** Even those who are circumcised do not obey the law. But they want you to be circumcised. Then they can be proud that they made you do it. **14** But I will not be proud of anything but of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of it, the things of the world have become dead to me, and I have become dead to the world. **15** It does not matter if a person is circumcised or not, but he must become a new person.

16 May all who live by this rule have peace. And may God bless them. They are the true people of Israel and they belong to God.

17 From now on, please do not trouble me. For I have marks on my body that show I belong to the Lord Jesus.

18 My brothers, may the kindness and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ bless your spirit. May he do it!

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

Paul writes to the Christians at Ephesus which was in Asia Minor (now part of Turkey). He was in prison in Rome at that time. He tells the church people about God and his love for them. He tells how God wants all people on earth and in heaven to worship Jesus Christ because this brings them closer to God. Christ is now the head of the Church. But one day he will be the head person in the whole world. Paul wants everyone to believe in Jesus. He wants us to follow the ways of Jesus: being kind to one another, and at peace with each other, free from our wrong and sinful ways.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. It was God's wish for me to be his messenger.

I send greetings to God's people in the city of Ephesus, to those who believe in Christ Jesus.

2 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in their kindness give you peace.

God's plan for us

3 Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every blessing which is in heaven, such as the Spirit gives us. **4** Before the world was made, God chose us in Christ. He chose us that we should be holy and good before him. **5** Because he loved us, he planned that we should be his own children. It is through Jesus Christ that we are God's children. That is the way God wanted it to be.

6 Praise him! His kindness is great and wonderful. We have been accepted by God through Jesus Christ, whom he loves so much.

7 Jesus Christ has given his blood [died] to make us free. He has forgiven us for our wrong ways. We have been put right with God freely because of his great kindness. **8** He has given us blessing after blessing in his wisdom and understanding. **9** He has shown us the plan he had. This plan was what he wanted to do through Christ. **10** When the right time came, God planned to bring together everything in heaven and on earth, and make Christ head of them all. **11** In and through Christ we will have a share in all that belongs to him. Long ago God chose us for this. And he makes things happen that he wants to do. **12** We believed in Christ first, so we will praise him because he is so great and wonderful.

13 You also believed in Christ when you heard the true message. That message is the good news by which you were saved. You received the Holy Spirit whom God had promised. You

were marked as belonging to him. **14** The Holy Spirit is the first part of what we are to receive from God. This proves that we will get all God has promised. Some day we shall have them all. Praise God! He is very great and wonderful.

Asking God how to be wise

15-16 Here is why I always thank God for you. I have heard that you believe in the Lord Jesus and love all of God's people. I think of you when I talk to God. **17** He is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father who is very great and wonderful. I ask him to give you a mind that is wise and will understand about him. **18** I ask him that you may understand these things in your hearts. I ask him that you may know what a great hope you have because God has called you. I ask him that you may know the rich and great blessings God has promised to his people. **19** I ask him that you may know the wonderful power he has to do things for us who believe in Christ. His power is very strong. **20** God used that power when he raised Christ from death and had him sit at his right side in heaven. **21** He is greater than any ruler, power, chief, or king. His name is greater than any other name, not only in this world, but in the world that will come. **22** And God has put all things under Christ. He has made him the head of the church people in all matters. **23** The church [all the people who believe in Jesus Christ] is his body. The church people have everything that Christ has. He is the One who is in everything everywhere.

CHAPTER 2

From death to life

There was a time when you were dead. That was because of the bad and the wrong things you did. **2** At one time you did those wrong things, just like the people around you. You obeyed the ruler who has the power over things in the air. That ruler is the spirit who is working now in the people who do not obey God. **3** At one time we too all lived like them. We lived to

please ourselves. We did what our bodies and our minds wanted us to do. We were people with whom God was angry, just like other people. **4** But God was very, very kind. He loved us very, very much.

5 We were dead because of the wrong things we had done. He has made us alive with Christ. You have been saved by his love and kindness. **6** God raised us from death with Christ Jesus and gave us a place to sit with him in heaven. **7** He did this to show us in all times to come how much he can bless people and how kind he is. It was Jesus Christ who brought this kindness to us. **8** You have been saved by God's love and kindness because you believed. It was not because of anything you did, but it was a gift from God. **9** You were not saved by trying to do what the law says. So no one can be proud about it. **10** God has made us. In Jesus Christ God made us so that we can do good things. He planned that we should live that way.

Made one in Christ

11 So remember that you were not born Jews. (They call you 'The Uncircumcised'). **12** Remember you did not know Christ at that time. You were far away from the people of Israel. You had no part in the agreements which God promised to them. You had no hope and you were without God in this world. **13** At one time you were far away, but now you have been brought near to God by the blood [death] of Jesus Christ. **14** Christ has made peace between us. He has brought both Jews and non-Jews together into one people. He has broken down the wall that divided us. **15** In his own body Christ made an end of the law and its rules. He did this so that in him two peoples could become one. In this way, he made peace between us. **16** He did this so that by the cross he might bring both kinds of people back to God in one body. And by the cross he has stopped our hating each other. **17** He came and said that there is now peace. There is peace for you who were far away from God and for those who were near. **18** Because of what Christ has done, we can come to the Father by one Spirit. **19** So then you are no longer strangers or people far away. But you live with God's people and belong to God's family. **20** God's family is like a house and you are part of the building. The apostles and prophets are like the lower walls of the house and you are the building on this foundation. Jesus Christ is the big stone at the corner. **21** He is the one who holds the

whole house together, and it becomes a holy house belonging to the Lord. **22** You too are a part of this house. God himself lives in this house by his Spirit.

CHAPTER 3

Paul's work for those who are not Jews

That is why I, Paul, am a prisoner who belongs to Jesus Christ. It is for the sake of you people who are not Jews. **2** I am sure you have heard that God gave me work to do for you. **3** He showed me what his plan was. And I have already written a little about it to you. **4** When you read this, you can understand why I know about his plan for Christ. **5** In the past, God did not tell his plan to people. But now the Holy Spirit has shown it to his holy apostles and prophets. **6** This is God's plan. Those who are not Jews will also share in the blessings of God. They also are a part of the body of Jesus Christ. They also will receive the things God has promised in Jesus Christ through the good news.

7 God gave me the work of telling that good news. And he blessed me by his power. **8** I am less than the least of all God's people, and yet he blessed me. It is my work to tell those who are not Jews about the wonderful blessings of Christ. There are so many that we cannot know them all. **9** God has blessed me so that I might tell all people plainly what his plan is. God, who made all things, did not tell anyone about his plan in all the times in the past. **10** Now he wants those who rule and have power in the sky to know how very wise God is. They will know this when they look at the church people. **11** This is what God has always planned to do. And he did it in Jesus Christ our Lord. **12** In Christ we are not to be afraid to come to God. We are sure we can come because we believe in Christ. **13** So I ask you not to be sad when you think of the troubles I have for your sake. You should be proud about it.

The love of Christ

14 That is why I kneel down before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **15** From him every family in heaven or on earth gets its name. **16** I ask him to make you very strong in heart by his Spirit. He has great and wonderful blessings and is able to do so because of the fullness of his glory. **17** And I ask that Christ may live in your hearts because you believe in him. I ask that you may live and grow in love. **18** I ask that

God will give you power to know how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is. All Christians should know that. **19** I ask God that you may know the love of Christ which is more than we can ever know. I ask that you may be filled with everything that God has.

20 God can do much more than we ask him to do, or we even think of. He does it by his power which is working in us. **21** So, praise him in the church meeting in Christ Jesus. Praise him for ever and ever! May it be so!

CHAPTER 4

Working together in unity and love

I am a prisoner who belongs to the Lord. I beg you, live the way people should live who have been called by God. **2** Do not be proud at all. Be very humble. Love one another and be patient with each other. **3** The Spirit has made you all one. Try to stay like that. May you be at peace with one another. **4** There is one body of Christ and one Spirit. When God called you, there was one hope before you in your calling. **5** There is one Lord, one way to believe, and one baptism. **6** There is one God and Father of us all. He is over all. He works through all. And he is living in us all.

7 But each one of us has received a blessing, whatever amount Christ has given to each one.

8 So then, the holy writings say, 'When Christ went up to heaven he took those he had won with him. And he gave gifts to men.' **9** Now, what does 'he went up' mean? Does it not mean that he also came down to the earth below?

10 The one who came down is the same one who went up higher than all the heavens. He did this so that he would be everywhere.

11 The gifts he gave are these: some are to be apostles; some prophets; some evangelists; some pastors and teachers. **12** These gifts are to make God's people better able to do their work for him and to make the body of Christ become stronger. **13** The gifts are given so that we will all believe the one way and all know the Son of God. They are given so that we will be really grown-up Christians, like Christ himself.

14 The body of Christ must grow so that we will no longer be like children. We are like children when we are pushed this way and that way. We change our minds every time people bring a different teaching. Some teachers teach the lies of men and fool people so that they believe wrong things. **15** We must say what is true and

say it with love. In that way we will grow up in all things to be like Christ, who is the head of this body. **16** The whole body is joined and held together by every joint that it has. It is from Christ that the whole body grows as each different part does its work. It grows so that it becomes stronger in love.

The new life in Christ

17 Here then is what the Lord has told me to say. You must not live like the people who do not believe in God. They do not think clearly.

18 Their minds are dark. They are far away from God's life because they do not know the truth. They have no love in their hearts.

19 Nothing makes them ashamed anymore. They live a very bad life. They do every kind of wrong thing. And they always want to do it more.

20 That is not what you have learned from Christ! **21** You were taught by him, and Jesus has the truth! **22** Stop being the person you used to be in your old life. That person was bad because he wanted to do wrong things.

23 Have a new mind and heart. **24** Be a new person. That new person has been made like God. He does what is right and holy because he knows the truth.

25 So stop telling lies. Tell the truth to each other. We all are parts of the same body.

26 When you are angry, do not do anything wrong. And do not stay angry after the sun goes down. **27** Do not let the devil control you.

28 The person who used to steal must not steal now. But he must do some good work with his own hands. Then he will have something to give to the poor people.

29 Do not let any bad words come out of your mouth. But say good things that will help people. Then those who hear you will also be blessed by what you say.

30 Do nothing that makes the Holy Spirit feel sad. He is the mark God has put on you until the day you will belong to God altogether. **31** You must stop all hate, big and small anger, loud talk, saying wrong things about people, and all wanting to do wrong things to people. **32** Be kind to one another. Have a loving and understanding heart. Forgive one another because God has forgiven you for Christ's sake.

33 Let your hearts be full of love, kindness, and mercy. Let your hearts be full of peace and patience. Let your hearts be full of gentleness and self-control. Let your hearts be full of faith, hope, and love. These three things will last forever. The greatest of these is love.

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CHAPTER 5

Good Christian living

So try to be like God, because you are his own dear children. **2** Love others as Christ has loved

us. He gave his life for us, a sweet-smelling offering and a sacrifice to God.

3 As God's people, you should not even talk about wrong living, any kind of wrong sex or wanting things you cannot have. **4** There should be no dirty talk, no foolish talk, no funny stories with a wrong meaning. This is not a good way to talk. But what you should do is thank God.

5 You know this. There are people who use sex wrongly, and who are always wanting what others have. No such a person has any place in the kingdom of Christ and of God. He is worshipping an idol.

6 Do not let anyone fool you by their empty talk. It is because people do these wrong things that God is very angry. He is angry with the people who do not obey him. **7** So then, have nothing to do with them. **8** You were in the dark before, but now the Lord has given you light. Live like people who have the light. **9** People who have the light do all that is good and right and true.

10 Learn what pleases the Lord. **11** Have no part in the empty things people do in the dark. Show them that they are wrong. **12** It is a shame even to talk about the things they do in secret. **13** But when the light shines on something, it can be seen. Anything that shows up wrong ways is light. **14** So it is said, 'Wake up, you who are asleep! Rise from death. And Christ will give you light.'

15 Take care how you live. Do not live like people who are not wise, but live like people who are wise. **16** Make good use of time because people live in very wrong ways these days. **17** So then, be wise and understand what the Lord wants. **18** Do not get drunk with wine. That is living in a wrong way. But be filled with the Spirit. **19** Speak to one another by the songs in the holy writings, and songs of praise, and Christian songs. Sing and make a joyful noise in your hearts to the Lord.

20 Always thank God the Father for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Husbands and wives

21 Give way to each other because you respect Christ. **22** Wives, obey your husbands as you obey the Lord. **23** The husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church people. The church is his body and he saved it. **24** Wives should obey their husbands in everything, just as the church people obey Christ.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church people. He gave his life for the church. **26** He did that so that he might make the church people holy, when they were washed with water by God's word. **27** He gave his life for the church so that one day he can look at the church and see that the people are great and wonderful. The people of the church must have no dirty spot or wrinkle or anything like that. But they are to be holy and good. **28** So husbands should love their wives as they love their own bodies. The man who loves his wife loves himself. **29** No one ever hated his own body. But he feeds it and takes care of it. **30** In the same way Christ takes care of the church because we are parts of his body. **31** The holy writings say 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother. He shall be joined to his wife, and the two of them shall be like one person.'

32 This is a wonderful plan of God. I am speaking here of the plan about Christ and the church people. **33** However, each one of you should love his wife as he loves himself. And the wife should respect her husband.

CHAPTER 6

Obeying and loving

Children, obey your parents as the Lord wants you to. This is the right thing to do. **2-2** 'Respect your father and mother.' This is the first law of God with a promise: 'So that all will be well with you, and that you may live long on earth.'

4 Fathers, do not make your children angry. But teach them the things children need to know, and tell them what they must not do. Teach them what Christ would teach them.

5 Servants, obey your boss. Respect him with all your heart and try to please him as you would Christ. **6** Obey not only when he is looking at you, as if you were pleasing a man. But obey as the servants of Christ, and do with all your heart what God wants you to do. **7** Work gladly as if you were working for the Lord and not for men.

8 You know that the Lord will pay every man for the good things he does. It does not matter if he is a servant or a free man.

9 And you who are bosses, be good to your servants also. Do not talk loud, hard words to them. Remember that both their Lord and yours is in heaven. He does not love one person more than another.

The things God gives us to fight with

10 Last of all, I say this. Be strong in the Lord and use the strength he gives. **11** Use everything that God has given you so that you can fight against the tricks of the devil. **12** We are not fighting against people of flesh and blood. But we are fighting against rulers and powers whom we cannot see. We are fighting against those who control the darkness of this world, and against bad spirits who have power in the air. **13** So use everything that God has given you, that you can fight when the bad time comes. You will need to do everything you can do to stand!

14 So then, stand and hold on tight to the truth like you put on a belt. Do what is right. Wear it as a cover for your body. **15** You have the good news of peace. Wear that like shoes on your feet. **16** You believe in God. Take that and cover all of yourself with it. With that you can stop all the poison arrows of the devil. **17** You have been saved. Wear your salvation like you wear something on your head to protect yourself. And

take with you the big knife or sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **18** Always talk to God in the Spirit. Talk to him about everything and ask him for what you need. Put your mind on what you are saying, asking God to help all his people. **19** And also, ask God to help me to talk without fear and tell people God's plan about the good news. **20** I am in prison with chains on because I speak the good news about Jesus Christ. Ask God to help me to tell the good news without fear as I should tell it.

The last greetings

21 Tychicus will tell you all about me and what I am doing. He is a brother whom I love and a very good helper in the Lord's work. **22** I am sending him to you so that you will know about us, and so that he may comfort your hearts.

23 May God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, give our brothers peace and love with faith. **24** May the kindness of God bless all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippi was a town in the country of Macedonia. It was Paul who first told the people here the Good News about Jesus Christ. Now he is in prison because of his faith. The Christians in Philippi have sent a man called Epaphroditus with a gift of money for Paul. In this letter, Paul writes to thank them. He also tells them to keep to the good teaching he gave them, and to show much love for one another. He warns them not to obey those who want to keep to the old ways of religion

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

We, Paul and Timothy, are servants of Christ Jesus. We send greetings to all of God's people who belong to Christ Jesus and who live in the city of Philippi. We send greetings to the leaders of the church people and those who have been chosen to help them. **2** May the loving kindness of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

Paul talks to God for the Philippian Christians

3 Every time I think of you I thank God for you. **4** I have joy in my heart every time I ask God to help you. **5** I thank God for the joy we share in telling the good news from the very first day until now. **6** God began to do a good work in you. And I am sure that he will keep on doing it until he has finished it. He will keep on until the day Jesus Christ comes again. **7** I have a right to feel this way about you all because I love you very much. God is good to me and you all share in this goodness. You share in my troubles in prison. You share in my work of staying true to the good news of Jesus. **8** I love you all as Jesus Christ loves you. God knows that what I say is true.

9-10 When I talk to God I ask that you may have more and more love. I ask him that you will also know and understand, so that you will be able to see what things are right. I want you to be clean with nothing wrong in you when Jesus Christ comes back. **11** I want you to be doing right by the help of Jesus Christ. That will make people praise God and will show how great he is.

I live for Christ

12 My brothers, I want you to know that what has happened to me has made more people know about the good news. **13** All the soldiers here and all the other people know that I am in prison because of Christ. **14** Because I am in prison, most of my Christian brothers are

stronger for the Lord. They are strong in the faith now and they are not afraid to tell God's good news about Jesus Christ.

15 Some of them tell about Christ because they are jealous. They want to prove they are better than me. Some of them tell about Christ because they want to help me. **16** The first ones do it because they want to prove they are better than I am. They do not have a good reason. But they think they will make trouble for me while I am in prison. **17** These last ones do it because they love me. They know that I am here to speak for the good news. **18** But it does not matter. Every way, in the wrong way or in the right way, Christ is talked about. I will be glad because of that.

19 Yes, I will keep on being glad about it. I know that you will talk to God about me, and I know that the Spirit of Jesus Christ will help me. So I know that things will work out for me to be free. **20** I look forward to this very much and hope that I will not be ashamed at all. But I want to be very strong. I want to bring honour to Christ now as I always have. I can do this if I live or die. **21** All I live for is Christ, and to die would give me more blessing. **22** If I keep on living, then I will keep on doing my good work. I really do not know which I want more, to live or to die. **23** I am caught between these two. I want to die and go to be with Christ, which would be very much better. **24** But you need me more to stay here.

25 Because I am sure of this, I know that I will stay on and be here with you all. That will help you to be better Christians and happy ones. **26** Then you will be even more happy about what Christ Jesus has done for me because I have come back to you.

27 So whatever happens, live as people who believe the good news of Christ should live.

Then, if I come and see you, or if I am away and hear about you, you will be standing strong together in one spirit. With one mind you will be working hard together for the good news. **28** Do not fear in any way those who are working

against you. It is God who shows them they are lost and you are saved. **29** God has given you a special gift. You can not only believe in Christ but also suffer for him. **30** You have the same trouble which you saw me have. And you hear now that I still have it.

CHAPTER 2

Christ humbles himself, then is made great

Does Christ speak to you? Does love call to you? Do you have a part in the Holy Spirit? Do you have any love and care for others? **2** Then make me very, very happy. Live in happiness with one another. Have the same love for each other. Think the same way. Agree together about things. All have one purpose in mind. **3** Do not try to prove you are better than others. Do not be proud of yourselves, but be humble. Think of other people as being better than yourselves. **4** Each one of you should not think only about himself, but about other people also. **5** Think the same way Jesus Christ thought. **6** He was in every way like God. Yet he did not think that being equal to God was something he must hold on to. **7** He gave this up and became a servant. He was born a baby. **8** And when he was a man, he was humble. He was even willing to die, yes, to die on a cross. **9** That is why God has made him very great. God has given him a name above every name. **10** Everyone in heaven, everyone on earth, and everyone under the earth will kneel before the name of Jesus. **11** Everyone will admit that Jesus Christ is Lord. They will praise God the Father for this.

Shining like lights In the world

12 My dear people, you have always obeyed me. God has saved you from wrong ways. Now show this by the good things that you do. You must live that way, not only when I am with you, but much more now that I am not with you. Think of how wrong it will be if you do not. Try hard to work out how to do it. **13** For God is at work in you. He helps you want to do it. And he helps you do what he wants you to do.

14 Do everything without grumbling or making trouble. **15** In that way you will be completely good. No one will be able to say anything wrong about you. You will be God's good children living amongst bad people. Among them you will shine like lights in the world. **16** You will have the message of life for them. I will be proud of you when Christ comes. My work and trouble will not be for nothing. **17** The life you live because you

believe in God is like a sacrifice. Even if I am killed, it will be like wine which people pour on a sacrifice. I am happy to do this for you, and I am happy about you. **18** In the same way you must be happy. And you must be happy about me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

19 I hope the Lord Jesus will let me send Timothy to you soon. I will be glad to hear about you. **20** I have no one like Timothy. He is troubled to know about you. **21** All the other people think only of themselves and not of Jesus Christ. **22** But you know what a good man Timothy is. You know that he has worked with me in telling the good news. He has worked just as a son works with his father. **23** So I hope to send him to you as soon as I see what happens to me. **24** And I trust that the Lord will let me come to you soon myself. **25** I thought I must send Epaphroditus, our Christian brother, back to you. He has worked with me and has also been a soldier of Christ with me. He was your messenger and he brought your gift for my needs. **26** I am sending him back because he has been lonely without you all. And his heart has been troubled because you heard that he was sick. **27** He was very sick! He almost died! But God was kind to him. He was not only kind to him, but also to me. God did not let me have one trouble after another. **28** I want even more to send him to you so that you will be happy when you see him again. And I will not be so troubled any more. **29** So receive him with much joy because he is a Christian brother. Give respect to men like him. **30** He almost died doing the work of Christ. You wished to help me, but you could not come. He came instead. He was willing to put his life in danger in order to help me.

CHAPTER 3

The true way to become good people

Now, my brothers, I say be glad for what the Lord has done for you. It is not hard for me to write the same things to you over and over. And it is good for you.

2 Watch out for those teachers who are like dogs. Watch out for those teachers who do wrong things. And watch out for those teachers who want you to have the mark of a Jew cut in your bodies. **3** We have God's Spirit and we worship God in the Spirit. So we are the people who have the mark of God. Christ Jesus is our

reason for being joyful. We do not trust in having a mark cut in our bodies. **4** And yet I could trust in things about myself if I wanted to. If any other man thinks that he has something about himself to trust in, I have more things. **5** I had the mark of a Jew cut in my body when I was eight days old. I was born of the people of Israel. I belong to the family of Benjamin, so I was born a true Jew. I was a Pharisee, so I obeyed the Jewish law very carefully. **6** I was so full of my own ideas that I sent Christians to prison. But I was a good man in the way the Jewish law calls a man good.

7 But all these things that might have helped me, I call them all nothing, because of Christ. **8** Yes, I call them all nothing, because to know Christ Jesus my Lord is much better. It is for his sake that I have given them all up and call them just dirt. I have lost them but gained Christ. **9** I do it so that I will belong to him. I do not want to be called good because of the Jewish law. But I want to be made good by believing in Christ. I want to be put right with God through faith alone. **10** I want to know Christ. I want to know the power that raised him from death. I want to have a part in his trouble. I want to be like him in his death. **11** Then I hope to be raised from death.

Going forward

12 I do not mean to say that I have got there yet, or that I am perfect yet. But I am trying hard to get there, because that is why Christ saved me. **13** My brothers, I do not yet think that I have got all the things of Christ. But there is one thing that I am doing. I forget what is behind me and reach out to what is ahead of me. **14** Like a man running a race, I try hard to reach the line so that I will receive the prize. Because we belong to Christ Jesus, God is calling us to receive this prize that he has for us in heaven.

15 All of us who are grown-up Christians should feel this way. And if you do not think this way, God will show you the right way. **16** But no matter how far we have gone, we must keep on going that way. And let us do it together, having the same things in mind.

17 My brothers, do as I do, all of you. Look at the people who live the way we have lived. **18** Many people live as if they hated the cross of Christ. I have often told you about them, and I tell you now with tears. **19** They will be lost for ever. Their belly is the god they worship. They

boast about things they should be ashamed of. They think only about things of this world. **20** But we belong to heaven. And we are waiting for the Saviour to come from heaven. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. **21** He will change our body which was made for this world. He will make it like his own wonderful body. He will do this by his power to make all things obey him.

CHAPTER 4

Be glad in the Lord

And so, my brothers, I love you and want very much to be with you. I am very happy about you. And you are like a prize I have won in a race. My dear people, keep on standing firm and strong in the Lord.

2 I beg Euodia and Syntyche to agree to work together. I ask them to be of the same mind in the Lord. **3** I beg you, my real helper, to help these women. They worked hard with me in telling the good news. Clement and my other helpers worked hard with me too. Their names are in God's Book of Life. **4** Always be glad for what the Lord has done. I will say it again, be glad. **5** Let everyone know that you think kindly of others before yourselves. The Lord is near. **6** Do not worry about anything. Talk to God about everything. Thank him for what you have. Ask him for what you need. **7** Then God will give you peace, a peace which is too wonderful to understand. That peace will keep your hearts and minds safe as you trust in Christ Jesus.

Do these things

8 Here, my brothers, are some things I want you to think about. Think about things that are true, honest, right, clean and pure, things that are lovely, and things that are good to talk about. If they are good, and if they bring praise to God, think about these things. **9** I taught you, and you learned things from me. You heard the things I said, and you saw the things I did. Do these same things yourselves. Then God who gives peace will be with you.

The gift from the people of Philippi

10 The Lord made me very happy to know that you were thinking about me again. Yes, I know you were thinking of me before, but you had no way to help me. **11** I do not mean that I needed it. I have learned to be satisfied with what I have. I am happy with whatever happens to me. **12** I know how to live when I am poor, and I know how to live when I am rich. No matter how things are, I have learned how to live:

when I have plenty of food, or when I am hungry; when I have more things than I need, and when I do not have enough. **13** I can do all things because Christ gives me strength.

14 But you were kind to help me when I was in trouble. **15** You people of Philippi know this too. When I first told the good news after I left the country of Macedonia, you were the only church people who helped me. You sent me money to pay my expenses. **16** Even when I was in the city of Thessalonica, you sent money to help me more than once. **17** It is not that I want the gift. But I want you to have more and more blessing because you give. **18** I have all I need and more. Yes, I have plenty because Epaphroditus gave me what you sent me. Your gift was like a

sweet-smelling offering to God. It was a sacrifice which God took and it pleased him. **19** My God will give you everything you need. He has wonderful riches in heaven because of Christ Jesus. **20** Praise God our Father for ever. Yes, he will do it.

Final greetings

21 Please give my greetings to everyone who belongs to Christ Jesus.

The Christian brothers who are with me greet you. **22** All of God's people send greetings to you, especially the people of Caesar's house.

23 The loving kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen, may it be so!

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

The apostle Paul sends this letter to the church in Colossae. This was near Ephesus in Asia Minor (Turkey). The believers there were trying to please God by keeping a lot of rules and laws. Paul explains that Jesus Christ alone can teach us how to know God, and how to please him. Following Jesus, God's Son, puts us right with God. We are not put right with God just by obeying laws.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. God wanted me to be an apostle. **2** Timothy our brother, and I are writing this letter to God's people, the Christian brothers in the city of Colossae.

May the kindness of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

3 We give thanks to God. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we ask God to bless you, we always thank him for you. **4** We have heard that you believe in Christ Jesus and love all of God's people. **5** And also, you are looking ahead to what you will have in heaven. You have heard about it already when the good news was told to you. **6** That message has reached you. It is doing good and it is spreading everywhere in the world. It is doing the same among you. It began the day you heard and understood God's blessing, which came to you in a clear way.

7 Epaphras taught you the truth. He is Christ's servant, as we are also, and we love him. He is a good worker to help you. **8** Also, it is he who told us of your love in the Spirit. **9** That is why we keep on talking to God about you since the day we heard about you. We ask him that you may know everything he wants you to do. We ask him that you may be very wise and that the Spirit will help you to understand. **10** We ask him that you will live the way the Lord wants you to live, so that you will please him in everything you do. We ask that you will do everything that is good. We ask that you will see the fruit from what you do. We ask that you will know more and more about God. **11** God has wonderful power. And we ask him to give you all the strength you need to go through all your troubles, to be very patient in them, and to be happy. **12** Thank the Father who has made us ready to be with the people of God who live in his light. **13** He has set us free from the kingdom where it is dark. And he has put us into the kingdom where his dear Son rules.

14 Because of his Son, we are set free and the wrong things we have done are forgiven.

Christ is everything

15 The Son is like God who cannot be seen. He was his Son before anything was made. **16** He made everything in the sky and on the earth. He made the things which can be seen and the things which cannot be seen. That means angels, kings, great powers, and rulers. They were all made by him and for him. **17** He himself was before all things. And he holds all things together. **18** He is also the head of the body which is the church [the people who believe in Jesus Christ]. He is the beginning, the first one to rise from death, so that he would be the first one in everything. **19** God wanted Christ to have everything in himself. **20** And God chose him to be the one who would bring all things back to himself. God made peace by the blood which Christ gave on his cross. He would bring back all things on earth and in heaven.

21 At one time you were far away from God. You hated him in your hearts and you did wrong things. **22** But now Christ himself has died on a cross, and he has brought you back to God. Christ will bring you before God holy, clean, and good. **23** But you must keep on believing and stand strong and true. Let nothing shake the hope which the good news brought you. You heard the same good news as is told to everyone in the whole world. I, Paul, was given the work of telling that same good news.

Paul works and suffers for church people

24 And now, even though I suffer for you, I am happy. There are still some things for Christ to suffer in his body, which is the church. So I am glad to take my share of his suffering in my body. **25** God gave me work to do for the church people so that you might know all of God's message. **26** This message is about the secret plan of God. People who lived in all the past times of the world did not know about this plan. But now it has been told to God's people. **27** He wanted them to know that his plan is very great and wonderful for those who are not

Jews. And this plan is that Christ is in you! He is your hope for all the wonderful things that are to come. **28** We tell about him. We tell everyone to be careful to live in the right way. We teach everyone all he needs to know. We do this so that we can bring everyone before God and he will be grown up in the things of Christ. **29** And I am working for this with all the strength that God gives me.

CHAPTER 2

I want you to know how much I care for you and those in the city of Laodicea, and even all those who have never seen me. **2** I want them to be strong and to love one another. I want them to understand everything. I want them to know in a more perfect way about God's plan, which is Christ. **3** All the wonderful things there are to know about the plan are found in Christ. **4** I say this so that no one may lead you the wrong way by their fine words. **5** Even though I am not with you in body, I am with you in spirit. I am happy to see that you stand together well and that you keep on believing in Christ.

6 You received Christ Jesus the Lord. So live in him. **7** Let your heart be planted in him. Grow up in him. Believe with all your heart what you were taught. And be very thankful to God.

All of life in Christ

8 Do not let anyone fool you by his wise words. They are not true. They are what men say. They are the teachings of this world and not what Christ says. **9** Christ has everything that God has. **10** And you, too, have everything when you are in him. He rules over every power and ruler. **11** In Christ you were not circumcised by men's hands. But you were circumcised in Christ's way when all the wrong things you did in your bodies were taken away. **12** You were buried with Christ when you were baptised. You were also raised with him to a new life when you were baptised. You were raised because you believed in the power of God who raised Christ from death. **13** You were dead because of the wrong things you had done, and because your lives had not been made clean. But God gave you life with Christ. He forgave you for all the wrong things you did. **14** He wiped out all the things that were written against us in the laws. He took the writing away and nailed it to a cross. **15** He won the victory over powers and rulers. He showed that they had no power at all. He showed the world his victory through the cross.

Try to get the things which are in heaven

16 So do not let anyone say you are wrong about what you eat or drink, or about a feast, or a special holy day or a Sabbath day. **17** They are like a shadow of what is to come. But Christ is the body that makes the shadow. **18** Do not let anyone tell you that you are wrong and that to be humble you must worship angels. He talks about things he has not seen. He is very proud, but he has nothing to be proud of, because his thoughts come from his own mind. **19** He is not joined to the real head which is Christ. It is from him that the whole body receives strength and is held together by its joints and muscles. It is from him that the body grows as God makes it grow.

20 Did you die with Christ? Then you left the teachings of this world. So why do you obey laws as if you were still living in this world? **21** I mean laws like this: 'Do not touch that. Do not eat this. Do not put your hand on that.' **22** All such things are gone as soon as they are used. These are laws made and taught by men. **23** These laws look as if they are good laws. They make a show of doing things for God. They make people humble themselves in some way. They make people control their bodies in certain ways. But they have no power to keep people from doing all the wrong things they want to do.

CHAPTER 3

Were you raised from death with Christ? Then look for the things which are in heaven. There Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Think about the things that are in heaven, not about things that are on earth. **3** Your old life died with Christ and your new life is kept with Christ in God. **4** Christ is our life. When he comes again and is seen, then you will also be seen with him. And you will be great.

The old life and the new

5 So then, put to death those things of this world which are in you. I mean these things: wrong sex, things that are not clean, a heart that is burning to do wrong things, wanting what is wrong, and wanting to have what other people have. This last one is like worshipping an idol. **6** They are things that make God angry. **7** You used to do these things when you lived that way. **8** But now you must stop all these: being angry, hating people, wrong feelings toward others, saying wrong things about people, and dirty talking. **9** Do not tell lies to

one another. You have stopped being the person you used to be who did wrong things.

10 And now you have become a new person. That new person is always learning more and more until he becomes like God who made him.

11 In this new person, there is no difference between a Greek and a Jew. There is no difference between a man who is circumcised with the mark of the Jew and a man who is not circumcised. There is no difference between a person from a friendly country or someone from a country which is not friendly. There is no difference between a slave and a person who is free. Christ is everything and is in all of them.

12 You are chosen by God. He loves you and has made you holy. So then, care for one another. Be kind. Do not be proud. Be humble. Be patient. **13** Be patient with one another. If anyone has a complaint against another, forgive that one. Christ forgave you. So you should forgive each other. **14** Beside all these, you must have love. This joins everything together as it should be. **15** Hold on to the peace of God which is in your hearts. You were called to have peace because you are all like one body. Be thankful. **16** Let your hearts be filled with the word of Christ. Be very wise when you teach people and help them to understand what is right and wrong. Sing with music. Sing praises and Christian songs. Sing to the Lord with praise in your hearts. **17** Whatever you say, or whatever you do, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through Jesus.

How to live the new life with others

18 Wives, obey your husbands. This is the right way to live when you belong to the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be unkind to them. **20** Children, obey your parents in everything. This pleases the Lord. **21** Fathers, do not make your children angry. They might stop trying to do right. **22** Servants, obey your boss in everything. Obey always, not only when he is looking at you as if you were pleasing a man. Do it with all your heart because you respect the Lord. **23** Whatever your work is, do it gladly. Do it as you would do it unto the Lord and not for people. **24** You know you will get pay from the Lord, for you are the servants of the Lord Christ. **25** The person who does wrong will be punished for the wrong he has done. God does not love one person more than another.

CHAPTER 4

You who are a boss, do what is right to your servants. You know that you also have a Master in heaven.

2 Always take time to talk to God. Put your mind on what you are saying. And thank God for what he has done. **3** Talk to God about us too. Ask him to open a way for us to tell people his message. We want to tell God's plan about Christ. That is why I am in prison because of that plan. **4** I want to be free to talk about it as I should do.

5 Act the right way to people who are not Christians. Make good use of your time.

6 Always say good things when you talk. Talk in a way that will make people listen. Then you will know how to answer people.

Last greetings

7 Tychicus will tell you all about me. He is a brother whom I love. He is a very good helper and works with me in the Lord's work. **8** I am sending him to you so that you will know about us and so that he may comfort your hearts. **9** I am sending Onesimus with him. He is also a good brother whom I love. He is one of you. They will tell you all about everything here.

10 Here are the people who send you greetings: Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, and Mark, a cousin of Barnabas. I have already told you to welcome him if he comes to you. **11** Jesus, whose other name is Justus, also sends greetings. These men are the only Jews who are doing God's work with me. And they have comforted me much. **12** Epaphras sends you greetings. He is one of you and is a servant of Christ Jesus. He always talks to God about you with all his heart. He asks God to help you to be strong so that you will become grown-up Christians and know all that God wants you to do. **13** I myself have seen how hard he has worked for you and for the people in the cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis. **14** Luke, the doctor whom I love, and Demas also greet you. **15** Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and also to Nympha and the church people who meet in her house.

16 When you have read this letter, then be sure that it is also read to the church people in Laodicea. And be sure that you read the letter which will be sent to you from Laodicea. **17** Tell Archippus, 'See that you do all the work which the Lord has given you to do.'

18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember that I am in prison. God bless you.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

This is a letter to the church people at Thessalonica in the country of Macedonia. Paul thanks them for their love and their faith. This makes him joyful. He wants to help them to know more about Jesus. He wants them to keep right with God and not follow wrong people. He helps them with their problems and questions. He teaches them to stay strong in their faith. He tells them that Jesus will come back again one day.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, send greetings to the church people in the city of Thessalonica. The people of this church belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

May the kindness of God bless you and give you peace.

You believe and show others how to live

2 We always thank God for all of you, and we always talk to him about you. **3** You do good things because you believe. You work very hard because you have love in your hearts. You are patient because you have hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. We remember these things when we talk to God our Father about you.

4 My brothers, God loves you and we know that he has chosen you. **5** The good news we brought you was not just words. It had power. It had the Holy Spirit. It made people very sure it was true. And you also know how we lived when we were with you to help you. **6** You tried hard to be like us and like the Lord. You had much trouble because you believed our message. Yet the Holy Spirit made you very happy. **7** You have shown all the Christians in the countries of Macedonia and Greece how they should live. **8** People in Macedonia and Greece have heard from you the message about the Lord. And people everywhere have heard that you believe in God. So there is no need for us to write about your faith.

9 They tell us how glad you were to see us. They tell us about how you left your idols and turned to God. You worship the God who is the living and true God. **10** And you wait for his Son to come again from heaven. God raised his Son Jesus from death. It is Jesus who saves us from God's great anger which is to come.

CHAPTER 2

Paul's work in Thessalonica

My brothers, you yourselves know that our visit to you was not for nothing. **2** The people at the

city of Philippi treated us very badly. As you know, we had much trouble. But God helped us, and we did not fear to tell you God's good news. But many things were against us and tried to stop us. **3** Our message was not a lie. What we told you was not wrong. And we did not try to fool you. **4** But God chose us to tell people the good news. And so we do not speak to please men, but to please God. He is the one who knows what is in our hearts. **5** We never said nice things about people that were not true. You know this. We never talked to get something out of it for ourselves. God knows this. **6** And we did not ask you or anybody else to help us or to praise us. Of course, we are apostles of Christ, and we had the right to do so. **7** But we were kind when we were with you. We were like a woman taking care of her own children. **8** Because we loved you, we were glad to give you God's good news. We were also glad to give you our lives, because we loved you very much.

9 My brothers, you remember how hard we worked. We worked night and day so that we would not trouble any of you. And we told you God's good news. **10** We lived in a holy and right way among you Christians. We did nothing wrong to you. You know this yourselves and God knows it too. **11** You know how we talked to each of you as a father talks to his children. We comforted, helped, and taught you. **12** We told you to live to please God. He called you to his own kingdom and greatness.

13 And here is another reason why we always thank God all the time. When you heard God's word from us, you did not say, 'That is men's word.' But you said, 'That is God's word.' And it really is God's word. The word is working in you Christians. **14** My brothers, you were like the churches of God in Judea which belong to Christ Jesus. The people of your own country troubled you in the same way that the Jews troubled them. **15** The Jewish leaders killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets. And they drove us out of their country. They do not please God and they are against all other people. **16** They try to stop us from talking to those people who are

not Jews. They do not want them to be saved. So they are always doing wrong things. And now at last, God has become very angry with them.

Paul wants to visit the church people again

17 My brothers, we have been away from you for a short time in body, but not in heart. We wanted very much to see you face to face, and we tried hard to come. **18** We wanted to come to you. Twice, I, Paul, wanted to come. But Satan stopped us. **19** What is our hope when our Lord Jesus comes? What will make us happy and proud then? It is you people! **20** You are ones of whom we are proud. You make us happy.

CHAPTER 3

We felt we could not wait any longer. So we thought it best to stay at the city of Athens alone. **2** And we sent our brother Timothy to you. He works for God by telling the good news about Christ. We sent him to help you be strong and to encourage you in what you believe. **3** We do not want anyone to give up because of the trouble.

You yourselves know that we all will surely have trouble. **4** When we were with you, we told you that we would have trouble. Trouble came. And now you know what we said is true. **5** That is why I could not wait any longer. I sent Timothy to find out if you were still believing. I was afraid that Satan had tried you too much. Then our work would have been for nothing. **6** But now Timothy has come back to us from you. He has brought us the good news that you are still believing and have love in your hearts. He has told us that you always remember us. He also told us that you want to see us, just as we want to see you.

7 My brothers, the way you believe has comforted us in all our troubles. **8** It gives us new life now to know that you are standing strong in the Lord. **9** We cannot thank God enough for you. We are very happy about you as we talk to God. **10** Night and day we ask God that we may see you face to face. We want to help you know more about what you believe. **11** Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, open the way for us to come to you. **12** May the Lord make you stronger in your love for each other. Love others in the way we love you. **13** We want the Lord to help you to stand strong. And then, when the Lord Jesus

comes with all God's people, you will be holy in the eyes of our God and Father. He will see no fault in you.

CHAPTER 4

A life pleasing to God

And now, brothers, here is what we ask you to do. We beg you in the name of the Lord Jesus. We taught you how to live and to please God. You are living that way now, and we want you to do so more and more. **2** You know what we told you through the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 This is what God wants. He wants you to live clean lives. He wants you to keep away from wrong sex. **4** Each of you should know how to control yourself. Honour your body to make it holy. **5** Do not have sex with a person you are not married to. Control your strong feelings. Do not act like the people who do not know God. **6** Do not do wrong to your Christian brother by taking his wife for yourself. The Lord will surely punish all those who do wrong in these things. We have already told you that and made it very clear. **7** God did not call us to live unclean lives. He wants you to live clean and holy lives. **8** So anyone who does not obey is not just disobeying a man, but he is disobeying God. And it is God who has given us his Holy Spirit.

9 You do not need anyone to write to you about how to love each other. God himself has taught you to be loving towards each other. **10** And you do love all the Christian brothers who are in the whole country of Macedonia. But we beg you, brothers, love them more and more. **11** Please try to live a quiet life. Mind your own business. Work with your hands as we told you to do. **12** Then people who do not belong to the church will respect you. And you will not need help from anyone.

The dead and the living when the Lord comes

13 My brothers, here is something I want you to know about those who have died. You should not cry for them like people cry who have no hope. **14** We believe that Jesus died and rose again. And because of what Jesus did, God will bring back with him those who have died. **15** We tell you what the Lord said. We who are still alive when the Lord comes, will not go ahead of those who have died. **16** The Lord himself will come down from heaven. There will be a shout, a great angel will speak, and God's loud horn or trumpet will be blown. **17** Then we

who are still alive on earth will be caught up together with those who were dead. We will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And then we will be with the Lord forever!

18 Therefore, comfort one another with these words.

CHAPTER 5

Be ready for the Lord's coming

My brothers, you do not need anyone to write to you about the day or the year when these things will happen. **2** You yourselves surely know that the day of the Lord will come just like a person who comes to steal in the night. **3** When people are saying, 'Everything is quiet and safe,' they will be destroyed. It will all happen very quickly. And there will be no way out. It will be like the pain that a woman has when a child is born. **4** But you, my brothers, are not in the dark. That day should not surprise you like a person who comes to steal. **5** You all belong to the light. You belong to the day. We do not belong to the night or to the dark.

6 So then, we must not go to sleep like other people. No, we must keep watching and not get drunk. **7** Because we belong to the day, we must not get drunk. But we must be ready like people dressed for war. We must keep believing in God. We must be loving towards each other. Faith and love will be like strong clothes to cover our bodies. The hope of being saved will protect us like a hat or helmet covers our head. **8** God did not choose us so that he might be angry with us. But he chose us so that we might be saved through our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** He died for us so that, if we are alive or dead, we will live with him.

11 So comfort and strengthen one another, just as you are doing.

Last words of teaching and greetings

12-13 My brothers, we ask you to respect those who are working among you. They are your leaders in the Lord's work, and they tell you what you should do. **14** My brothers, we beg you, tell this to people who do not do what they should do. Talk to those who fear, and say something that will make them strong. Help those who are weak. Be patient with all people. **15** Do not let anyone do a wrong thing to a person if that person did a wrong thing to him. Always do good to one another. Be good to each other and to all men.

16 Always be happy. **17** Talk to God at all times. **18** Thank God for everything. This is what God wants you to do through Christ Jesus. **19** Do not stop the Spirit when he wants to do something. **20** Do not despise people who speak words from God. **21** But test everything that is said. Keep what is good. **22** Have nothing to do with any kind of wrong thing. **23** May God himself, who gives peace, make you pure and clean. You are set apart and belong only to him. And may your spirit and soul and body all together be kept free from fault until our Lord Jesus Christ comes. **24** It is God who calls you, and he can be trusted. He will surely do what he has said.

25 My brothers, ask God to help us.

26 Greet all the brothers with a kiss that is holy.

27 I give you this order from the Lord. Read this letter to all the Christian brothers.

28 May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you. May it be so.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

Paul writes again to the church people at Thessalonica. He tells them some more about the day when Jesus will come back again. This will be at a time when there are many more bad things in the world. We do not know the time when Jesus will come back.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy send greetings to the church people in the city of Thessalonica. This church belongs to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **2** May God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, in their kindness, give you much happiness and peace.

When Christ comes to judge

3 My brothers, we thank God for you always. It is the right thing to do. You trust him more and more. You all love each other more and more.

4 So we are proud of you. We tell the churches of God about you because you are standing strong and you keep on believing in God. Your troubles and hard times do not stop you. **5** This proves that God will judge right. And he will say that you are good enough for the kingdom of God because you suffer for it. **6** God will do what is right. He will give trouble to those who are troubling you. **7** And he will give rest to you who are having troubles, and to us also.

He will give this rest when our Lord Jesus comes back from heaven. The Lord Jesus will come with his strong angels in flaming fire. **8** He will punish those who do not know God, and those who do not obey the good news of our Lord Jesus. **9** They will be destroyed for ever. That will be their punishment. They will be for ever separated from the Lord and from his great and wonderful power. **10** This will happen on the day he comes. On that day his people will show how great and wonderful he is. And all those who have believed in him will be surprised at how great he is. That means you also, because you believed what we told you. **11** That is why we always talk to God about you. We want our God to make you fit for the good work to which he called you. We ask him to finish his good work of faith which trusts in his power. **12** In that way you will make the name of our Lord Jesus Christ great. And he will make you great. This will be because of the kindness of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 2

The chief law-breaker

My brothers, we want to talk to you about the time when our Lord Jesus Christ comes again and we are taken to meet him. **2** Do not let your minds be easily upset. Do not be troubled by a spirit, or a message, or a letter. Do not be troubled if you hear that the day of the Lord has already come. Some people will say it came from us. **3** Do not let anyone fool you in any way. Before the day of the Lord comes, many people will stop believing God. The Man of Evil will be seen. He is the evil one who will be destroyed for ever. **4** He will put himself against God. He will put himself above everything to do with God, and above everything that people worship. He will sit in God's holy place and tell people that he is God.

5 You remember that I told you these things when I was still with you. **6** And you know what is holding that evil man back. He will not be seen until it is his time to be seen. **7** The plan to make people wrong has already begun to work. But someone is holding back that plan. He will stop the law-breaker for a time. **8** Then that evil man will be seen. The Lord Jesus will kill him with the breath from his mouth. The coming of the Lord Jesus will be so bright and wonderful that it will put the evil man to an end.

9 The coming of the evil man is the work of Satan. He will come in great power with signs that are not true, and wonderful things. **10** And by his bad tricks he will fool people who are lost. They will not love the true message which would have saved them. **11** That is why God lets them be fooled so that they will believe what is not true. **12** They will all be judged. I mean the people who have not believed in the true message but who wanted to do what is wrong.

Chosen to be saved

13 My brothers, the Lord loves you. We should thank God for you always. Here is why. From the beginning God chose you to be saved. You were saved because the Spirit made you holy and because you believed the true message. **14** God called you to be saved by the good

news we brought you. He did this so that you would have some of the honour which the Lord Jesus Christ has. **15** So my brothers, be strong. Hold on to the things we taught you by our words or by letter.

16 God has loved us and made us happy through his kindness. He gave us everlasting comfort and good hope. **17** May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, comfort your hearts and make you strong to do and say everything that is good.

CHAPTER 3

Talk to God about us

My brothers, please talk to God about us. Ask God that the Lord's message may reach many people quickly and that they may receive it gladly as you did. **2** Ask God that we may be saved from bad people who do wrong things. Not everyone believes in Christ. **3** But the Lord can be trusted. He will make you strong. He will keep you safe from all that is wrong. **4** The Lord makes us feel sure about you. We are sure that you are doing, and will do, what we tell you to do. **5** May the Lord lead you to love God and be patient like Christ.

People must work

6 Now, my brothers, we tell you to do this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Have nothing to do with any lazy brother who is not living the

way we taught you. **7** You yourselves know how you should be like us. We were not lazy when we were with you. **8** We did not eat anyone's food without paying for it. But we worked very hard day and night because we did not want to trouble any one of you. **9** We have the right to be helped. But we wanted to show you what you should do in this matter. **10** Even when we were with you, we told you this, 'If any man will not work, do not let him eat.'

11 We hear that some of you are lazy. You do not work, but you trouble other people. **12** We say to such lazy people, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Do your work quietly. Earn your own food.' **13** My brothers, do not get tired of doing what is good. **14** If anyone will not obey what we say in this letter, look at that man and remember him. Have nothing to do with him, so that he will be ashamed. **15** Do not treat him like an enemy. Tell him, as you would tell a brother, what he should do.

A blessing

16 The Lord gives peace. May he give his peace to you at all times in every way. May the Lord be with you all.

17 I, Paul, write these words of greeting with my own hand. This is the sign in all my letters that I wrote them. **18** The loving kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

Timothy was a young man who helped Paul tell people about the Good News of Jesus Christ. In this letter Paul warns against wrong ideas and ways. He wants to help Timothy to look after the church people. He also tells him how to be a good leader and worker in the church.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul. I am an apostle of Christ Jesus. God and Christ Jesus told me to be an apostle. God is our Saviour, and Christ is the one who gives us hope.

2 Timothy, you are my true son because you believe the way I do. I ask God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord to show you love and kindness, and give you peace.

Wrong teaching and right teaching

When I went to the country of Macedonia, I asked you to stay in the city of Ephesus. I wanted you to tell some of the teachers not to teach wrong things. **4** Tell them not to use stories that are not true, and long histories of names. These things often make people quarrel. These things do not make people believe and follow God's way.

5 Here is what teachers should aim at. God's people should love each other with a love which comes from a clean heart, a clear mind, and true faith. **6** Some teachers have not tried to do these things and so they talk about things that do no good. **7** They want to teach the law. But they do not understand what they say. And they do not know what they are trying to prove.

8 We know that the law is good when anyone uses it in the right way. **9** He must understand that the law was not made for the man who lives right. It was made for those who do not want any laws over them, and for those who will not obey. It was made for those who do not respect God, and those who are bad people. It was made for those who do not respect anything that is holy or belongs to God. It was made for those who beat their fathers or mothers, and for those who kill people. **10** It was made for those who use sex in the wrong way and for men who have sex with other men. It was made for those who steal people, for those who tell lies, for those who make a promise that is not true, and for any other thing that is not right. **11** The wonderful good news of

God teaches what is right. Praise him! And he has trusted me to tell this good news.

Paul is thankful for kindness

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who gave me power to tell the good news. I thank him because he believed he could trust me, and he chose me for this work. **13** There was a time when I did not respect him. I troubled his people. I said wrong things about him. But he was very kind to me, because I did not know what I was doing and I did not believe in him.

14 Our Lord showed me much love and kindness. I believed in him and had the love which comes from Christ Jesus. **15** These are true words and everyone should believe them. 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save bad people.' And I am the worst of all. **16** Jesus Christ wanted to show that he is very, very patient. And so he was kind to me who was the worst. He did this so that others would believe in him and live for ever. **17** Give honour and praise for ever and ever to the one who is King for ever. He will never die. He cannot be seen. He is the only God. Yes, he is!

18 My son Timothy, here is what I tell you to do. And it is what the prophets said about you before. Remember their words, and fight like a good soldier. **19** Keep on believing. Do only what you know is right. Some people have not done that and they have stopped believing. **20** Hymenaeus and Alexander are among them. I have given them to Satan so that they will be punished and learn not to teach things that do not respect God.

CHAPTER 2

Talking to God

First of all, I want God's people to do this. They must talk to God for all the people. They must ask God to help them. They must ask God to give them what they need. They must thank God for all that he gives them. **2** They must talk to God for all the kings and all rulers. They must do this so that we may live in peace and quiet, so that we may please God and do what is right. **3** This is a good thing. And God, our Saviour, is

pleased when people do it. **4** He wants all people to be saved and to know what is true.

5 There is one God. There is also one man who can open the way between God and all people. That man is Christ Jesus. **6** He gave his life to set all men free. This matter was told at the right time. **7** I was chosen to tell about this and to be an apostle. I am telling the truth. I am not lying. I was chosen to teach people who are not Jews. I must teach them to believe and to know what is true.

8 So I want men in every place to talk to God. They must have clean lives when they lift up their hands to talk to God. They must not be angry. They must have faith in God.

The Behaviour of women

9 I also want women to wear the right kind of clothes. They should not make a show of themselves, but use good sense. They should not fix up their hair in a fancy way, or wear gold and fine stones, or clothes that cost much money. **10** But women should busy themselves with good works. This is the right thing for women who say they worship God. **11** A woman must learn quietly and be very humble. **12** I do not allow any woman to teach or to rule over a man. She must remain quiet. **13** Adam was not fooled. But the woman was fooled and did wrong. **14** But anyway, the women will come safely through the time of delivering a child, if they keep on believing and loving God, and if they live a clean life and keep humble.

CHAPTER 3

A church leader

These are true words. If a man wants to be a leader of the church people, he seeks a good thing. **2** For a man to be a church leader, people must speak well of him. He must have only one wife. He must be able to control himself. He must use good sense. He must behave himself well. He must be kind to strangers in his house. He must be a good teacher. **3** He must not get drunk. He must not fight. But he must be kind. He must not quarrel. He must not love money. **4** He must be a good leader for his own family. His children must obey him and respect him. **5** If a man does not know how to lead his own family, how can he take care of the church of God?

6 A church leader must not be a new believer. If he were a new believer, he might become proud and set himself up like the devil did. **7** People

who are not church people must also speak well of a church leader, so that he will not fall into the devil's trap.

The leader's helpers

8 In the same way, the leader's helpers must be men whom people respect. They must not say one thing one time and something different another time. They must not drink too much wine. They must not try to get rich in wrong ways. **9** They must know God's plan and what we believe. They must do only what they know is right. **10** Try these men first. Then let them help the church people if they have done nothing wrong.

11 In the same way, their wives must be women whom people respect. They must not tell lies about anyone. They must be able to control themselves. They must live so that people can trust them in all things. **12** The leader's helpers must have only one wife. They must be good leaders for their children and family. **13** When they have done the work of a helper well, people will respect them. If they do well, they will not fear to tell what they believe about Christ Jesus.

What we believe

14 I am writing to you about these matters even though I hope to come to you soon. **15** Then if I do not come right away, you will know what people should do in God's family. This family is the church of the living God. The church people hold what is true and keeps it strong.

16 God's plan is very great as we all know. Here it is: we saw God as a man; God's Spirit proved he was right; angels saw him; the nations were told about him; people of the world believed in him; God took him up into heaven.

CHAPTER 4

People who stop believing

The Spirit of God says very plainly that in later times some people will stop believing. They will listen to other spirits that fool them, and to the teaching of bad spirits. **2** Men will tell lies and make people believe they are something when they are not. These men will have made their hearts so hard that they will not know they are doing wrong. **3** They will teach people that they should not marry. They will teach them not to eat some kinds of food. God made the food and he wanted people to take it and thank him for it. Those who believe and know what is true do

this. **4** Everything that God has made for food is good. It is all right to eat it if people thank God for it. **5** God's word and asking him to bless the food makes it good for people to eat.

A good worker for Jesus Christ

6 Tell the Christian brothers and sisters these things and you will do the work of Christ Jesus well. Your own heart will be fed by the things you have believed and the good teaching you have followed. **7** Have nothing to do with foolish stories. Make yourself strong in the things that please God. **8** 'To make the body strong helps a little, but the things of God help us in all ways. The things of God promise us life now and life in heaven.' **9** These are true words and everyone should believe them. **10** That is why we work hard and put up with troubles. We trust in the living God who came to save all people. He makes a way for those who believe in him.

11 Tell people these things and teach them to do them. **12** Do not let anyone despise you because you are a young man. Show those who believe how they should live. Show them by the way you talk. Show them by the way you live. Show them by the way you love. Show them how to believe by the way you believe. Show them how to live a clean life by the way you live a clean life. **13** Until I come, read the holy writings to people. Talk to them and teach them. **14** Use the gift you have. It was given to you when the church leaders put their hands on your head and gave you a message from God. **15** Take time to think about these things. Then everybody will see how well you are going ahead in your work. **16** Take care of yourself and what you teach. Keep on doing this. If you do, you will save yourself and those who listen to you.

CHAPTER 5

What you should do for others

Do not be angry with an older man if he has done something wrong, but talk kindly to him as you would talk to your father. Talk to the young men like brothers. **2** Talk to the older women like mothers. Talk to the young women like sisters. And be sure to keep a clean mind and heart in all this.

3 Help widow women, whose husbands are dead, if they have no one to help them. **4** If they have children or grandchildren, they should learn that the first place to do God's work is in the home to help their own family. They should

help their parents because their parents have helped them. This will please God. **5** A widow who has no one to help her, and is alone, trusts in God. Day and night she talks to God and asks him for the things she needs. **6** But a woman who spends her time in pleasing herself is really dead, even while she still lives. **7** Tell them these things so that they will do what is right.

8 A man must care for his own people. At least he must care for his family. If he does not care for them, he shows that he does not believe in God. He is worse than one who has never believed.

9 A widow who is over sixty years old, may be chosen to help the church people. But she must have been the wife of one husband. **10** People must speak well of the good works she has done. Has she brought up children? Has she been kind to strangers and cared for them in her house? Has she washed the feet of God's people? Has she helped people who were in trouble? Has she done every kind of good thing to help people?

11 But do not choose young women. When they begin to love other things more than Christ, they will want to marry again. **12** And that will be wrong for them because they have not kept their first promise. **13** Not only that, but they also become lazy. They walk about going from house to house. Not only are they lazy but they talk too much and tell stories about people. They tell things they should not tell. **14** So I would like young women to marry again and have children. They should care for their homes. They should do nothing that would make the enemy say wrong things about them. **15** Some have already turned away to follow Satan.

16 Do any Christians have in their families women whose husbands are dead? If they do, they should help them. The church people should not have to care for them. Then the church can help the women who have no one to help them.

17 The leaders of the church people who rule well should be given greater honour and reward. At least do this for those who work hard in speaking and teaching. **18** The holy writings say, 'You may not tie the mouth of a cow when it is walking on the grain to beat it out.' And also, 'The man who works should be paid for it.'

19 Do not listen to a complaint against a leader if what he has done has not been seen and proved by two or three people.

20 Talk to those who live a wrong life and tell them to stop it. Talk to them in front of all the church members. Then the others will be afraid to do it. **21** I say this before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels of God. Do these things in an honest way. Do not treat one person better than another person.

22 Do not be in a hurry to place your hands on a man as a sign for him to be a leader. Do not take part in the wrong things another man does. Keep yourself clean.

23 Do not drink water only. But drink a little wine to help your stomach because you are sick so often.

24 The wrong things some men do can be seen clearly and show that they should be punished. But wrong things other people do are not seen until later. **25** So also, the good things are seen clearly. Even when they are not seen at first, they will be seen later.

CHAPTER 6

Servants should respect their bosses in every way. Then people will not say wrong things about God's name and what we teach. **2** Those who work for Christian masters should not take life easy just because the person they work for is a Christian. They should work all the better because they are loved by them.

Teach these things and tell people to do them.

3 Is there anyone who teaches something different? Or is there anyone who does not agree with the true words of our Lord Jesus Christ? Or does he not agree with teaching about the things of God? **4** If there is such a person, he is full of pride. He knows nothing. He wants to quarrel and talk about words. Such things make people jealous of each other. They think wrong thoughts about each other which are not true. **5** They quarrel. The minds of these men are bad. They do not know what is true. They think that worshipping God makes people rich. Keep away from such people.

6 It is true that people are much better off if they live to please God and if they are satisfied.

7 When we were born, we brought nothing into this world, and when we die, we can take nothing out of the world. **8** If we have food and clothes, that should be enough. **9** People who

want to be rich have trouble. They get caught in a trap. They want many foolish things which are wrong for them. Because of this, men are lost and punished for ever. **10** Because people love money they do all kinds of wrong things. Some people have stopped believing in God because they want money so much. And it brings them many troubles.

11 But you belong to God, Timothy. Have nothing to do with all this. But do what is right. Do what God wants you to do. Believe in Christ. Be loving. Be patient. Be kind. **12** Work hard at believing in God more and more. Make sure that you get everlasting life; God called you to have it. You stood before many people and said that you believed in Christ. That was the right thing to say. **13** Now we stand before God who gives life to all things. We stand before Christ who said what was right when he was in court before Pontius Pilate. I tell you to do this.

14 Do what you have been told to do. And do it so there will be nothing wrong, until our Lord Jesus Christ comes. **15** At the right time God will bring Christ back. Praise God! He alone is ruler. He is King over all kings, and Lord over all lords. **16** He alone has everlasting life. He lives in such light that no one can go near him. No person has ever seen him, or can see him. May he have honour and respect and have everlasting power. May it be so!

17 Tell the rich people in this world not to be proud. Tell them to trust in God not in short-lived riches. He gives us richly all things to make us happy. **18** Tell the rich people to do good. Tell them to do many good things. Tell them to give to other people, and to help those who are in need. **19** In this way they will store up good things for themselves for the time to come. Then they will get that life which really is the true life.

20 Timothy, take good care of what has been given to you. Some teachers say they know many things, but these things are not true. Do not teach these foolish things that do not come from God. Do not teach these things that do not agree together. **21** Some men have believed these things and have stopped believing in Christ.

May God bless all of you.

THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

Paul wrote again to his young friend. Paul was now in prison in Rome for telling the Good News about Jesus Christ. He tells Timothy more things which will help him to lead the church people. He tells him to keep being faithful to God, to follow his writings and the teachings of Jesus. He asks Timothy to tell the people all he knows about Jesus Christ. He teaches him how to be a good follower of Jesus.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul. I am an apostle of Christ Jesus because God wanted me to be. This is because God has promised life through Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy, you are my son and I love you very much. May God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord, bless you. May they be kind to you and give you peace.

Do not be ashamed of the Lord

3 I worship God with a clean heart, as my fathers did. And I thank God when I talk to him about you. I always do this night and day.

4 I want very much to see you. I remember how you cried when we left you. When I see you, how happy I shall be! **5** I remember that you really believe. Your grandmother Lois believed first. Your mother Eunice believed too. I am sure that you believe in the same way. **6** That is why I am telling you again. You must use God's gift. It was given to you when I put my hands on your head. **7** God has not given us a spirit of fear. But he has given us a spirit of power and love and self-control.

8 So do not be ashamed to talk about our Lord. And do not be ashamed of me. I am his prisoner. Be patient in your trouble also, because you tell the good news. God will give you the power to do it.

9 God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did not do it because of the good things we have done. He did it because he himself planned to do it, and wanted to do it. That was the blessing he gave us in Christ Jesus. He had this plan before he made the world. **10** But now he has made it real through the coming of Jesus Christ who saves. He has put death out of the way. He has shown people can have everlasting life by telling them the good news.

11 I have been chosen to tell that good news. I have been chosen to go out and teach it to those who are not Jews. **12** That is why I have this trouble. But I am not ashamed of it because I know the one whom I have trusted. And I am

sure he is able to keep safe what I have trusted to him. He will keep it safe until that great day when he comes again. **13** Take what I have taught you as a guide for good teaching. Keep believing in Christ Jesus and loving him. **14** Keep safe that good thing which was trusted to you. The Holy Spirit who lives in us will help you.

15 You know that all the men who live in the country of Asia Minor have left me. Phygellus and Hermogenes are among them. **16** I hope the Lord will be kind to the family of Onesiphorus. He has often helped me. He has not been ashamed of me in prison. **17** When he came to the city of Rome, he looked for me until he found me. **18** I hope the Lord will be kind to him on that great day. You know very well all that he did for me in the city of Ephesus.

CHAPTER 2

A good soldier of Jesus Christ

So, my son Timothy, be strong. Christ Jesus So, my son Timothy, be strong. Christ Jesus has blessed you so that you can be strong. **2** You and many others heard what I taught. Now you must teach these things to men who can be trusted, men who will be able to teach them to other people also.

3 Be patient in your trouble like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. **4** A soldier who is fighting does not live the way other people do. He wants to please the one who chose him. **5** A man runs a race. But he does not win if he does not obey the rules. **6** A farmer works hard planting. He should be the first one to have the food that grows.

7 Think about what I say and the Lord will help you understand everything. **8** Keep your mind on Jesus Christ. He was raised from death. He was of the family of David. That is the good news I tell people. **9** Because of that, I have trouble. I am even tied with chains like a bad man. But the word of God is not tied up. **10** That is why I bear all my trouble for the sake of God's chosen people. I do it so that they also

may be saved by Christ Jesus and be made great for ever.

11 These are true words: If we died with Christ, we shall also live with him. **12** If we bear all our troubles, we shall also rule with him. If we say we do not know him, then he will also say he does not know us. **13** If we do not believe in him, he still is true, because he cannot say he is not what he is.

A worker who pleases God

14 Tell people these things again. Tell them before the Lord not to quarrel in their teaching. There is no good in doing that. It upsets the minds of those who listen to them.

15 Try to show God that you are a good worker. Do nothing you would be ashamed of. Tell the true message in the right way.

16 Have no part in foolish talk that does not come from God. That kind of talk will take people farther and farther away from God.

17 Their teaching will spread like bad sickness. Hymenaeus and Philetus are two like that.

18 These men say that the time when people are raised from death is past already. That is not true. And what they say is making some people stop believing. **19** But the truth of God stands strong. It cannot change. These words are sure: 'The Lord knows the people who belong to him' and, 'Let all those who use the name of the Lord stop their wrong ways.'

20 In a large house there are many pots. They are not all made of gold and silver. Some are made of wood, and some of earth. Some are used for fine things and some are used for things that are not so fine. **21** So if a person keeps himself clean from these things, he will be like a dish that is used for a fine work. It is kept as a better dish for the head man of the house, and it is ready for any good thing he wants to use it for.

22 Have no part at all in the wrong things that young men like to do. Believe. Have love. Follow what is right. Live at peace. Do these things along with others who have a clean heart and talk to God. **23** Keep out of foolish quarrels. You know that they start fights. **24** The Lord's servant must not fight. But he must be kind to all people. He must be a good teacher to them. He must be patient with them. **25** When he corrects those who are against him, he must do it in a gentle way. It may be that God will turn their hearts to know what is true. **26** And they

may get free again from the devil's trap. He has caught them to do what he wants them to do.

CHAPTER 3

What people will be like in the last days

Be sure of this. In the last days hard times will come. **2** People will love themselves. They will love money. They will talk about themselves and be proud. They will say wrong things about people. They will not obey their parents. They will not be thankful. They will not keep anything holy. **3** They will have no love. They will not agree with anybody. They will tell lies about people. They will have no self-control. They will beat people. They will not love anything that is good. **4** They cannot be trusted. They will act quickly, without thinking. They are proud of themselves. They love to have fun more than they love God. **5** They act as if they worshipped God, yet they do not let God's power work in their lives. Keep away from people like that. **6** They are the kind who go quietly into people's houses. There they get foolish women to believe them. These women know that they have done many wrong things. And they want to do many kinds of wrong things. **7** They are always trying to learn, but never able to find out what is really true.

8 Jannes and Jambres were two men who were very much against Moses. In the same way, these men I am talking about are against what is true. They are men who have wrong thoughts in their minds. They do not believe. **9** But these men will not get very far. Everyone will see that they are wrong, just as people saw that Jannes and Jambres were wrong.

Paul's orders to Timothy

10 Timothy, you know my teaching and the way I lived. You know what I want to do and what I believe. You know my patience, my love, and my strength to bear trouble. **11** You know about my troubles. You know what happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, and in Lystra. You know how badly the people treated me. But the Lord brought me safely through it all. **12** Yes, all who want to live a good life in Christ Jesus will be troubled by other people.

13 Bad men and those who fool other people will grow worse and worse. They will fool other people, and other people will fool them. **14** But you, Timothy, must keep on doing the things you have learned. You know they are right. You know who taught them to you. **15** From the

time you were a child you knew the holy writings. They showed you how to be saved by believing in Christ Jesus.

16 All that is written in the holy writings comes from the Spirit of God. The holy writings are good for these things: to teach people, to show them when they are wrong, to make them see what is right, to teach them to do what is right.

17 In this way a man who belongs to God has all he needs. He is ready for every kind of good work.

CHAPTER 4

I say this before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge people who are living and people who are dead. I say this to you because he will come back and rule over all. **2** Tell people the word of God. Be ready to do it at any time. Show people they are wrong and talk to them about it. Tell them what they should do. Be very patient with them and teach them in many ways.

3 The time is coming when people will not listen to good teaching. They will want to listen to the things they like to hear. And they will bring in many teachers who will teach them just what they want to do. **4** They will not listen to what is true, but will turn away and listen to strange stories.

5 But you, Timothy, must always be watching. Be patient in your troubles. Tell the good news. Do all the work God has given you to do.

6 My life is already being poured out as an offering to God. The time is here for me to leave this life. **7** I have fought the kind of fight that is good. I have reached the mark on the road that God wanted me to reach. And I have kept on believing in him. **8** From now on, my reward is waiting for me, because I have done what is right. The Lord will repay me on the day when he comes back. He judges the right way. I will

not be the only one to get a reward from him. But he will repay all those who want very much to see him.

9 Try to come to me soon. **10** Demas has left me because he loved the things of this world. He has gone to the city of Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. **11** Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you. He helps me very much in my work. **12** I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

13 I left a coat with Carpus in Troas. Bring it with you when you come, and also bring the books. But most of all, I want the written papers.

14 Alexander, the man who makes things from copper, did many wrong things to me. The Lord will punish him for what he has done. **15** You too must keep away from him, for he was very much against what we said.

16 The first time I spoke for myself in court, no one was on my side. All left me. I hope that God will forgive them. **17** But the Lord was with me. He gave me strength to tell the message. All those who are not Jews heard it. And I was saved out of the mouth of the lion. **18** The Lord will save me from every wrong thing. He will bring me safely into the kingdom of heaven. Praise him for ever and ever. Yes, he will!

Last greetings.

19 Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, and to the people who belong to the house of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus stayed in the city of Corinth. Trophimus was sick when I left him at Miletus.

21 Try to come before the cold time of the year. Eubulus sends you greetings. So do Pudens, Linus, and Claudia and all the Christian brothers.

22 The Lord be with your spirit. May he in his kindness bless you. Amen. May it be so!

PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS

Titus was the leader of the church on the island of Crete. Paul asks Titus to make more church leaders, to show kindness, to give teaching and to do good works.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Paul. I am a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. I have been sent to God's chosen people so that they will believe and know what is true. This will make them more like God wants them to be. **2** I do this work because then they can hope to have everlasting life. God does not fool people. He promised everlasting life before he made the world. **3** And at the right time he sent men to tell people his word. God, who saves us, trusted me and told me to tell that word.

4 Titus, I send greetings to you. You are my true son because you believe the same way I do. May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour bless you, and be kind to you, and give you peace.

Titus' work in Crete

5 This is why I left you in the island of Crete. I want you to finish putting things in order. And I want you to choose leaders among the church people in every city as I told you to do. **6** A leader must be a good man, that no one can blame for doing anything wrong. He must have only one wife. His children should believe. They must not live wrong lives. **7** The church leader must be a good man because he looks after God's work. He must not want his own way. He must not get angry or get drunk. He must not fight. He must not try to get rich in wrong ways. **8** But he must be kind to strangers in his house. He must love what is good. He must be wise. He must do what is right. He must live a holy life. He must know how to control himself. **9** He must hold strongly to the true message which he has been taught. Then he will be able to teach other people what is right. And he will be able to answer people who talk against it.

10 There are many people who do not obey God's truth. They talk about things that do no good, and they fool people by it. The Jewish leaders do this very much. **11** You must put a stop to their talking. They stop whole families from believing in Christ because they teach things which they have no right to teach. They teach because they want to get paid for it, even

though it is wrong. **12** One of their own prophets said, 'The people of Crete are always telling lies. They are like wild, bad animals. They are lazy and want to eat too much.' **13** What he said is true. You must tell them that they are wrong. Tell them to stop it. They must believe what is true. **14** They must not use the old Jewish stories. They must not use the rules which were made by men who do not believe what is true.

15 All things are clean to those who have a clean mind. But nothing is clean to those who do wrong things and do not believe. Their minds and their hearts are full of wrong things. **16** They say that they know God. But what they do shows that they do not know him. They live in a way that God hates. They do not obey. They can do nothing that is good.

CHAPTER 2

Teaching what is right

But as for you, Titus, you must teach what is right. **2** Tell the older men that they must not drink too much wine. They must be men whom people respect. They must be wise. They must believe what is true. They must be loving and patient.

3 Tell the older women also that they must live like Christians. They must not tell lies about anyone. They must not drink much wine. They must teach what is good. **4** They must teach the young women to love their husbands and their children. **5** They must teach young women to have good sense, to live a clean life, to care for their homes, to be kind, and to obey their husbands. Then people cannot say wrong things about God's word. **6** Also tell the young men to have good sense.

7 Titus, show them what they should do in all matters by the good things you do. Do not mix your teaching with things that are not true. Teach in such a way that people will respect you. **8** Be sure that what you say is true, so that no one can say anything against it. Then anyone who is against us will be made ashamed because he can find nothing wrong to say about us.

9 Tell servants to obey their master in everything. Tell them to please them and not talk back to them. **10** They must not steal, but be very honest so the person they work for can trust them. In all things they must show that the teaching about God our Saviour is good.

11 God's loving kindness has come. It is through that blessing that all men are saved. **12** It teaches us to say no to the things that are not true of God, and to the things of this world. It teaches us to use good sense, to do what is right, and to please God while we live in this world. **13** All this is while we wait and hope to see the one who brings blessing. We are waiting for our great God to come in Jesus Christ. He is the One who will save us. He is wonderful! **14** Christ gave himself for us so that he might make us free from all that is wrong. He gave himself to make us into clean people who belong to him and want to do good.

15 Talk about these things. Tell people they must do them. And use all your power to stop people if they are doing wrong. Do not let anyone despise you.

CHAPTER 3

Doing what is good

Tell the people again to obey their rulers and governments, and to do what they tell them to do. Tell them to be ready to do any honest work. **2** They must not say wrong things about anyone. They must not quarrel. They must be kind and polite to everyone.

3 There was a time when we ourselves did not have understanding. We did not obey God. We were fooled by people. We did many wrong things we wanted to do. We did what we pleased. We lived our days in planning to do wrong things and wanting what other people had. People hated us, and we hated each other.

4 God who saves us showed how kind and good he is. **5** We were not saved by any good things we did ourselves, but he saved us because he is so kind. He washed us clean. We were born again as a new person. The Holy Spirit has made us new. **6** God is rich. And he gave the Holy Spirit to us because of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **7** He did this so that we can be put right with God, by his kindness. He did this so that we can become his children. So now we can look forward to everlasting life.

8 These are true words. And I want you to tell the people these things. Then those who have believed God will try to do good things. These things are right and help people.

9 Have nothing to do with: foolish quarrels; lists of people who lived long ago; those who make trouble and argue about the law. These things do not help people and are good for nothing.

10 Talk to any who do not believe right. Talk to them about it once or twice. Then, if they will not listen, have nothing more to do with them.

11 You know that such people are wrong and what they do is wrong. They themselves know that they are wrong.

Paul tells Titus what to do for him

12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at the city of Nicopolis. I have planned to stay there while it is the cold time of the year. **13** Do your best to send Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos on their way. Give them all they need. **14** Our people should learn to spend their time in doing good things to help people who are poor. In that way, our people will not waste their time.

A blessing

15 All those who are with me send you greetings. Greet those who believe as we do and who love us.

God bless you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

Paul writes to his friend Philemon. He asks him to take back his slave Onesimus. Onesimus ran away from Philemon. Onesimus went to see Paul in Rome in prison. He became a believer and follower of Jesus. Paul sent Onesimus back home with this letter. Paul asks Philemon to forgive Onesimus. Paul wants them to become friends again because they both love Jesus. This letter shows how love in Christ Jesus can overcome the wrong things people do.

Greetings

I am Paul. I am in prison because I belong to Christ Jesus.

Our brother Timothy and I send greetings to you, Philemon. We love you very much. And you work with us. **2** We also send greetings to our sister Apphia; to Archippus who is a worker in God's army as we are; and to the people who meet as a church in your house.

3 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you in their kindness and give you peace.

Philemon's love and faith

4 I always thank my God when I talk to him about you. **5** I have heard that you love all of God's people and that you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. **6** You believe as I do. I ask God that he may help you to know more and more of every good thing that we have in Christ. **7** My brother, your love made me very glad and it comforted my heart. I know that God's people were glad because you loved them.

Paul begs for Onesimus

8 Because I am Christ's apostle, I could tell you what you must do. **9** But because I love you, I would rather not tell you, but ask you to do this for me. I, Paul, am an old man and now I am in prison because I belong to Jesus Christ. **10** I am asking you to do something for my son. He became a Christian here in prison. This son is Onesimus. **11** At one time he was no help to you. But now he is a big help to you and to me. **12** I am sending him back to you and it is like sending you my own heart. **13** I would like to keep him with me. He can help me while I am in prison for the sake of the good news. That

would be just as if you were here to help me.

14 But I did not want to do anything unless you agreed. I did not want you to do this because you were forced to do it, but because you wanted to do it.

15 Maybe it was good for him to be away from you for a while. Now you will have him with you for ever. **16** Now he is not like a slave who must work for you. He is better than a slave. He is a Christian brother and you will love him. I love him very much. But you will love him even more because he belongs to you and he is a Christian.

17 So if you think of me as a real friend, take him back just as you would take me back.

18 If he has done you any wrong, or if he owes you a debt, then ask me to pay it. **19** I, Paul, write this with my own hand. I will repay it. I do not need to tell you that you have your life because of what I did for you. **20** Yes, my brother, give me some help in the Lord. Make me happy in Christ.

21 I believe that you will do what I ask you to do. And so I am writing to you. I know that you will do even more than I ask you to do.

22 At the same time, please make a place ready for me to stay. I know you are asking God to set me free, so I believe he will let me come to see you.

Last greetings

23 Epaphras is in prison with me for the sake of Christ Jesus. He sends greetings to you.

24 Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke are working with me. They all send greetings too.

25 May the loving kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen! May it be so!

HEBREWS: A LETTER TO JEWISH BELIEVERS

This letter was written to help Hebrew people who had accepted Jesus as their Messiah. It explains many things from the holy writings. It shows how many things in the Old Testament really point to Jesus Christ. It is only through Jesus that we can receive all the blessings that God wants to give us. So we must keep on following Jesus, even if things get very hard. Old ways of religion are not good enough to put us right with God. When Jesus died on the cross, he set us free from the old ways. We should therefore believe this and follow him. Only this will make us right with God.

CHAPTER 1

God has talked through his Son, Jesus Christ

Long ago, God talked to our fathers through the prophets. He talked many times and in many ways. **2** In these last days, he talked to us through his Son. God chose him to be the one to whom he would give all things. God also made the world by this Son. **3** He shines as bright as God. He is just like God himself. He holds up the world by the power of his word. He made people clean from their wrong ways. Then he sat down beside God in heaven.

God's Son is greater than angels

4 He is much greater than the angels because God has given him a much better name than theirs.

5 Did God ever say to any of the angels, 'You are my Son, and I am your Father today'? Did God ever say to an angel, 'I will be your Father and you will be my Son'? **6** When God brings his first-born Son into the world, he says, 'All of God's angels must worship him.'

7 Here is what he says about the angels: 'God makes his angels to be like the winds. He makes his helpers to be like flames of fire.'

8 But here is what God says about his Son: 'O God, you will sit and rule for ever. You will rule in the right way. **9** You have loved what is good and you have hated what is wrong. That is why God has poured out happiness on you, more than on those who are with you.'

10 He also said, 'Lord, you made the world in the beginning. The sky was made by your hands. **11** These things will come to an end, but you will live on. They will all wear out like clothes. **12** You will fold up the world and the sky as if they were a blanket. They will not stay as they are now. But you will always be as you are now. The years of your life will never end.'

13 But did God ever say to any of the angels, 'Sit down beside me until I put your enemies

under you'? **14** Are not all the angels spirits that help? They are sent out to help the people who will be saved.

CHAPTER 2

The way to be saved

That is why we must listen very carefully to the things we have heard. We must never forget them. **2** What the angels said proved to be true. Everyone who broke the law, and who did not obey it, was punished as he should be punished. **3** If that is so, then we will not get away without being punished. We will be punished if we forget or throw away this wonderful way to be saved. It was the Lord who first told people how to be saved. Then those who heard him told us the true way. **4** God also proved that it was the true way. He gave signs. He did things that surprised people. He did many things by his power. He gave the gifts of the Holy Spirit to people just as he wanted to.

The one who made the way to be saved

5 God did not put the next world under angels for them to rule over. That is the world we are talking about. **6** In one place the holy writings say, 'What is man and why do you think about him? What is the Son of a Man and why do you care about him? **7** You made him lower than angels for a little while. But then you made him very great and high. **8** You put everything under him for him to rule over.' When God gave him the right to rule over everything, nothing was left out which he did not have the right to rule. But we do not yet see him ruling over everything. **9** But we do see Jesus! For a short time he was lower than the angels. Because he died, we see him made great and high. He did this so that he could die for every person. God is so good!

10 Everything was made for God and by God. It seemed good to him that Jesus' life should be made complete, by going through the hard things that happened to him. This was because

Jesus leads many people to heaven as God's children. And he is the one who saves them.

11 Jesus, who makes people holy, and those who are made holy, all have one Father in heaven. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers.

12 He said, 'I will tell my brothers about you. I will sing praise about you among those who gather together for worship.'

13 He also said, 'I will trust God.' And again, 'Here am I and the children God has given to me.'

14 God's children all have a body. That is why Jesus himself had the same. But because Jesus also had a body, he was able to die and stop the devil. The devil has power to make people die. But Jesus, by his own death, was able to stop the power of death.

15 People were afraid to die. All their lives they were like slaves. When Jesus died, he was able to set them free from their fear. **16** Jesus did not come to help angels. He came to help people who were born in Abraham's family.

17 So he had to be made like his brothers in every way. Then he could be a high priest to make a way to God for them, a priest who was kind and true. He could make it possible for God to forgive people for the wrong things they had done. **18** He had a very hard time when he was tested. But because he was tested, he is able to help people who are tested.

CHAPTER 3

Jesus is greater than Moses

My brothers, you are holy. You are also called to go to heaven. Take time to think carefully about Jesus. God sent him. He is the high priest we believe in. **2** He did what God sent him to do, just as Moses did in God's house. **3** But Jesus is much greater than Moses - as the one who builds a house is greater than the house itself. **4** Every house is built by someone, but God is the one who builds all things. **5** Moses did what he was told to do as a servant in all of God's house. He showed things that God would say later. **6** But Jesus Christ was true as a Son over God's house. We are God's house if we keep on believing and telling others what we hope to have.

A rest for God's people

So as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, when you hear me speak, do not make your hearts hard. **8** That is what happened when the people

tested me in the desert and I became angry.

9 There your fathers tested me and tried me. And they saw what I did for forty years. **10** So I was very angry with the people of that time. I said, "Their minds are always dark. They have not known my ways." **11** I said when I was angry, "They will never go into my resting place".'

12 My brothers, take care that not one of you has a heart that does not believe. Such a heart will take you away from the living God. **13** But talk to each other every day while 'Today' lasts, so that wrong ways will not fool any one of you and your hearts become hard. **14** We have our part with Christ if we go on to the end and believe in him as we did at first. **15** God is still saying now, 'Today, when you hear me speak, do not make your hearts hard. That is what happened when the people turned against me.'

16 Who were the people who heard him and yet made him very angry? It was all the people whom Moses led out of the country of Egypt.

17 With whom was God angry for forty years? He was angry with the people who had done wrong. And they died in the desert. **18** Who were the people God said would never go into his resting place? They were the people who would not listen to him. **19** So then, we see that they could not go in because they did not believe him.

CHAPTER 4

We still have God's promise that people will go into his resting place. So let us take care that not one of you will be kept out. **2** The good news has been told to us just as it was told to the people in the desert. But the message which they heard did not do them any good. Even though they heard it, they did not believe it. **3** But we who believe, will go into that resting place of God. It is as God said, 'When I was angry, I said, "They will never go into my resting place".'

He said this even though his work had been finished ever since he had made the world.

4 Here is what he said, somewhere in the holy writings, about the seventh day: 'And God rested on the seventh day after doing all his work.' **5** And now here he says again, 'They will never go into my resting place.' **6** So that means some people will go in. But the people who first heard the good news about it did not go in. They did not believe it. **7** So he chose another day called 'Today.' He spoke through David

many years later, who said, 'Today, when you hear his voice, do not make your hearts hard.'

8 If Joshua had led those people to rest, God would not have talked later about another day.

9 So there is still a rest for God's people, like a Sabbath day. **10** The person who goes into God's resting place will rest after doing his work, just as God rested after doing his work.

11 So let us do our best to go into that resting place. Those people died in the wilderness because they did not believe. So let us take care that the same thing does not happen to one of us. **12** God's word is living and full of power. It is more sharp than any sword that cuts on both sides. What God says cuts through and divides the mind and spirit. It cuts through and divides the place where the bones are joined, and the part inside the bone. What God says is able to judge the things people think and plan in their hearts. **13** God is the one we must meet. Nothing can be hidden from him. Everything is open and he can see it.

Jesus our great high priest

14 We have a great high priest who has gone into heaven. He is Jesus, the Son of God. Because we have such a great high priest, let us hold on to the things we believe. **15** We have a high priest who can feel with us when we are weak. He has been tested in every way, just as we are. But he did not do anything wrong. **16** So let us trust him when we come to worship God. He is so good. He will be kind to us and help us when we need it.

CHAPTER 5

Every high priest is chosen from among men. His work is to stand before God for people. He brings gifts and makes sacrifices to God for the wrong things people have done. **2** Such a high priest can be kind to people who do not know what is right and who do wrong. He knows how to share in the suffering of others because he himself is weak. **3** Because he is weak himself, he must make sacrifices to God for the wrong things he has done, just as he does for the people.

4 No one chooses himself to be high priest. But God calls him, just as he called Aaron.

5 So Christ did not choose himself to be a high priest. But he was chosen by the One who said to him, 'You are my Son, and I am your Father today.' **6** In another place in the holy writings

God said, 'You are a priest for ever like Melchizedek.'

7 When Jesus was a man, he talked to God who was able to save him from death. He called loudly to him with tears. God heard him because he honoured and respected God. **8** Even though Jesus was his Son, he learned to obey God in the troubles he had. **9** When he became perfect, he saved for ever all who obeyed him. **10** God called him a high priest like Melchizedek was a priest.

We must grow up in our Christian life

11 We have many things to say about him. But they are hard to explain to you. You are so slow to understand what we tell you. **12** By this time you should be able to teach others. But you need someone to teach you God's word again from the very beginning. Like children, you need milk, not meat. **13** Anyone who takes milk does not understand the message about which things are right. **14** But meat is for people who are grown up. It is for people who have trained their minds to know the difference between what is good and what is bad.

CHAPTER 6

So, let us leave behind the first teachings about Christ. And let us go on to things that are grown up. We must not go back to the beginning again and talk about turning away from doing things that bring death to us. We must not go back again and talk about believing in God. Let us go forward. **2** We must not go back to teaching about baptizing people in water, about putting hands on people's heads, about people being raised from death, and about people being judged for ever. **3** If God will let us, we will go on to build on these things. **4** Some people had light in their hearts once. They knew the gift from heaven. **5** They had the Holy Spirit. They knew the word of God is good and felt the powers of the next world. **6** If people who were like that leave their faith in Christ, they cannot come to God again. They themselves nail God's Son up on the cross again. They are holding him up to shame before everyone.

7 The ground drinks the water that often rains on it. It makes plants grow for the people who take care of it. And God blesses that ground.

8 But if it grows thorns and weeds, it is no good. It will soon be cursed. In the end, it will be burned with fire.

Sure to have what God promised

9 This is the way we talk. But dear people, we are sure that better things are true about you. Yes, you show all the good ways of people who have been saved from their wrong ways.

10 God does what is right. He will not forget your work and the love you have shown for him. You have helped God's people and you are still helping them. **11** We want every one of you to try in the same way. Then you will get what you hope for right up to the end. **12** Do not give up. But be like the people who get what God has promised. They believe God and keep on believing for a long time.

13 God made a promise to Abraham. God did not have anyone greater than himself to hear his promise. **14** So he promised to himself when he said, 'I will surely bless you and you will have many children.' **15** Abraham kept on believing God. And so he got what God had promised him. **16** When men make a promise, they ask someone to hear it who is greater than they are. When someone great has heard a promise, it stops any quarrel about it.

17 God made a promise to people. He wanted to show them that he would surely do as he said. So he promised to himself to keep the promise. **18** These two things cannot be changed and God cannot lie about them. So we can trust him. We have run to him to get what he has promised us. **19** This promise gives our hearts something to hold on to. It keeps our hearts strong and steady. It will take us into the Holy Place right inside God's house. **20** Jesus has gone there ahead of us. He has been made high priest for ever like Melchizedek.

CHAPTER 7

Melchizedek the priest

Melchizedek was king of the city of Salem. He was a priest of God who is the greatest of all. Melchizedek met Abraham when Abraham came back from killing some bad kings. And Melchizedek blessed him. **2** Abraham divided all that he took away from the kings into ten parts. He gave Melchizedek one part.

First, the name Melchizedek means the king who is true and right with God. Then he was king of Salem. That means king of peace. **3** He has no father or mother. The names of the family from which he comes are not written down. It is not written down that he was born or that he died.

But, like the Son of God, he stays on being a priest for ever.

4 Just think how great he was! Even Abraham, the father of our people, gave him a tenth, one part out of ten, of all he brought back. **5** The sons of Levi, who are priests, have the right by law to take a tenth of what the people have. These people are their own brothers. They also are Abraham's children. **6** But Melchizedek was not from Levi's family. Yet he took a tenth of what Abraham had. And he blessed Abraham, to whom God made the promise. **7** Everyone knows this is true. The person who is blessed is not so great as the person who blesses him. **8** Here, priests take their tenth, but they are people who will die one day. But Melchizedek, who took his tenth, never dies. The holy writings say it is so. **9** And we say that Levi, the priest who takes the tenth from the people, gave his tenth through Abraham. **10** He was not yet born when Melchizedek met Abraham.

11 It was while the sons of Levi were priests that the law was made for the people. If those priests were good enough, why would another priest need to come who was like Melchizedek? Why would he not be like Aaron? **12** If the kind of priest is changed, then the law must be changed also. **13** The one we are talking about belonged to another tribe. No man from his tribe ever made sacrifices in God's house. **14** Everyone knows that our Lord Jesus came from the tribe of Judah. And Moses never said anything about priests coming from that tribe. **15** You can understand it even better when another priest comes who is like Melchizedek. **16** He was not made a priest by law. The law said that the priest must come from a certain tribe. But he was made a priest because he has power to live for ever. **17** This is what the holy writings say about him, 'You are a priest for ever, like Melchizedek.'

18 The old law given to Moses by God was put away. It was weak and no good. **19** The law did not make anything right. But something better has been brought to us. It is God's promise. And by that promise we come near to God.

20 Also Christ was not made a priest without God's strong promise. The others were made priests without God's strong promise. **21** But this man was made priest by God's strong promise. God said to him, 'The Lord has made a strong promise, and he will not change it. "You are a priest for ever".' **22** Also because of this,

Jesus makes a better agreement with God for people.

23 The other priests were many, because they died and could not go on with their work. **24** But because Jesus lives forever, he is a priest for ever and no one takes his place. **25** Because of that, he is able to save people for ever, if they come to God by him. He lives for ever to talk to God for them.

26 We needed such a high priest as he is. He is holy. He is good. He has never done any wrong. He has been taken away from among bad people, and taken up higher than the sky. **27** He does not need to make sacrifices every day. The other high priests make sacrifices every day, first for the wrong things they have done, and then for the people. He did it once when he offered himself as the sacrifice. **28** The law makes men high priests, and they are weak. But the word of God's promise came after the law. It makes his Son high priest for ever, and he is all right.

CHAPTER 8

The high priest of the new agreement

The real point of what we are saying is this. We now have a high priest who sits beside God's throne or chief chair in heaven. **2** He is priest in the true holy place where God lives. The Lord made that place, man did not.

3 Every high priest is chosen to offer gifts and sacrifices. So this high priest must have something to offer also. **4** If he were still on earth, he would not be a priest. There are priests on earth already who offer gifts the way the law says. **5** The work they do shows what the work of the priest in heaven is. When Moses made a house for God, here is what God told him to do. He said, 'Be sure you make everything like I showed you on the mountain.'

6 But Christ has been given a much better work, because he is the man who is between God and men in making an agreement. This is a much better agreement. It was made by better promises. **7** If the first agreement had been all right, there would have been no need to make another.

8 When the people had done wrong, God's words to them were, 'The days will come, the Lord says, when I will make a new agreement with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. **9** It will not be like the agreement that I made with their fathers. I made that agreement

the day I led them by the hand out of the country of Egypt. But they did not keep their part of my agreement, so I left them alone, the Lord says. **10** After those days, the Lord says, I will make an agreement with the people of Israel. This is my agreement. I will put my laws in their minds. I will write them in their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people. **11** A man will not need to teach another man, or his brother. He will not say, "Know the Lord," because everyone from the youngest to the oldest will know me. **12** I will be kind even when they do what is not right, and I will never remember the wrong things they do.'

13 God says this is a new agreement, and that makes the first one old. When a thing is old and no good, it is about ready to be thrown away.

CHAPTER 9

Holy places on earth and in heaven

The first agreement had laws about worship. And it had a holy place on earth where the agreement was kept. **2** A house was made. In the first part of the house were the light, the table, and the bread of God. This first part was called the Holy Place.

3 The next part of the house was called the Most Holy Place. **4** In the Most Holy Place was a pan made of gold. In this pan a fire could burn to make a sweet-smelling smoke. The box of the agreement was also in the Most Holy Place. It was covered all over with gold. In this box were: the golden pot, which had some of the food God sent from heaven for the people in the desert; Aaron's stick which grew flowers on it; and the stones which had God's agreement written on them. **5** On top of the box were the shapes of two angels. They showed that God is great. Their wings spread over the cover of the box. It was the place where God showed that he is kind. But we cannot take time to tell about every part of these things now.

6 These things were made ready. The priests always went into the first part of the house to do their work for God. **7** But only the high priest went into the second part. And he went in only once a year. He never went in without taking blood with him. He gave the blood to God for the wrong things he had done and for the wrong things people had done. **8** This is how the Holy Spirit showed that the way into the Most Holy Place was not yet open to everybody. It was not open as long as the first house was still standing. **9** This first part is a picture of the

time we are in now. In it gifts and sacrifices are made to God. But they cannot make a person's heart clean to worship God. **10** These are only things to eat and drink and different kinds of washings. They are laws made for the body until the time when everything is made right again.

What Christ has done

11 But Christ has come as the high priest of the good things which have come. He went through a greater and better house which was not made by men's hands. It is not a part of this world. **12** He did not take the blood of goats and young cows. He took his own blood. And he went into the Most Holy Place just once. He paid for our sins and made us free for ever. **13** The priest takes the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes from a young cow that has been burned. He puts this on the people who have done wrong things. This makes their bodies clean. **14** If the blood of animals can do that, then the blood of Christ will clean our hearts much better. Christ gave himself to God as the sacrifice. He did this by the Spirit who lives for ever. He was a perfect sacrifice. He will clean our hearts from useless acts of worship. Then we can serve the living God.

15 That is why he is the middle man of a new agreement. He died and paid for the wrong things that were done under the first agreement. Because he is a middle man, those people who are called by God can have what he promised. This will belong to them for ever.

16 A person can say who will get his things when he dies. He writes this agreement down. Before anyone can have them, it must be proved that the person has died. **17** The agreement has no power until the one who made it has died. It has no power as long as the one who made it is living. **18** So even the old agreement made by God was not begun without blood. **19** Moses told all the people every part of the law. Then he took the blood of young cows and goats. He put some of the blood on the book of the law itself and on all the people. He took water and red wool and a plant called hyssop. **20** As he did this, he said, 'This is the blood for the agreement which God has made for you.' **21** In the same way, he put some of the blood on the house he had made for God, and on all the things that were used in worship.

22 Yes, by the old law almost everything is made clean with blood. If no animal is killed to give blood, then there is no way for people to

be forgiven for the wrong things they have done.

Christ's sacrifice

23 These things on earth show in a little way what things in heaven are like. The things on earth had to be cleaned by the blood of animals. But the things in heaven had to be cleaned with better sacrifices than these. **24** Christ did not go into a holy place made by men's hands. The holy places on earth only show in a little way what the true holy place in heaven is like. He went into heaven itself. Now he stands before God for our sake. **25** Christ did not have to offer himself as a sacrifice many times. He is not like the high priest who went into the Holy Place every year and took blood that was not his own blood. **26** If Christ were like him, he would have had to die many times ever since the world was first made. But as it is now, Christ came once in the last days of the world. He came to clean away what is wrong by giving himself as a sacrifice. **27** People must die, and after that they will be judged. **28** So Christ gave himself as a sacrifice only once. He took on himself the wrong things many people have done. He will come a second time. But he will not come to do anything about the wrong things people have done. He will come to save those who are looking and waiting for him.

CHAPTER 10

The law can show only a little about the good things that are coming. It cannot show the good things themselves. People come to worship God. But the law can never make them all right by the same sacrifices that are brought every year. **2** If the law could make people all right, they would stop making sacrifices. The people who come to worship would be made clean for all time, and they would not remember the wrong things they had done. **3** But, by making these sacrifices, they show that they do remember the wrong things they have done. **4** The blood of bulls and goats can never clean wrong things from people's hearts.

5 That is why Christ said when he came into the world, 'You did not want sacrifices and gifts. But you made a body for me. **6** Animals that are burned for sacrifices, and animals killed to clean away the wrong things that people do, did not satisfy you. **7** Then I said, "See, I have come to do what you, God, want me to do." This is what is written about me in the book of the law.'

8 First he said, 'You did not want sacrifices and gifts, and animals that are given to be burned as sacrifices, and animals killed to clean away people's wrong ways. You did not like them.' These sacrifices are made to obey the law.

9 Then he said, 'See, I have come to do what you want me to do.' He took away the first kind of sacrifices so that the second kind would remain. **10** God wanted us to be made holy. We have been made holy by Jesus Christ. He made us holy by once making his body a sacrifice.

11 Every priest stands day after day doing his work. He makes the same sacrifices many times. But these sacrifices can never clean away the wrong things people have done. **12** But Christ made one sacrifice to clean away their wrong ways for ever. Then he sat down beside God.

13 Since then, he is waiting till his enemies are put under him. **14** By one sacrifice Christ has made right for ever all those people who are being made holy.

15 The Holy Spirit tells us about this also.

16 First he said, 'This is the agreement that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts. I will write them in their minds.' **17** Then he also said, 'I will never remember the wrong things they have done and the times they did not obey.'

18 When these wrong things have been forgiven, a sacrifice is not needed for them again.

Let us come to God

19 So, my brothers, we can go into the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus. **20** He made a new and living way for us. He opened up God's way specially for us. It lets us through the big curtain or cloth which hides God from us. This happened when Jesus gave his body as a sacrifice. **21** Also, we have a high priest who has charge of God's people.

22 So let us come to him with a true heart. Let us come because we believe all these things. Let us come with our hearts washed clean from our wrong ways. Let us come with our bodies washed with clean water. **23** We must hold on to God's promise that we have said we believed. And we must never let go. He has promised and he will do it. **24** Let us think of one another and help one another to love and to do good things.

25 Do not stop going to church meetings. Some people do stop. But help each other to be strong. You must do it all the more as you see the Great Day coming closer.

Bigger punishment

26 Do we go on doing what is wrong after we know the truth? If we do, then there is no sacrifice any more for the wrong things we do.

27 But we will be judged, and that makes us fear. God's anger will be like a very hot fire that will burn up those who are against him. **28** Any man who broke the law of Moses was killed, if two or three people proved that he had broken the law. He will not be forgiven. **29** But the person who should have much bigger punishment is the one who turns against the Son of God. That person was made holy by the blood of the new agreement and then calls it nothing. He no longer honours and respects the Spirit who has been so kind to him. **30** We know God who has said, 'I am the one who will punish people. I will repay them.' Also, 'The Lord will judge his people.' **31** People should fear very much to be punished by the living God.

32 Remember the first days when you had the light of God's truth. In those days you were strong, even though you had to fight against many troubles. **33** Sometimes it was because people said and did wrong things to you and everybody saw it. And sometimes it was because you stood with others who had wrong things done to them. **34** You shared in the troubles of those who were in prison. When your things were taken from you, you were happy. You knew that you had better things in heaven, things that would always belong to you.

35 So do not stop believing God now. Your faith will bring you much reward. **36** You must not give up believing. Then you will do what God wants you to do. Then you will get what he promised you. **37** The holy writings say 'In a little while, the one who is to come will come. He will not wait any longer. **38** If a person does what is right because he believes in God, he will live. If he turns back, I will not be pleased with him.'

39 We are not the people who turn back and so are lost. But we are people who believe, and so we are saved.

CHAPTER 11

Believing God

If people believe God, then they know they have the things they hope to get. It is the proof of things we do not see. **2** There were people long ago believed God. He said they were good because they believed him.

3 We believe in God, so that is how we know that God made the world by his word. The things we see were made out of things that cannot be seen.

4 Because Abel believed God, he made a sacrifice that pleased God more than the one Cain made. Because Abel believed God, God showed that he was good. God was pleased with his gifts. Abel died. But because he believed God, he still speaks to us through his faith.

5 Because Enoch believed God, he was taken up into heaven without dying. The people could not find him because God had taken him. Before he was taken up, the holy writings say that he pleased God. **6** If a person does not believe God, he cannot please him. Anyone who comes to God must believe that God is real. And he must believe that God will bless those who try to find him. God will reward a person, if he really tries to find God. **7** God told Noah about things that would happen. These things had never happened before. Noah believed God; he respected God. He built a big house on a boat, and so his family was saved [from the big flood]. By believing God he showed that the other people were wrong. He was put right with God because he believed.

8 God called Abraham to go away to a place which he would have as his own. Because Abraham believed God, he obeyed him. He went even though he did not know where he was to go. **9** Because he believed God, he lived like a stranger in the land God promised him. He lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob. They had the same promise he had. **10** Abraham was looking for a city which will last for ever. It was the city God planned and made. **11** Sarah also believed God, and she was able to have a baby even though she was too old to have children. But she trusted God to do what he had promised. **12** Abraham was too old to be a father, but a great nation was born from that one man. They are as many as the stars in the sky and as the sands on the seaside. No man can count them.

13 These people all died still believing God. They did not get the things God had promised them. But they saw them far away and were glad to see them. They said they did not belong to this world, but were only travelling in it.

14 People who say such things mean they are looking for a country which will be their own.

15 If they had wanted the country they left behind, they could have gone back to it. **16** But

now they want a better country. They want a place in heaven. That is why God wants to be called their God. He has made a city ready for them.

Abraham believed God

17 Abraham believed God when he was tested. The test was to give Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham gave up his only son, even though God had made a promise to him about Isaac. **18** God had said to Abraham, 'Isaac's children will be called your family.' **19** Abraham said in his heart that God could bring Isaac back to life. And so it was just as if he did get his son back. **20** Isaac believed God. He gave Jacob and Esau blessings that were to come.

21 Jacob believed God. When he was dying, he blessed Joseph's two sons. He leaned on his walking stick as he worshipped God. **22** Joseph believed God. When he died, he remembered God's promise and talked about the time the people of Israel would leave Egypt. He told them what to do with his bones when they left Egypt.

Many believed God

23 The father and mother of Moses believed God. When he was born, they hid him for three months because they saw that he was a very nice baby. They were not afraid of the king's orders.

24 Moses believed God. When he was grown up, he did not want to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. **25** He chose to have troubles along with God's people. He thought that was better than the fun which he could have living a wrong life. The fun would last only for a short time. **26** He thought it was better to take shame, as Christ did, than to be a rich man in Egypt. He was looking for God's blessings. **27** He believed God and left Egypt. He was not afraid of the king's anger. He was strong because he saw the one who cannot be seen.

28 He believed God and obeyed his law about the Passover Feast, and put blood on the door posts. He did this so that the angel who killed the oldest sons of the Egyptians, would pass over. Then he would not kill the oldest sons in the families of the Jews.

29 The people believed God and went through the Red Sea on dry land. When the people of Egypt tried to do that, they were drowned.

30 The people believed God and walked around the walls of the city of Jericho for seven days. The walls fell down.

31 Rahab was a woman who used her body wrongly for sex to get money. But she believed in God, so she did not die with the people who did not believe in God. This was when the men came to spy out her country. She took them into her house in peace.

32 What more should I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. **33** Men believed God and were able to win over other nations. They made people do what was right. They got what God promised them. They were not eaten by lions. **34** The big, hot fire did not burn them. They got away from men who wanted to kill them with long knives or swords. They were weak, but they became strong. They became very strong to fight. They drove away the armies of their enemies. **35** Women had children who died and were raised to life again. Some people allowed themselves to be beaten to death. They would not go free because they wanted to rise again to a better life. **36** Others were laughed at and beaten very hard. They were even tied with chains and put into prison. **37** They were killed with stones. They were tested. They were cut in pieces. They were killed with swords. They walked about wearing skins of sheep and goats. They were very poor. They were treated very badly. They were punished. **38** They were really too good to be in this world. They walked about in the desert and in the mountains, and in the holes in the hills and in the holes among the rocks on the earth.

39 All of these people had good things said about them because they believed God. But they did not get what God had promised. **40** God planned something better. They will be made perfect but only with us.

CHAPTER 12

We have all these people all around us, proving to us that we should believe God. So then, like people running a race, we must take off everything that is heavy. We must put off all wrong, wrong things that get in our way. We must not stop running until we reach the mark that has been put in front of us. **2** We must keep our eyes on Jesus. He believed from first to last. What was put in front of him made him glad, so he did not give up when the people nailed him on a cross. He did not care about the shame. And now he is sitting beside God.

3 Think about him. He did not give up when bad people said wrong things about him. When you

think about him, you will not become tired and your hearts will not give up. **4** You have been fighting against bad people. But you have not been hurt very much.

Why the Lord punishes

5 You have forgotten the words spoken to you as sons. 'My son, when the Lord punishes you, do not think it is a little thing. Do not give up when he tells you that you do wrong. **6** The Lord punishes the person he loves. And he beats every son he takes into his family.'

7 Do not give up when you are punished. God is treating you like sons. Is there a son who has never been punished by his father? **8** You are punished like the other children in the family. If you are not, you do not belong to the family as the other children do. **9** And what is more, our fathers on earth punished us and we respected them. We should obey even more the Father of our spirits. If we do, we will live.

10 Our fathers on earth punished us for a short time the way they wanted to. But God punishes us the way it is good for us. He is holy and good, so he wants us to become holy also.

11 At the time a person is punished, he is not glad. He is sad. But after it is over, there is peace. Then those who are trained by it do what is right.

Get God's blessing

12 So lift up your hands that are hanging down. Make your weak knees strong. **13** Walk straight ahead. Then weak feet will not get worse, but will be made well. **14** Try to be at peace with all people. And try to be holy. If a person is not holy, he will not see the Lord. **15** Take care that no one loses God's blessing. Take care so that no angry feeling starts to grow in anyone. It will make trouble and many people will become bad.

16 Take care that no one takes part in wrong ways of using sex. And take care that no one is like Esau and forgets God. He was the older son. But he sold all that he would get from his father. He sold it for a little food. **17** You know that later he wanted to get the blessing, but he did not get it. He could not turn back. He even cried as he begged for the blessing.

18 You have not come to the mountain that can be touched and is burning with a big fire. You have not come to the place of darkness and night and storm. **19** You have not come to a place where a loud trumpet or horn is blown, and a loud voice is talking. When the people heard the voice, they begged that God would

not say anything more to them. **20** They were afraid of what he said. He said, 'If even an animal touches this mountain, it must be killed with stones.' **21** Moses was afraid when he saw all this. He said, 'I fear very much and I tremble.'

22 But you have come to a hill called Zion. You have come to the city of the living God. It is the Jerusalem in heaven. You have come to many thousands of angels in a happy gathering.

23 You have come to the church people. They are God's first sons, and their names are written in heaven. You have come to God who is the judge of all people. You have come to the spirits of good people who have been made right.

24 You have come to Jesus who is the middle man of a new agreement. You have come to the place where the spilling of his blood has more power than Abel's.

25 Take care that you listen to God who is talking now. The people were punished when they would not listen to the One who talked on earth. And we will be punished much worse if we will not listen to the One who talks from heaven. **26** That time his voice shook the earth. But now he has said, 'Only once more I will shake the earth and the sky also.' **27** The words, 'Only once more' mean that the things that are shaken will be taken away. They are things that were made. The things which are not shaken will stay. **28** We have a place in heaven that cannot be shaken. So let us be glad and worship God and please him. Let us respect and fear him. **29** Our God is a fire that can burn up.

CHAPTER 13

Things that please God

Keep on loving your Christian brothers. **2** Take strangers to your home and care for them. Some people who have done this found out the strangers were angels. **3** Remember those who are in prison as if you were in prison with them. And remember those who are having troubles, as if you were having the same troubles. **4** Everyone must respect marriage. And the bed must be kept clean. God will punish those who use their bodies for wrong sex. **5** Do not let the love of money control your life. Be satisfied with what you have. God himself has said, 'I will never be away from you. I will never leave you alone.' **6** So we can be strong and say, 'The Lord will help me. I will not be afraid. What can men do to me?'

7 Remember your leaders. They have told you the word of God. Think about the way they lived and died, and keep on believing as they did.

8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. **9** Do not listen to all kinds of different teaching and strange things. It is better to have a heart that is strong because of God's blessing than a heart that is thinking about different kinds of food. Different kinds of food do not help people who put their trust in them. **10** We have a sacrifice. But priests who serve God on earth have no right to eat from this sacrifice. **11** The high priest takes into the Most Holy Place the blood of animals that are sacrificed. He gives it to God to pay for the wrong things people have done. The bodies of these animals are burned outside the town. **12** So also Jesus was put to death outside the town. Then he could make the people holy by his own blood. **13** So let us go to him outside the town and take the shame as he did. **14** Here we do not have a city that will last for ever, but we are looking for the city that will come. **15** Let us always give a sacrifice of praise to God through Jesus. We do it by thanking him for all that he has done and also by talking about him. That is the sacrifice we make with our lips to his name. **16** But do not forget to do good things for people, and to give what you have to those who need it. These are sacrifices that please God.

17 Obey your leaders and do what they tell you. They are watching over your souls. They must give a report. Obey them so they will be glad, and not sad, to give a report. If you make them sad, it is no help to you.

18 Talk to God about us. We know that what we do is right. We want to do what is right in every way. **19** Here is why I want very much that you talk to God about me. If you do, I will be free to come to you sooner.

Last greetings

20 God gives peace. He brought back our Lord Jesus from death. Our Lord Jesus cares for God's people and he gave his blood for the agreement that stands for ever. **21** May God give you everything good so that you will do what he wants you to do. He will do in us, through Jesus Christ, what pleases him. Praise him for ever. May it be so!

22 Please, brothers, be patient with the words I have given to help you. I have written a short letter.

23 I want you to know that our brother Timothy is free. If he comes here soon, I will come with him to see you.

24 Greet all your leaders and all of God's people.

Those who belong to the country of Italy send you greetings. **25** May God's loving kindness be with you all. Amen! May it be so!

THE LETTER OF JAMES

James was a church leader. He wrote this letter to all of God's people in the churches everywhere. He tells the Christians how they can be happy, even if they have many troubles. He also explains how they should live their lives, and how they should behave to each other. He tells them what is good and what is not.

CHAPTER 1

Greeting

I am James. I am a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I send greetings to all of God's people wherever they live.

Believing God

2 My brothers, be very happy when you are tested by having troubles of many kinds. **3** You know this, that when you prove you believe, you become stronger to take troubles. **4** But you must keep on being strong to take trouble. Then you will be all right in every way. You will not need anything more.

5 If any of you need to be wise, ask God to make you wise. He gives plenty of wisdom to all people. He is not angry because you ask him. He will make you wise. **6** But when you ask, you must believe that God will do it. You must not doubt and think, 'Perhaps God will not do it.' A person who doubts is like a wave on the sea. The wind drives it this way and that way. **7** That person must not think that he will get anything from the Lord. **8** A person like that has two minds. He cannot go straight in any of his ways.

What to be glad about.

9 A Christian brother who is poor should be glad: he is in a high place now he is a Christian.

10 A Christian brother who is rich should be glad: he is in a low place now he is a Christian. A rich man will pass away like a flower on the grass. **11** The sun shines and is very hot. Then the grass dries and its flower falls off. It was nice at first, but now it is not nice any more. In the same way, the rich man will die while he is going around trying to make money.

Being tested

12 God will bless any man who is strong to take his trouble, when he is being tested. When he has proved he is strong, he will live for ever. That is what the Lord has promised to those who love him. **13** No one who wants to do something wrong should say, 'God is trying to make me do this wrong thing.' God cannot do

anything wrong. **14** It is their own heart which is wrong. That is why he wants to do something wrong. It fools him. **15** Then the wrong in his heart makes him do the wrong thing. And the wrong thing he has done leads to death.

16 My dear brothers, do not fool yourselves.

17 Every good thing and every fine gift comes from heaven. It comes from the Father of all light. He does not change and he makes no shadow by turning. **18** He made us his children because he wanted us. He made us his children by giving us his true word. He made us his children so that we would be the first and best of all he made.

Hearing and doing God's word

19 My dear brothers, do not forget this. Every man should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to be angry. **20** When a man is angry, he does not do what God says is right. **21** So stop all your dirty living. Stop doing so many wrong things. Listen quietly to the word that has been put in your hearts. It is able to save you.

22 But obey God's word. Do not just listen to it. If you just listen to it, you fool yourselves.

23 Anyone who just listens to the word, and does not obey it, is like a man who looks at his face in a looking glass. **24** He looks at himself and goes away, and right away he forgets what he looked like. **25** But there is a law that is all right. It sets people free from their old ways. Anyone who looks into that law and remembers it, is happy because he obeys the law. He does not just listen to the law and forget it, but he obeys what the law says.

26 Some of you think that you are doing what God wants. But you are not careful what you say. If you are like that, you are fooling yourself. And you are not doing what God wants. **27** This is what God the Father wants. It is clean and right. Go and help those who have no father and mother. Go and help widow women whose husbands are dead. These people have troubles. And keep yourself clean from the wrong things in the world.

CHAPTER 2**Treating everyone the same**

My brothers, you believe in our Lord, the wonderful Jesus Christ. So you must not think one man is better than another. **2** A man comes in to your church meeting. He has a gold ring and wears fine clothes. A poor man also comes in. He wears old clothes. **3** You look at the man who wears fine clothes. And you say to him, 'Sit here on this good chair.' But you say to the poor man, 'Stand over there,' or you say, 'Sit on the floor by my feet.' **4** If you do these things, you think some people are better than others. You are wrong when you judge people this way. **5** Listen, my dear brothers. God has chosen people who are poor in this world. They believe very much. They will have a place in the kingdom which he has promised to give to those who love him. **6** But you made the poor man ashamed. Is it not the rich people who trouble you? Are not they the ones who take you to court? **7** Are not they the ones who say wrong things about the good name you have?

The best law is to show loving kindness

8 The holy writings say, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' If you obey this law of your King you do well. **9** But if you think one man is better than another, that is wrong. The law says you are a bad person. **10** Anyone who obeys the law, but then breaks one of the laws, has broken all the laws. **11** God made the law, 'Do not use sex wrongly.' God also made the law, 'Do not kill'. If you do not have wrong sex, but you kill, you have broken the law.

12 There is a law that makes people free. It is the law of showing kindness. Always talk and live like men who will be judged by that law.

13 When God judges, he will not be kind to a person who has not been kind. It is better to be kind than it is to judge people.

Believe and do good things

14 My brothers, perhaps a man says, 'I believe.' What good is that if he does not do anything? Can just believing save him? **15** Perhaps a brother or a sister needs clothes and has no food. **16** Perhaps one of you says to them, 'God bless you. Be warm. Eat all you want.' But what good is that if you do not give them what they need for their bodies? **17** Believing is like that. If it does not do anything it is no good. Belief by itself is dead. **18** In that case someone may say, 'You believe. And I do good things. Try to show

me that you believe without doing any acts of kindness. I will show you that I believe by doing acts of kindness.'

19 You believe that there is one God. That is right. But even the bad spirits believe that. And they shake with fear. **20** You are foolish! Believing is no good if it does not do anything good. Do you want to know that for sure?

21 Look at Abraham. God called our father Abraham a good man. This was because he gave his son Isaac to God on the holy table for a sacrifice. **22** You can see he believed. His faith and the things he did worked together. His believing was made all right because he did something. **23** The words of the holy writings came true. They say, 'Abraham believed God. And he was called a good man because of it.' In another place he was called 'God's friend.'

24 You see, a man is a good man because of the things he does, and not just because he believes.

25 Rahab was a bad woman. But in the same way God called her a good woman because of something she did. She took the men into her house and then let them go out another way.

26 A body is dead if it does not breathe. In the same way, believing is dead if it does not do anything good.

CHAPTER 3**The tongue**

My brothers, not many of you should be teachers. You know that we who teach will be punished more than other people. **2** We all do many wrong things. Any man who never says anything wrong is right in every way. He is able to make his whole body do what is right. **3** We put a piece of iron in the mouths of horses so they will obey us. Then we can make their whole bodies go where we want them to go. **4** Look at the big boats also. They are very big. The strong winds push them along. But a man uses a small piece of wood and makes the boat go where he wants it to go. **5** A person's tongue is like that. It is a small part of the body but it talks about big things. A very small fire can burn a big pile of wood!

6 The tongue is like a fire. It is like a whole world of trouble. It is a part of our body. And it makes our whole body bad. It burns up our whole life. And the fire that makes the tongue burn comes from hell. **7** People have been able to tame all kinds of animals, birds, snakes, and

fish. **8** But no one can tame the tongue. It is a bad thing that will not be ruled. It is full of poison that can kill. **9** We praise our Lord and Father with our tongues. And we speak wrong words about people with our tongues, even though they were made like God. **10** Praising and wrong words come out of the same mouth! My brothers, this should not be so. **11** Do good water and bad water both come from the same place? **12** My brothers, do olives come from a fig tree? Or do figs come from a vine? No, they do not! Salt water and fresh water do not both come from the same place.

How to be wise

13 Who among you is wise and knows about things? He should show what he knows by his good life. He will not be proud because he is wise. **14** Are you a person who is very jealous? In your hearts you want to be better than others? Then stop being proud of yourself. Do not say what is not true. **15** God did not give you wisdom like that. But it comes from this world. It comes from people. It comes from bad spirits.

16 If people are jealous of others, their lives are not right. They do every kind of wrong thing to get what they want. They confuse and upset people. **17** First of all, when God makes people wise, they are holy. They do not fight. They are gentle. They listen to what other people say. They are very kind and do many good things. They do not quarrel. They do not say what is not true. **18** People who do not quarrel have peace. When there is peace, there is a good life.

CHAPTER 4

Loving the wrong things

Why do you fight and quarrel? It is because your feelings are fighting inside of you. That is why you fight. **2** You want something but you cannot get it. Then you kill. You want something very much and cannot get it. So you quarrel and fight. You do not get it because you do not ask God for it. **3** You ask for it, but you do not get it, because you ask in a wrong way. You want to use it for yourselves and not for others. **4** You people promised God you would be true to him, but you did not stay true! Do you not know that if you love the world you hate God? Anyone who wants to be a lover of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

5 The holy writings say, 'God gave his Spirit to live in us. And that Spirit wants us for himself.'

Do you think this means nothing? **6** But God helps you even more than that. That is why the holy writings say, 'God fights against those who are proud, but he helps those who are not proud.'

7 So let God control you. Fight the devil and he will run away from you. **8** Come to God and he will come to you. You bad people, make your hands clean! You love what is good and what is wrong at the same time. Make your hearts clean. **9** Be sad about this, and cry. Turn your laughing into crying. Stop being happy. Be sad. **10** Do not be proud before the Lord. Then he will lift you up.

Judging a brother

11 My brothers, do not say wrong things about each other. A man who says wrong things about his brother or judges his brother is saying wrong things about God's law and he is judging God's law. If you judge the law, you are not obeying the law, but you are a judge. **12** God made the law and he is the judge. And he is the one who can save you or kill you. Who are you that you should judge your neighbour?

Planning for tomorrow

13 Listen to me! You say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to that town. We will stay there a year. We will buy and sell and get rich.' But you do not know what will happen to you tomorrow. **14** What is your life like? It is like a cloud. It is here for a little while and then it is gone. **15** You should say 'If the Lord wants to do it, we will live and do this or that.' **16** But now you talk about the big things you will do. All that kind of talk is wrong! **17** But if a person knows what he should do and he does not do it, he has done something wrong.

CHAPTER 5

Rich people will have troubles

Rich people, listen to me! Cry loud and long because of the troubles you will have. **2** Your things are spoiled. Bugs have eaten your clothes. **3** Your gold and silver are all spoiled. The wrong in them will prove that you have done wrong. The wrong will burn you up like fire. You have kept all these things and now time is almost ended.

4 Listen! Men worked in your fields to cut your grain and you did not pay them! That money shouts against you. The men who cut your harvest have called out to the Lord who has power and he has heard them. **5** You have had

a good time on earth. You have done anything you wanted to do. Your lives are full of everything. Like a fat animal, you will soon be killed. **6** You have punished good people. You have killed them. And they do not stop you.

Waiting and talking with God

7 So brothers, take your troubles quietly and wait until the Lord comes. A farmer waits until the harvest grows from the ground. He waits for it a long time until it has had the first and second rain. **8** You must wait also. Keep your hearts strong, because the Lord will come soon.

9 Brothers, do not say mean things to each other. If you do, you will be judged. Listen, the judge is standing at the door now.

10 My brothers, look at the lives of the prophets of God who spoke in the name of the Lord. See the troubles they had. They took them and waited. Do as they did. **11** God blesses those who take their troubles quietly and keep on believing. You have heard about Job's troubles and how he took them. And you have seen what the Lord did for him at the end. The Lord is very kind and helps people.

12 My brothers, here is something that matters very much. When you make a promise do not ask heaven to hear it, or the earth, or any other thing. When you mean 'Yes,' just say, 'Yes.' And

when you mean 'No,' just say, 'No.' If you do that, you will not be judged.

13 Is any one of you in trouble? He should talk to God about it. Is any one of you happy? He should sing songs of praise to God.

14 Is any one of you sick? He should call for the leaders of the church people. They should talk to God about him and put oil on him in the name of the Lord. **15** Because they talk to God, and believe, he will hear them. The sick man will be healed. The Lord will make him well again. If the sick man has done wrong things, the Lord will forgive him.

16 So tell one another the wrong things you have done. And tell God about each other's needs, so that you will be healed. When a good man talks to God, big things can be done.

17 Elijah was a man like us. He asked God not to let it rain. And for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. **18** Then he talked to God again. And it rained. Plants grew on the earth.

19 My brothers, has one of you left the right way? Has another person brought him back again? **20** Do not forget that the person who has brought a man back from his wrong ways will save that man from death. He will cover up many wrong things and be forgiven.

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER

Peter was one of the first followers of Jesus. He became a leader of the Christian church. Peter wrote to the churches which were in Asia Minor (part of Turkey). He wanted to help them to be strong in their faith in God. He reminds them about the Good News of Jesus Christ. He tells them of the hope for the future. When they are sad, and hurt by people, he teaches them that the answer is to be kind.

CHAPTER 1

Greetings

I am Peter. I am an apostle of Jesus Christ.

I send this letter to God's chosen people. You are like people on a journey. You live in the countries of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. But you do not belong there.

2 God the Father chose you as he planned to do long ago. You were made holy by the Spirit. You were chosen to obey Jesus Christ and to be made clean by the blood of his death.

May you have much blessing and peace.

A living hope

3 Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He was very kind to us, and made us his children. So we have a new hope. This hope is a living hope because Jesus Christ was raised from death. **4** Because we are God's children, one day we shall receive special blessings. They cannot be spoiled in any way, and they will last for ever. They are kept safe in heaven for you.

5 You are saved by God's power because you believe. You will then be fully saved. The way is ready and you will see it when the end of time comes. **6** This makes you very glad, even though now maybe you are sad because you have troubles of many kinds. They are only for a short time.

7 To believe is worth more than to have gold. Gold can spoil, but it is tested by fire to show that it is good. So troubles test you to prove that you believe. Then, because you really believe, you will be praised and made great and have honour when Jesus Christ comes again.

8 You love him even though you have not seen him. You trust him even though you do not see him. And so you are very happy. No words can tell how happy you are. Your joy is very great.

9 God will reward you because you have believed. You will then be fully saved.

10 The prophets of God long ago told about this way of being saved. They tried to find out about it and asked much about it. They spoke words from God telling about the blessing God would

give you. **11** The Spirit of Christ in them showed them that Christ would have troubles and after that he would be great. They tried to find out when these things would happen or how things would be when they did happen. **12** The Spirit showed them that they told these things not for themselves, but for you. And now the men who told you the good news have told you these same things. They spoke by the power of the Holy Spirit who was sent from heaven. Even the angels wanted very much to know about these things.

Ready to live a holy life

13 So think clearly. Keep awake. When Jesus Christ comes, he will bring you blessing. Set all your hope on that. **14** Be children who obey. Do not be like what you were before you knew Christ. Then you did anything you wanted to do.

15 But be holy in all the things you do. Be holy because the one who has called you is holy.

16 God says in the holy writings, 'You must be holy, because I am holy.'

17 You call God your Father. He does not think one man is better than another. He judges everyone by what he has done. So then you must fear him as you live your life here on earth. **18** You know this. You lived the way your fathers taught you to live, and it was not a good way to live. You were bought and set free from that way of life. But you were not bought with silver or gold money, which can spoil. **19** You were bought with blood that is worth much. It is like the blood of a sheep that is perfect with nothing wrong in its body. You were bought with the blood of Christ.

20 Before the world was made God chose Christ to do it, and Christ came at the end of time for your sake. **21** It is through Christ that you believe in God. God raised Christ from death and made him great. And that is why you are able to believe and hope in God.

22 You have obeyed what is true and that has made your hearts clean. And now you really love your Christian brothers. So with your clean hearts, love each other very much. **23** You have

been made God's children. He did not make you his children by something that dies, but by something that cannot die. That is the word of God. **24** The holy writings say, 'People may be great. But they are like a flower on the grass. The grass dies and the flower falls off. **25** But the word of the Lord cannot die!'

CHAPTER 2

The living stone and the holy people

So stop all the wrong things you do. Stop all the ways you cheat people. Stop fooling people. Stop being jealous. Stop saying wrong things about people. **2** Babies who have just been born want milk very much. In the same way, you should want God's word. That is like good milk. It will make you grow up so that you will then be fully saved. **3** You should want God's word if you have already tasted and know that the Lord is good.

4 Come to the Lord Jesus. He is like a living stone. People did not want to use it. But God chose it. It was worth very much to him. **5** You also are like living stones. You are being built into a temple, a holy place for God. You are to be holy priests there. You are to give sacrifices to God from your heart. God will accept them because of Jesus Christ.

6 The holy writings say, 'Listen, I am placing a stone in Zion. It is the main stone of the house. I have chosen it and it is worth very much. Anyone who believes in him will not be ashamed.'

7 He is worth very much to you who believe in him. But some people do not believe in him. To them he is, 'the stone that the men who were building would not use. But now it is the chief stone at the corner.'

8 And to them he is also, 'a stone on which people will hit their feet, and a rock that will make them fall down.' They hit their feet on it, because they do not obey the word. It was planned that this would happen to them!

9 But you are a chosen people. You are priests to your king. You are a holy nation. You are God's very own people. All this is so that you will tell how good he is. He called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** At one time you were not God's people. But now you are God's people. At one time you did not know God's kindness. Now you do.

Live as God's servants

11 Dear brothers, you are people who do not belong to this world. You are like visitors who are on a journey. I beg you, do not do the things your body wants to do. Those things fight against your soul.

12 Live good lives among the people who do not believe. They may talk about you as if you do wrong things. But when they see the good things you do, they will praise God on the day he comes to help you.

13 Obey every officer of the government to please the Lord. Obey the king because he is over all. **14** Obey the rulers because they are sent by him. They are sent to punish those who do wrong things and to praise those who do good things. **15** That is what God wants you to do. He wants you to do good things. By doing good things, you will stop foolish people from saying wrong things about you. They say wrong things about you because they do not know you. **16** You are free people. But do not think, 'I am free so I can do wrong things.' You are God's servants. **17** Respect all men. Love your Christian brothers. Fear God. Respect the king.

What servants should do

18 Servants, respect and obey your masters in all things. Obey not only those who are good to you. But also obey those who are hard on you.

19 Maybe a person is punished when he has done nothing wrong. If he takes these troubles to please God, he does a very good thing.

20 What praise will you have if you take a beating when you have done something wrong? But when you do right and are punished, if you take it quietly, God is pleased. **21** You have been called to do this because Christ also was punished for you. He showed you what you should do. So do as he did. **22** He did no wrong. And he told no lie. **23** When people said wrong things to him, he did not say wrong things to them. When he was punished, he did not say, 'I will do something to you!' But he trusted in God who judges what is right.

24 Christ in his own body took the wrong things we have done to the cross. He did this so that we would stop our bad ways and live right. Because he was punished, you were healed.

25 Like lost sheep, you were going away from God. But now you have come back to the one who takes care of you and helps you.

CHAPTER 3**How wives and husbands should live**

Wives, respect and obey your husbands in the same way. Then the husbands who do not obey the word of God will want to know God. They will want to know God because their wives live good lives, even though they say nothing about God. **2** They will see that you live holy lives and respect your husbands. **3** You should not be fine on the outside only. Some women make their hair nice. They wear gold things. They have fine clothes. **4** But you must be fine in your heart. Have a heart that is gentle and quiet. That will not wear out. And God thinks it is worth very much. **5** There were holy women long ago who trusted in God. They made themselves nice in this way. They obeyed their husbands. **6** Sarah obeyed Abraham. She called him her master. You are her children if you do what is right and are not afraid of trouble.

7 Husbands, also live with your wife the way you know is right. Respect her because she is a woman. She is not as strong as a man. Also respect her because God has given her, as well as you, the blessing of life. In this way, you will not stop God from doing what you ask him to do.

Suffering because you are doing right

8 Here is one thing more. You must all agree. You must care when others have trouble. You must love your Christian brothers. You must be kind. You must not be proud. **9** You must not do wrong things to those who do wrong things to you. You must not say wrong things to those who say wrong things to you. But ask God to bless those people. This is what you have been called to do. Then God will bless you.

10 The holy writings say, 'A man who wants to live and have good days must not say wrong things. He must not say anything that is not true. **11** He must turn away from anything wrong and do what is good. He must try hard to find peace, and keep on looking for it. **12** The Lord watches over those who do good. He listens when they talk to him. But the Lord is against those who do wrong things.'

13 Who will do something bad to you if you want to do what is good? **14** But even if people trouble you because you do right, God will bless you. Do not be afraid of them. And do not be troubled. **15** Worship Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you about the hope you have.

But be gentle and respect him. **16** Keep your hearts clean. Then when people say wrong things about you, they will be ashamed because they have talked wrongly about your good Christian life. **17** It is better to have trouble for doing right, if God allows it, than to have trouble for doing wrong.

18 For Christ died that once because of our wrong ways. He was good and he died for those who were bad. He did this to bring us to God. His body died, but his spirit had new life. **19** His spirit went and gave his message to people's spirits who were in prison. **20** In the days long ago, they did not obey God. God waited for them to do so while Noah was building the big house on the boat. A few people, only eight, were saved by going through the water. **21** The water of baptism is like that. It saves you. It does not save you because it washes dirt from your bodies. But it saves you because you bring yourselves to God with a clean heart. It saves you because Jesus Christ has been raised from death. **22** He has gone up into heaven. He is now at the right side of God. Angels, rulers, and governments obey him.

CHAPTER 4**Using the blessings God has given us**

Christ suffered in his body. You also must be ready to have the same trouble happen to you. When a man has suffered in his body, he has stopped doing wrong things. **2** For the rest of his life on earth he will not do what people want to do. He will do what God wants him to do. **3** In the time past you did the same things as people who do not believe God. Let that be enough. You did things you should be ashamed of. You did what you wanted to do. You got drunk. You got into fights. You took part in noisy feasting with dancing. You did wrong by worshipping idols. **4** Those people are surprised now that you do not do the same wrong things they do. And they say wrong things about you. **5** They will have to explain what they are doing. They will have to talk to God about what they have done. He is ready to judge living people and dead people. **6** That is why the good news was also told to those who are now dead. They will be judged like men who are alive. This was done so that they could live like God in the spirit.

7 It is almost the time when the world will end. So be wise and watch and talk to God.

8 Here is something that matters very much. You must love each other very much. Love will cover up many wrong things. **9** Be glad to take other Christians into your house and care for them. And do not grumble about it. **10** God has given each person a gift. That gift is something he can do. Each one should use his gift to help the others. In that way you all make good use of the many blessings God has given you. **11** Has God blessed you by knowing how to talk? Then you should talk the words of God. Are you a helper? Then you should help with the strength God has given you. In all that you do, you should show that God is great through Jesus Christ. He has praise and power for ever. Yes, he has!

Suffering as a Christian

12 My dear brothers, do not be surprised by the hard trouble like fire that comes to test you. Do not think some new thing is happening to you.

13 Be glad when you suffer as Christ did. Then you will also be very glad when he comes and you see how great he is. **14** Do men say wrong things about you because you are a Christian? Then you are blessed because the wonderful Spirit, the Spirit of God, is with you.

15 Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not do wrong. Do not try to boss other people. None of you should suffer because you have done these things. **16** But if a man suffers because he is a Christian, he should not be ashamed of it. He should praise God that he is a Christian.

17 The time has come for God to judge people. God's people will be judged first. If we are judged first, what will happen at the end to those who do not obey the good news of God?

18 The holy writings say, 'If it is hard for a good person to be saved, what will happen to a person who is against God and lives a bad life?'

19 If God allows you to suffer, trust him. He made you and you can trust him. But keep on doing good things.

CHAPTER 5

Watching over God's people

So I am talking to the leaders among you. I am also a leader. I saw the sufferings of Christ. And

I will have some part of his greatness when he comes again. **2** Take good care of God's people. They have been given to you to care for. Do this, not because you must do it, but because you want to please God. Do it not for the money that you get for doing it, but because you are glad to do it. **3** Do not be like a boss over the people you care for, telling them how to live. But show them how to live by the way you live. **4** Christ the big Shepherd who takes care of all people is coming. When he comes, he will give you a crown to show that you are great. You will have it for ever.

5 Also, you who are younger men, obey your leaders.

I say to all of you, do not be proud. Do not think you are better than the others. The holy writings say, 'God fights against proud people, but he helps those who are not proud.' **6** You are under God's power. Do not be proud, so that at the right time he may put you into a higher place.

7 Turn all your troubles over to him, because he cares for you and is watching over you.

8 Keep awake! Watch! Your enemy the devil is walking around like a growling lion. He is looking for someone to catch. **9** Fight against the devil. Be strong because you believe. Remember that your brothers all over the world suffer the same kind of trouble as you.

10 God gives all blessings. He has called you through Christ to be great with him for ever. When you have suffered for a short time, he will make you all right. He will make you strong and steady. **11** He has power for ever. Yes, he has!

Last greetings

12 Silas has written this short letter for me. I believe he is a brother who can be trusted. I have written to help you and tell you the true way to have God's blessing. Stand firm in that way! **13** The church people in the city of Babylon greet you. God has also chosen them. My son Mark also greets you. **14** Greet one another with a kiss of love.

May all of you who are Christians have peace.

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER

This second letter from Peter is to all the churches of Jesus Christ. Peter speaks out against wrong teachers, who tell lies about Jesus, and about God's truth. He tells them to listen to the people who know Jesus. He also tells them to expect Jesus to return soon.

CHAPTER 1

I am Simon Peter. I am a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ.

I send greetings to you who have believed as we have. Believing is worth just as much to you as it is to us. This is because our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is right and good.

2 May the loving kindness of God bless you and give you more and more peace because you know God and Jesus our Lord.

How you should live

3 Christ is God and by his own power he has given us everything that we need to live and to please God. He has given this to us because we know him, and he has called us because he is great and good. **4** Because of these things, he has promised us things that are worth very much and are very great. He has promised these things to us so that by them you may become like God too. By them you will be kept free from the selfish desires of the people in the world. These desires lead to death.

5 So now you believe, try to live a good life. When you live a good life, try to learn more about God. **6** When you have learned more, be strong to do what is right. Then go on doing what is right, even if it is hard. As you go about doing right, keep close to God. **7** As you keep close to God, love your Christian brothers. When you love your Christian brothers, love everyone!

8 If you do these things and you do them more and more, you will be good Christians and you will know more and more about our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** But the man who does not do these things is like a blind man. He can see only a little way. He has forgotten that he was made clean from the wrong things he used to do.

10 So my brothers, try to show that God has called you and chosen you. If you do these things, you will never fall. **11** That will make it easy for you to go into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His kingdom will be forever.

12 I do want always to bring these things to your minds. I will do this even though you know them, and even though you are strong in the

true way that you already have. **13** I think it is right, as long as I live, to keep these things in your minds. **14** I know that I will not live long now. Our Lord Jesus Christ has told me about that. **15** But I will try to see that you have something to bring these things to your minds, even after I am gone.

Seeing Christ made great

16 We have told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and that he is coming again. We did not tell you stories someone told us. We ourselves saw how great he is. **17** God the Father praised him and showed that he is great. A voice came from the bright cloud and said to him, 'This is my Son. I love him and he pleases me very much.' **18** We heard this voice which came from heaven. It happened when we were on the holy hill with Jesus.

19 And so we are more sure about what the prophets of God said long ago. You will do well to listen to them. It is like a lamp shining in a dark place. Then the daylight will come and the morning star will shine in your hearts. **20** First you must understand this. The words from the prophets in the holy writings did not come from their own minds. **21** The prophets did not say what they wanted to say. But the Holy Spirit made them speak. And they spoke God's message.

CHAPTER 2

Prophets and teachers who are not true

But prophets who were not true were also among the people of Israel. Also there will be teachers who will not be true among you. They will bring in wrong teaching that leads to death. They will even say that they do not belong to the Master who bought them. And so they will quickly bring themselves to death. **2** Many people will do the same wrong things they do. And because of them, men will say wrong things about the true way. **3** Because they are greedy for money, they will trick you with lies. For a long time God has planned to punish them. They will be punished at the right time.

4 God punished the angels who did wrong. He put them into the darkest part of hell. They

must be kept there until the time when they will be judged.

5 In the days long ago, God punished the world. But he saved Noah who told people what was right. And God saved seven other people. But he made water cover the world full of bad people.

6 God burned up the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He punished them so that no cities were left. He did this to show what would happen to bad people. **7** But God saved Lot out of the trouble. Lot was a good man. He did not like the wrong way the bad people lived. **8** That good man lived among the bad people and he saw and heard what they did. Day after day, the bad things they did troubled his heart because he was a good man.

9 The Lord knows how to save good people out of the trouble that tests them. And he knows how to keep bad people until the day when he will judge them. And they are being punished even now. **10** Most of all, he will punish people who do the wrong things they want to do and who will not obey the men who rule over them.

They are very bold and proud. They do not fear to say wrong things about those who are great, even about the angels. **11** Angels have more strength and power than they. And yet the angels do not judge them and say wrong things about them to the Lord. **12** These people are like animals that cannot think. They are like animals that are born to be caught and killed. They say wrong things about things they do not understand. They will die like the animals.

13 Bad things will happen to them because they have done wrong things. They think it is fun to have a good time during the day. They are like spots and sores. They like to eat and drink at the love feasts with you. They are trying to fool you. **14** They are always looking for women to have sex with them. They never stop their wrong ways. They fool people whose hearts are not strong to do right. They always want more and more money. God's curse is on them!

15 They have left the right road and have done wrong. They follow the same road that Balaam walked. He was the son of Beor. He loved the pay he would get for doing a wrong thing. **16** But he was told to stop doing wrong. The animal he was riding talked with a man's voice. It tried to make the prophet stop his foolish way.

17 These men are like wells with no water in them. They are like fog that is blown away by a strong wind. A very dark place has been kept to

put them in. **18** They say big and foolish things. They fool people who have just left those who live in wrong ways. They fool them by making them want to do wrong things with their bodies.

19 They promise them that they will be free. But they themselves are slaves of death. A man is a slave of anything that rules over him.

20 They left the wrong ways of the world because they knew our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Then when they went back to the wrong ways again, they were ruled by them. Then they will have more trouble than they had at first.

21 It would have been better for them if they had never known the right way! Because they knew the right way, it was very wrong for them to turn from the holy law God gave them.

22 They show that this saying is true, 'The dog goes back to eat what his own stomach threw up!' and, 'A pig that is washed rolls in the mud again!'

CHAPTER 3

The promise of the Lord's coming

My dear brothers, this is my second letter to you. In both of my letters I have tried to bring some things to your good minds. **2** I want you to remember what God's prophets said would happen. And I want you to remember what we apostles told you that our Lord and Saviour said.

3 Here is the first thing. In the last days, men will come who will make fun of holy things. They will do what they themselves want to do. **4** They will say, 'He promised to come. Where is he? Our fathers have died. And since then everything is just the same as it has been since the world was made.' **5** They do not want to remember that long ago God spoke and made the sky. He made the land come up from the water. **6** But later on these same waters covered the world in a flood and the people died. **7** The sky and the earth that are here now are being kept because God spoke. They are kept to be burned up. This will happen on the day when God judges people and they will die.

8 My dear brothers, do not forget this one thing. One day is like a thousand years to the Lord. And a thousand years are like one day. **9** God will do what he promised. He is not slow though, as some people think he is. But he is waiting a long time for you. He does not want anyone to die, but he wants all people to stop their wrong ways. **10** The day of the Lord will come like a man who wants to steal. There will be a loud noise and the sky will go away. The

elements will melt with fire and they will be gone. The earth and everything on it will be burned up.

11 That is the way the whole world will go. So think what kind of people you should be! Think how holy and true to God your lives should be!

12 You should look for the day of God and do everything you can to make it come quickly. On that day the sky will be on fire and go away. The elements will burn and melt away. **13** But we are looking for a new sky and a new earth which God has promised. Only good things will be in them.

14 My dear brothers, you are looking for these things. So do all you can so that the Lord will find you without any bad or wrong thing in your lives. Let him find you at peace with one another. **15** Think of this. He is waiting a long time so that people will be saved.

Our dear brother Paul also wrote these things to you, because God has made him wise. **16** He also tells about them in all his letters. Some things in his letters are hard to understand. Some people do not know about these things and they are not strong in their faith. They change the meaning of the things Paul wrote. They do this to other things in the holy writings also. Because they do this, they will die. **17** My dear brothers, you know about these things before they happen. Take care that you do not do the same things that bad people do. Take care that you do not stop believing the right way. **18** Have more and more of God's blessing and kindness. Learn more and more about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is great now, and he will be great for ever! Amen! Yes he will!

THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

John was one of the first men to follow Jesus. This is the first of three letters which John wrote to his church friends. He wants to help them to know God better. He warns them not to listen to wrong teachers. He calls God 'Light' and Jesus is called 'the Word'. He asks that love should be shown to all of God's people.

CHAPTER 1

Jesus, the Word that gives life

The Word of life always was living, even from the beginning. We heard him. We saw him with our own eyes. We looked at him, and we touched him with our own hands. We are writing to you about this Word of life.

2 This life came to earth. We saw him, and we know about him. And we tell you about this life that lives for ever. This life was with the Father and came to us. **3** We tell you also what we have seen and heard. We tell you so that you also will belong with us. And we belong with the Father and the Son. **4** We write these things to you so that we all will be very happy.

God is light

5 God is like light and he is not dark at all. That is the message we heard from him. That is the message we are telling you. **6** Do we say that we belong with him? And at the same time, do we live in the dark? Then what we say is not true, and what we do is not right.

7 Do we live in the light, as God is in the light? Then we belong with others who belong to him. And the blood of the death of Jesus Christ makes us clean from all the wrong things we have done. **8** Do we say, 'We have no wrong ways'? Then we are fooling ourselves, and we do not know what is true. **9** Let us tell God about our wrong ways. God can be trusted. He does what is right. He will forgive us for the wrong things we have done. He will make us clean from all that was wrong. **10** Do we say, 'We have not done anything wrong'? This is like saying that God is not true. That means we do not accept God's word.

CHAPTER 2

Christ our Friend

My children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not do wrong things. But if anyone does something wrong, we have a Friend to help us. He speaks to God for us. He is Jesus Christ who does what is right. **2** He himself is the sacrifice God offered to pay for the wrong

we have done. And he pays for the wrong things all people in all the world have done.

3 We can be sure that we know him when we obey his laws. **4** If any man says, 'I know him' and does not obey his laws, he is telling a lie. He does not know what is true. **5** But if any man obeys his word, he really loves God.

Here is the way that we may be sure that we belong to him. **6** If any man says he belongs to him, he must live in the same way Christ lived.

The new law

7 My dear brothers, I am not writing you a new law. This is an old law. You had it from the beginning. The old law is the word which you have heard. **8** But in a way, I am writing you a new law. The darkness is going away and the true light is shining already. **9** Does anyone say he is in the light, and hates his brother? Then he is still in the dark. **10** The man who loves his brother lives in the light. There is nothing in him to make him do wrong. **11** But the man who hates his brother is in the dark. He lives in the dark. He does not know where he is going, because the darkness has made him blind.

12 Children, I am writing to you because God has forgiven the wrong things you have done. Your wrong ways have been forgiven because of what Christ did. **13** Fathers, I am writing to you because you know the One who has lived from the beginning. Young men, I am writing to you because you have won the victory over the devil.

Children, I write to you because you know Father God. **14** Fathers, I write to you because you know him, the one who has lived from the beginning. Young men, I write to you because you are strong. You believe God's word. You have won the victory over the devil.

15 Do not love the world, or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, he does not love the Father. **16** Nothing in the world comes from the Father. I mean the wrong things people like to do with their bodies. I mean the things people see and want to have. I mean all the things people are proud of in this life. These things come from the world, not the Father.

17 And the world will go away and all the things in it that people like to do. But the person who does what God wants him to do will live for ever.

People who are against Christ

18 Children, we are very near the end of time. You have heard that someone will come who is against Christ. Many who are against Christ have already come. That is how we know that we are very near the end of time. **19** They left us, but they did not belong with us. If they had belonged with us, they would have stayed with us. But they left us so that people could see that all of them did not belong with us. **20** But the Holy One has given you a gift of understanding so that you all may know what is true. **21** I write to you, not because you do not know what is true, but because you do know. And you know that no lie is true. **22** Who then is the one who says what is not true? It is the one who says that Jesus is not the Christ. That person is against Christ, because he says there is no Father and there is no Son. **23** Everyone who says Jesus is not the Son does not know the Father. And everyone who says Jesus is the Son knows the Father.

24 So keep what you have heard from the beginning. If you keep what you have heard from the beginning, you too belong to the Son and to the Father. **25** And he himself has promised us that we will live for ever.

26 I have written these things to you about the ones who try to fool you. **27** You have a gift of understanding from Christ. That gift stays with you. You do not need anyone to teach you. His gift teaches you about everything. It is true. It is not a lie. So stay with him as he has taught you.

28 Now, my children, stay with Christ. Then we will not be afraid on that day when we see him again. We will not be ashamed to stand before him when he comes again. **29** You know that he does what is right. So you know also that everyone who does what is right is his child.

CHAPTER 3

Children of God

See how much the Father has loved us! We are called God's children. It is true, we are God's children. People in this world did not know him and so they do not know us. **2** My dear brothers, we are God's children now. No one knows yet what we shall be like. But we know that when Jesus comes, we will be like him. We

will see him as he really is. **3** Everyone who has this hope about Christ makes his life holy. He makes his life holy and clean, just as Christ is holy.

4 Everyone who does wrong things is breaking God's law. Doing wrong things is breaking the law. **5** You know that Christ came to take away the wrong things people have done. He is the one who has done no wrong. **6** Everyone who stays with him does not do wrong things. Everyone who does wrong things has never seen him and has never known him.

7 My children, do not let anyone fool you. Anyone who does what is good, is good just as Christ is good. **8** Anyone who does what is wrong belongs to the devil. The devil has done what is wrong from the beginning. That is why God's Son came. He came to stop what the devil does. **9** No one who is God's child does wrong things, because God's life is in him. And he cannot keep on doing wrong things, because he is God's child. **10** This is how people can know who are God's children and who are the devil's children. Everyone who does not do right is not God's child. And anyone who does not love his brother is not God's child.

Love one another

11 This is the word you have heard from the beginning. 'We must love one another.' **12** We must not be like Cain. He was a child of the devil and killed his brother. Why did he kill him? He killed him because the things he himself did were wrong, and the things his brother did were right with God.

13 My brothers, do not be surprised if people in this world hate you. **14** We know that we have gone from death to life. We know this because we love the Christian brothers. Anyone who does not love them has not gone from death to life.

15 Everyone who hates his brother is like a man who kills a person. And you know that no one who kills a person has life that will live for ever.

16 Christ died for us. That is how we know what love is. We also should be willing to die for our brothers. **17** Perhaps a man has plenty of food and things. He sees that his brother needs some. If he does not want to help his brother, does he love God? **18** My children, we must not only talk about loving people; we must show we love people by what we do for them. We must really love them.

Trusting in God

19 And this is how we will know that we are true. This is why we will not be afraid in front of God. **20** Even if our hearts think we are wrong, God is greater than our hearts and he knows everything. **21** My dear brothers, if our hearts do not think we are wrong, we will not be afraid in front of God.

22 If we ask God for something, we get it. We get it because we obey his laws. We get it because we do what pleases him. **23** This is his law. We must believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ. And we must love one another as he told us to do. **24** If anyone obeys his laws, he belongs to God and God belongs to him. God has given us the Holy Spirit. That is how we know that God is with us.

CHAPTER 4

Two kinds of spirits

My dear brothers, do not trust every spirit. But test the spirits to see if they belong to God. There are many prophets who are not true who have gone out into the world. **2** Here is how you can know the Spirit of God. Every spirit that believes that Jesus Christ has come in the body of a man is from God. **3** And every spirit that does not say this about Jesus, does not belong to God. That is the spirit of the one who is against Christ. You have heard that he is coming. And now he is already in the world. **4** My children, you belong to God. You have won the victory over those prophets who are not true. You have won because the Spirit that is in you is stronger than the spirit that is in the world. **5** Those prophets belong to the world. That is why they teach about things in the world. And that is why the people of the world listen to them. **6** But we belong to God. Anyone who knows God listens to us. Anyone who does not belong to God does not listen to us. This is how we know if a spirit is true or not true.

Love one another

7 My dear brothers, we must love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves others is God's child and he knows God. **8** But anyone who does not love others does not know God, because God is love. **9** This is how God showed his love for us. He sent his only Son into the world to give us life. **10** This is love! We did not love God, but he loved us. And he sent his Son to be the sacrifice to pay for the wrong things we have done. **11** My dear

brothers, if God loved us so much, we must love one another also. **12** No man has ever seen God. But God lives in us if we love one another. And in loving one another, his love is made perfect.

13 He has given us of his own Spirit. That is how we know that we are in him and he is in us.

14 And we have seen and we are telling you that the Father sent his Son to save the people in the world. **15** If anyone says, 'Jesus is the Son of God,' God is in him and he is in God.

16 We know and we believe that God loves us. God is love. And anyone who loves others is in God and God is in him. **17** That is why we love each other very much. Then we will not be afraid on the day when people are judged. We are like Christ in this world. **18** Where God's love is, there is no fear. God's perfect love takes away fear. It is punishment that makes a person fear. Anyone who has fear does not have perfect love. **19** We love others because God first loved us. **20** If anyone says, 'I love God', and he hates his brother, he is telling a lie. If he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? **21** God gave us this law. The person who loves God must love his brother also.

CHAPTER 5

Believing in Jesus

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is God's child. And everyone who loves the Father loves his child. **2** This is how we know we love God's children. We love God and we obey his laws. **3** We show that we love God when we obey his laws. His laws are not hard to obey. **4** Everyone who is God's child wins a victory over the world. We win because we believe God. **5** Who wins a victory over the world? It is only the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

God's proof about his Son

6 There was water and there was blood when Jesus Christ came. There was not water only, but there was water and there was blood. The Spirit proves this is true, because the Spirit is true. **7** There are three in heaven who prove it is true. They are the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one. **8** There are three on earth who prove it is true. They are the spirit, the water, and the blood. These three all prove the same thing. **9** We believe what people prove to us. But when God proves something it

is stronger than what people prove. This is what God proved about his Son.

10 Anyone who believes in God's Son believes what God says about him. Anyone who does not believe God shows that he thinks what God says is not true. He has not believed what God says about his Son. **11** Here is what God says. He has given us life that will last for ever. And this life is in his Son. **12** So anyone who has the Son has this life. Anyone who does not have the Son of God does not have this life.

To know about living for ever

13 I have written these things to you who believe on the name of the Son of God. I have written them so that you will know that you will live for ever. **14** And we are sure God will do this. If we ask him for anything that he wants us to have, he will listen to us. **15** And if we know he listens to us when we ask for anything, then we know that we have what we asked him for.

16 Maybe a man sees his brother do something wrong, but not so bad that he must die for it.

The man should ask God and God will let his brother live. God will let people live if the things they have done are not so bad that they must die for them. But there are things so wrong that a person must die for them. If he has done such as that, I do not tell the man to ask God to let him live. **17** Everything that is wrong is a bad thing. But not every bad thing is so wrong that a person must die for it.

18 We know that any child of God does not do wrong things. The Son of God keeps him safe and the devil cannot touch him.

19 We know that we belong to God and the whole world belongs to the devil.

20 We know that the Son of God has come. He has given us a heart to know him who is true. We belong to him who is true, because we belong to his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God. He has the life that will live for ever.

21 My children, have nothing to do with false gods or idols.

THE SECOND LETTER OF JOHN

This letter was probably written by John to a church family. He warns the people not to listen to wrong teachers. He wants them to live in God's truth.

Greetings

From the leader of the church people. I send greetings to the lady whom God has chosen, and to her children. I love you all because you have the truth about Christ. I am not the only one who loves you. All those who know the truth, love you also. **2** We love you because of the truth we share which is in our hearts and will be with us for ever.

3 God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Father's son, will bless us. They will be kind to us. They will give us peace. They will do these things because they are true, and they love us.

Live in the teaching of Christ

4 I was very glad to find that some of your children are living in the right way. They are living the way the Father told us to live. **5** And now I want to ask you to do something. I am not telling you to do something new. It is the same law we had from the beginning. It is this, 'We must love one another.' **6** We love God when we live the way God has told us. This is the law you heard from the beginning. You must live by it.

7 Many men who fool people have gone out into the world. They believe that Jesus Christ did not come to live as a man with a body. These men belong to the one who fools people. He is against Christ. **8** Watch out for yourselves! Do not lose what you have worked for, but receive all the reward that you should have. **9** Everyone who goes too far, and does not believe what Christ taught, does not believe God. Anyone who believes what Christ taught, believes both the Father and the Son. **10** If anyone comes to you who does not teach what Christ taught, do not take him into your house. Do not even greet him. **11** Anyone who greets him helps him in the wrong things he does.

Last greetings

12 I have much to write to you. But I do not want to write it on paper. I hope to come to visit you and talk with you. Then we will be very happy.

13 The children of your sister whom God has chosen send their greetings.

THE THIRD LETTER OF JOHN

This letter is written by John to a church leader called Gaius. John thanks him for his help to the followers of Jesus. He warns not to listen to people who do not know the truth of God.

Greetings

From the leader of the church people. I send greetings to my dear Gaius. I love you because you have Christ.

2 My dear brother, I ask God that you may be all right in every way and that your body may be well. I know that your soul is all right. **3** I was very happy when the brothers came and told me that you have been true. They said you are really living the right way. **4** Nothing can make me more happy than to hear that my children are living in the right way.

Praises for Gaius because he was kind

5 My dear brother, when you help your Christian brothers in any way, even though you do not know them, you show that you do what you say you believe. **6** They have told the people of the church here how you showed your love to them. Please send them on their way as God would have you do. **7** They went out to do Christ's work. And they have not taken any help from people who do not believe in God. **8** So we should help such men with what they need. Then we are doing our part to tell the true message.

Diotrephes is against the church

9 I wrote a letter to the people of the church. But Diotrephes wants to be the leader. He will not listen to us. **10** So if I come, I will show what he is doing. He is saying wrong things about us. And that is not all. He does not take our brothers into his own home. And he stops other people who want to take them in. He will not let them be church members any longer.

A good report about Demetrius

11 My dear brother, do not do the wrong things people do, but do the good things people do. Anyone who does good things belongs to God. Anyone who does wrong things has never seen God. **12** Everyone says Demetrius is a good man. All this is true. We say the same thing too. And you know that what we say is true.

Last greetings

13 I have much to write to you. But I do not want to write to you with pen and ink. **14** I hope to see you very soon. Then we will talk together. **15** May God give you peace. Our friends greet you. Greet every one of my friends.

THE LETTER OF JUDE

Jude writes to the followers of Jesus. He warns them just like Peter and John did. He warns them not to listen to people who do not know God's truth, and who tell lies about Jesus.

Greetings

I am Jude. I am a servant of Jesus Christ and I am a brother of James.

I send greetings to you whom God the Father has called. He has loved you and kept you safe for Jesus Christ.

2 May God be kind to you. May he give you peace. May he love you very much.

Men who do wrong things will be punished

3 My dear brothers, I wanted very much to write to you and tell you how we all are saved. But then I saw that I must write and tell you to hold very strongly to what you do believe. Fight against those who want to change it. The right way to believe has been given to God's people once for all times.

4 Some men have come in quietly. They are bad men. The holy writings told us long ago that they would be punished. These men change the blessing of our God to do the wrong things they want to do. They show by their lives that they do not belong to Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord

5 You know all these things for all times. But I want to bring them to your minds. First, the Lord saved his people from the country of Egypt. At a time after that, he killed those who did not believe in him. **6** Remember the angels also. Some of them did not keep the high place they had. But they left their home. God has them tied in chains for ever, and he is keeping them in a very dark place. He will keep them there until that big day when they will be judged. **7** Also Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities near them show what will happen. The people there had wrong ways of using sex and did wrong things that people should not do with each other. They were punished and are in fire that burns for ever. God did this to show what will happen to others.

8 And yet these men do the same wrong things. They think of and do wrong things with their bodies. They will not obey the men who rule over them. And they say wrong things about those who are great, even about the angels.

9 At one time Michael the chief angel had a

quarrel with the devil about who should have the body of Moses. But he did not dare to judge the devil and say wrong things about him. He said, 'May the Lord tell you to stop!'

10 But these men say wrong things about everything they do not understand. They know some things just like animals that cannot think. And they will die because they do those wrong things. **11** They will have trouble! They have lived like Cain. They have done wrong things for pay like Balaam. They have talked against those who are over them. Korah did that. And so they will die as he did. **12** These men spoil your love feasts. They are not afraid to eat and drink with you. They take care only of themselves. They are like clouds that do not give rain, and are blown around by the winds. They are like trees when their leaves are gone and they have no fruit. These trees are also dead because they have been pulled up by the roots.

13 These men are like big waves on the sea. Big waves cause much trouble. And these men also show the wrong things they do. They are like stars that have fallen from their place in the sky. A very dark place has been kept for ever in which to put these men. **14** Enoch was the seventh in Adam's family line. He spoke words from God to these men also. He said, 'Listen! The Lord came with many thousands of his angels. **15** He came to judge all people and to punish all the bad people for all the wrong things they have done. And he came to punish bad people for all the wrong things that they have said against him.'

16 These men complain about the way things are. They do not like it. They do what they themselves want to do. They say big things. They say nice things to people to get what they want from them.

What Christians should do

17 But, my dear brothers, you must remember what the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ said would happen. **18** They said to you, 'At the end of time, men will come who will make fun of holy things. They will do the wrong things they themselves want to do.' **19** These are the men who make people go into different groups in the

church meetings. They have only a man's heart. They do not have the Holy Spirit.

20 But you, my dear brothers, must make your lives better in the holy things you believe. Talk to God in the Holy Spirit. **21** Keep yourselves in God's love. Wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to come and help you. He will give you life that will live for ever. **22** Some people are not sure what they believe. Be kind to them by sharing in their troubles. **23** Pull them out of the fire and save them. There are other people to whom you must be kind, but be careful about it. But you

must hate even the clothes that bad people have worn.

A blessing

24-25 God can keep you from doing anything wrong. He can bring you to the place where he is great and you will be all good. You will be very happy. **25** He is the only God. And he is our Saviour through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is great! He is wonderful! He has power! He has the right to rule! He was like that before time began! He is like that now! And he will be like that for ever. Yes, he will!

THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION TO JOHN

God shows John visions or pictures in his mind. They were like dreams. John was given messages from Jesus for the churches. Then he saw strange things that will happen in the world. John has written these things down for us to read.

CHAPTER 1

God showed these things to Jesus Christ to show to his servants. These are things that must happen soon. Then God sent his angel and showed them to John, his servant. **2** John wrote down what God said and what Jesus showed to him. These words tell all that He saw. **3** God will bless the person who reads the words of this book. God will bless those who hear the words of this book and obey the things written in it.

Greetings to the seven churches

4 Here is what John wrote to the people of the seven churches which are in the country of Asia Minor.

May God's loving kindness bless you and give you peace. He lives now, he always has lived, and he will come again. May the seven Spirits bless you and give you peace. They stand in front of God's throne [chief chair of a king]. **5** May Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace. What he says is true. He was the first to rise from death. And he is ruler of the kings of the earth. He loves us. By his own blood [death] he has made us free from the wrong things we have done. **6** He has made us into kings and priests to his God and Father. Praise him! He is great and has power for ever! Yes, it is so! **7** Watch! He will come in the clouds. Everyone will see him. Those who stuck a spear in him will also see him. All the tribes on earth will cry when they see him. That is the way it will be. Yes it will!

8 The Lord God says, 'I am the First and the Last. I am the beginning and the ending. I live now. I always have lived, and I will come again. I have all power.'

John sees the risen Christ

9 I am John, your brother. I belong to Jesus and I am having big trouble just as you are. I also belong to his kingdom and I wait patiently for it. I was on an island called Patmos because I told the word of God and talked about Jesus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Behind me I heard a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet or horn. **11** The voice said, 'Write what you see in a book. Send it to the seven churches

in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.'

12 I turned to see who was talking to me. I saw seven gold lamps. **13** In the centre of the seven lamps I saw someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long gown with a wide, gold belt around his chest. **14** The hair on his head was white like sheep's hair, white as snow. His eyes shone like a flame of fire. **15** His feet shone like fine brass that has been made pure by fire. His voice was like the sound of much water flowing.

16 In his right hand he had seven stars. Out of his mouth came a long knife or sword, sharp on both sides. His face shone like the sun when it is shining very brightly.

17 When I saw him, I fell down in front of him as if I had died. He put his right hand on me and said, 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. **18** I am he who lives. I died. But look, I am alive for ever. I have the keys to death and to the world of the dead. **19** So write what you have seen. Write the things that are now and the things that will happen after them. **20** You saw seven stars in my right hand. I will tell you the secret meaning of them and of the seven gold lamps. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. The seven lamps are the seven churches.'

CHAPTER 2

The message to Ephesus

Write this to the angel of the church people in Ephesus: Here are the words of the one who holds the seven stars in his hand, the one who walks among the seven gold lamps. **2** 'He says, "I know the things you do. I know that you work hard and are patient. I know that you have nothing to do with bad men. You tested those who say they are messengers from God but are not. You proved that they are not true apostles. **3** I know that you are patient and are strong for my name's sake. And you have not given up. **4** But here is what I say against you. You do not love as you loved at first. **5** So remember what you were like at first. Stop! Live the way you did at first. If you do not, I will come and move your lamp from its place. I will do it if you do not stop. **6** But this is good: you hate the things

which the people called Nicolaitans do. I hate the things they do also." **7** He who can hear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. He says, "I will let the person who wins eat fruit from the tree of life. It grows in God's garden".'

The message to Smyrna

8 'Write this to the angel of the church people in Smyrna: Here are the words of the one who is the First and the Last. He is the one who died but lived again.

9 'He says, "I know the things you do and the trouble you have. I know you are poor. But you are rich in some ways. I know some people do not respect God. They call themselves Jews. But they are not real Jews. They belong to Satan's people. **10** Do not be afraid of the troubles you will have. Yes, the devil will put some of you into prison where you will be tested. You will have trouble for ten days. But keep on believing, even if you have to die for it. I will give you life for ever."

11 'He who can hear should listen to the message of the Spirit to the churches. He says, "The person who wins will not be hurt by the second death".'

The message to Pergamum

12 'Write this to the angel of the church people in Pergamum: Here are the words of the one who has the long knife which is sharp on both sides.

13 'He says, "I know where you live. You live where Satan rules. But you keep my name and you have never said that you do not believe in me. You kept on believing in me even in the time of Antipas. He said he believed in me and was true to me. He was killed among you where Satan lives. **14** But I have a few things to say against you. You have some people there who believe the teaching of Balaam. He showed Balak how to trick the people of Israel and make them do wrong. They ate food that was given to idols, and they used sex wrongly. **15** Also, you have people among you who believe the teaching of the Nicolaitans. I hate the things they do. **16** Stop! If you do not, I will come soon and I will fight against them with the long knife that comes from my mouth."

17 'He who can hear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. He says, "I will give some of the secret food to the person who wins. And I will give him a white stone. A new name

will be written on the stone. No one will know the name but the one who gets the stone".'

The message to Thyatira

18 'Write this to the angel of the church people in Thyatira: Here are the words of the Son of God. He is the one whose eyes shine like a flame of fire, and his feet shine like fine brass.

19 'He says, "I know the things you do. I know that you love me, believe in me, work for me, and are patient. I know that you do these things more now than you did at first. **20** But I have this to say against you. You let that woman named Jezebel keep on teaching. She calls herself a prophet of God but teaches my servants wrong things. She fools them to use sex wrongly and eat food that has been given to idols. **21** I gave her time to stop, but she will not stop her wrong sexual ways and turn back to God. **22** Look, I will make her very sick, and also those who love her. I will do it if they do not stop what they are doing with her. **23** I will kill her children. Then all the churches will know that I find out what is in a person's mind and heart. I will pay each one of you for the good or wrong things you have done. **24** But some of you in Thyatira do not listen to that woman's teaching. You have not learned what some people call the deep things of Satan. To you I say, I will put no other load on you. **25** The only thing I say to you is to keep on believing until I come. **26** If a person wins and does what I want him to do until the end, I will make him rule with me over all peoples. **27** The holy writings said this long ago: 'He will rule them with an iron stick. He will break them to pieces like pots made of clay.' This is the same power as I received from my Father. **28** And I will give him the morning star."

29 'He who can hear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.'

CHAPTER 3

The message to Sardis

Write this to the angel of the church people in Sardis: Here are the words of the one who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.

'He says, "I know what you do. People say that you are alive, but you are dead. **2** Wake up! You still have a little life left in you. Make it stronger before it dies altogether. I have not seen you do anything that looked right to God. **3** So remember the things you were told and the things you have heard. Obey them. Stop the

things you have been doing. If you do not wake up, I will come to you like a thief. You will not know when I will come to you. **4** But you have a few people in Sardis who have not made their clothes dirty. They will walk with me in white clothes, because they are good enough. **5** He who wins will wear white clothes. I will not take his name out of the book of life. I will tell his name to my Father and to his angels.”

6 ‘He who can hear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.’

The message to Philadelphia

7 ‘Write this to the angel of the church people in Philadelphia: Here are the words of the one who is holy and true. He has David’s key. No one will shut what he opens. And no one will open what he shuts.

8 ‘He says, “I know what you do. Look, I have opened a door in front of you. No one can shut it. I know that you do not have much power. But you have obeyed my word and you have never said you did not believe in me. **9** Look! I will bring some people who belong to Satan’s group. They call themselves Jews, but they are not real Jews. They lie. Look, I will make them come and kneel down in front of you. They will know that I have loved you. **10** You have obeyed my word and been patient. So I will keep you safe in the time of trouble which will come all over the world. It will test the people who live on earth. **11** I am coming again soon! Hold on to the faith which you have, so that no one will stop you receiving your reward in heaven. **12** I will make the person who wins become a strong post in the temple of my God. I will keep him strong. He will never leave it again. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of my God’s city. This city is the new Jerusalem. It comes down out of heaven from my God. And I will write my new name on him.”

13 ‘He who can hear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.’

The message to Laodicea

14 ‘Write this to the angel of the church people in Laodicea: Here are the words of the one whose name is Truth. What he says can be trusted. He is the one who began all that God made.

15 ‘He says, “I know what you do. I know that you are neither cold nor hot. And I wish that you were cold or hot. **16** So I will spit you out of my mouth, because you are only warm and not

hot or cold. **17** You say, ‘I am rich and have many things. I need nothing.’ You do not know that you are in trouble and need help. You are poor. You are blind. And you have no clothes to wear. **18** I tell you what you should do. You should buy from me gold that has been made clean by fire. Then you will be rich. And you should buy from me white clothes to wear. Then people will not see that you have no clothes, and you will not be ashamed. You should buy from me healing oil to put on your eyes. Then you will be able to see. **19** I tell off and punish the people I love. So get busy and stop doing wrong. **20** Listen, I stand at the door and knock. If any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him. I will eat with him, and he will eat with me. **21** He who wins will sit with me on my throne in heaven. I won too, and I sat down with my Father on his throne.”

22 ‘He who can hear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.’

CHAPTER 4

Worship in heaven.

After this, I looked and saw a door open in heaven. I heard the same voice that I had heard before. It was like the sound of a horn or trumpet. It said, ‘Come up here. I will show you the things that must happen after this.’

2 Right away, I was in the Spirit. I saw a throne or chief chair in heaven. **3** The one who sat on the throne looked very fine and bright. He looked like fine stones called jasper and carnelian. All around his chair was a rainbow that looked like a fine stone called emerald. **4** Around his throne I saw twenty-four other thrones. On them sat twenty-four leaders. They wore white clothes and had gold crowns on their heads. **5** From the throne came lightning, loud noises, and thunder. In front of the throne, seven bright lamps were burning. These lamps are the seven Spirits of God. **6** In front of the throne, it was like a sea of glass. It looked like a stone called crystal.

Around the throne on the four sides of it were four living beings. They had many eyes in their faces and in their back. **7** The first living thing was like a lion. The second one was like a young cow. The third one had the face of a man. The fourth one was like a flying eagle. **8** Each of the four living beings had six wings. They had many eyes all over their bodies and under their wings. They say all the time, day and night: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God. He has all power. He

always has lived. He lives now. And he always will live.'

9 The living beings give praise and honour and thanks to the one who sits on the throne and lives for ever and ever. **10** Every time they do this, the twenty-four leaders kneel down in front of the one who sits on the throne. And they worship the one who lives for ever and ever. They take the crowns off their heads and lay them down in front of his throne. **11** They say: 'Our Lord and God, it is right for you to have praise and honour and power. You made all things. They were made and have life because you wanted them.'

CHAPTER 5

The book and the Lamb

I saw a book in the right hand of the one who sat on the chief chair. It had writing on the front and the back. It was locked with seven locks.

2 I saw a strong angel calling with a loud voice. He said, 'Who can open the book and break its locks?' **3** And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the book or look in it. **4** I cried very much because no one could open the book or look in it. **5** Then one of the leaders said to me, 'Do not cry. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah has won! The One who was born into David's family has won! He can open the book and break its seven locks.'

6 I saw a Lamb standing in front of the throne and the four living beings, and in front of the leaders. It looked as if it had been killed. It had seven horns and seven eyes. They are the seven Spirits of God who are sent out all over the earth. **7** He went and took the book from the right hand of the One who sat on the throne.

8 And when he took the book, the four living beings and the twenty-four leaders knelt down in front of the Lamb. Every one of them had a harp and a gold bowl. The bowls were full of incense that smelled very sweet when it was burned. These bowls are the words of God's people when they talk to him.

9 And the four living beings and the leaders sang a new song. The new song was: 'You are able to take the book and to open its locks, because you were killed. You have set the people free and bought them for God with the cost of your blood. They are from every tribe, language, nation, and country. **10** You have made them into kings and priests for our God. They will rule on the earth.'

11 Then I saw and heard many angels. They were around the chair, and the living beings, and the leaders. There were many, many thousands. **12** They said with a loud voice, 'The Lamb of God who was killed is the only one good enough to be given power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, praise, and blessing!'

13 Then I heard everything in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and on the sea, and everything in them say, 'Blessing, honour, praise, and power belong for ever and ever to the One who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' **14** Then the four living beings said, 'Amen! May it be so!' And the leaders knelt down and worshipped the One who lives for ever and ever.

CHAPTER 6

The locks

I saw the Lamb open one of the seven locks. I heard the voice of one of the four living beings call, 'Come!' It sounded like thunder. **2** And I looked and saw a white horse. The man who rode on it had a bow to shoot arrows. A gold crown for his head was given to him. And he went out fighting to win the victory over his enemies.

3 When the Lamb opened the second lock, I heard the second living being call, 'Come!' **4** And another horse came out. It was red. The man who rode on it was allowed to take peace away from the earth, so that men would kill each other. The man who rode on it was given a long knife or sword.

5 When the Lamb opened the third lock, I heard the third living being call, 'Come!' I looked and saw a black horse. The man who rode on it had scales in his hand to weigh things. **6** I heard a voice among the four living beings. It said, 'Four cups of wheat for bread will sell for a day's wages. Twelve cups of barley will sell for a day's wages. But do not destroy the oil and the wine.'

7 When the Lamb opened the fourth lock, I heard the fourth living being call, 'Come!' **8** I saw a horse the colour of ashes. The name of the man who rode it was Death. And the one who controls the world of the dead followed him. They were given power over a fourth part of the world. They could kill people with a sword, or by making them go without food to eat, or by making them sick, or with wild animals.

9 When the Lamb opened the fifth lock, I saw the souls of people who had been killed. They

were under the holy table where incense is burned. They had been killed because they believed God's word and said they believed it.

10 They called in a loud voice, 'Lord, you are holy and true. How long will you wait before you judge and punish the people on earth because they killed us?'

11 Then each one of them was given a white gown to wear. They were told to wait a little longer for the other Christian brothers. Those who worked with them for the Lord would be killed as they had been.

12 I saw the Lamb opening the sixth lock. The earth shook very much. The sun became very dark, like the black cloth people wear to show they are sad. The full moon became red like blood. **13** The stars in the sky fell to the earth. They fell like figs that are not ripe when the fig tree is shaken by a strong wind. **14** The sky was taken away like paper being rolled up. Every big hill and island was shaken out of its place.

15 The kings of the world, the great men, the army captains, the rich people, the strong people, every slave, and every freeman hid themselves in holes and the rocks on the big hills. **16** They called to the hills and to the rocks and said, 'Fall on us! Hide us so the One on the throne will not see us. Hide us from the Lamb who is angry with us. **17** The great day has come, and he is very angry with us. Who can stand before him?'

CHAPTER 7

Marking the people of Israel

After this, I saw four angels standing at four different places on the earth. They were holding back the winds coming from every way. They did this so that no wind would blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. **2** Then I saw another angel coming up from the place where the sun rises. He had something to put the mark of the living God on people. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels. They had been given power to hurt the earth and the sea. **3** The angel said, 'Do not hurt the earth, the sea, or the trees until we have put a mark on the foreheads of God's servants.' **4** And I heard that one hundred and forty-four thousand people were marked. They were from every tribe of Israel. **5-8** Twelve thousand people were marked from each of these tribes: Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin.

The people from every tribe

9 After this, I looked and saw many people. There were so many that no person could count them all. They were from every country, tribe, nation, and language. I saw them standing in front of the throne and the Lamb. They wore white clothes and they had palm branches in their hands. **10** They called in a loud voice and said, 'Our God who sits on the throne, and the Lamb: they are the Ones who save people. Salvation belongs to them!' **11** All the angels were standing around the throne and around the leaders and the four living beings. They bowed down their faces in front of the throne and worshipped God. **12** They said, 'May it be so! Blessing, praise, glory and wisdom, thanks, honour, power, and strength belong to our God for ever and ever! Amen!'

13 Then one of the leaders talked to me. He said, 'Who are these people wearing white clothes? Where did they come from?' **14** Then I said to him, 'Sir, I do not know.' And he said to me, 'These are the people who have had much trouble. They have washed their clothes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white. **15** That is why they are in front of God's throne. They worship him day and night in his temple. The one who sits on the throne will keep them safe because he is with them. **16** They will not be hungry or thirsty again. The sun or any other heat will not burn them. **17** The Lamb who is in front of the throne will take care of them. He will guide them to the places where there is water that gives life. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.'

CHAPTER 8

The gold bowl

When the Lamb opened the seventh lock, all was quiet in heaven for about a half hour.

2 Then I saw the seven angels stand in front of God. Seven horns or trumpets were given to them. **3** Another angel came and stood at the altar. He had a gold bowl. Plenty of incense was given to him. He was to put it with all the words of all God's people when they talk to him. He was to put it on the gold altar in front of God's throne. **4** The sweet-smelling smoke of the burning incense went up at the same time as the prayer words of God's people. They went up from the hand of the angel that was standing in front of God.

5 Then the angel took the bowl and filled it with fire from the altar. He threw it on the earth. There was thunder, loud noises, and lightning. And the earth shook.

The seven trumpets

6 The seven angels who had the seven horns or trumpets got ready to blow them.

7 The first angel blew his trumpet. Rain like stones, and fire mixed with blood, fell on the earth. A third part of the earth was burned. A third of the trees was burned. And one third of all the green grass was burned.

8 The second angel blew his trumpet. Then something like a big hill, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea. **9** Then a third of the sea became blood. A third of all things that lived in the sea died. A third of all the boats was broken.

10 The third angel blew his trumpet. A big star fell from the sky. It burned and gave a bright light. It fell on a third of the rivers and places where there is water. **11** The name of the star is Bitter. A third part of the water became bitter. Many men died because the water was made bad to drink.

12 The fourth angel blew his trumpet. A third of the sun was made dark. And a third of the moon and a third of the stars were made dark. A third part of them became dark. A third part of the day had no light, and also a third part of the night.

13 Then I looked and heard an angel who was flying across the sky. He called in a loud voice and said, 'Trouble! Trouble! Trouble to the people who live on earth! Big trouble will come when the sound of the other trumpets is heard. The three angels are now ready to blow their trumpets!'

CHAPTER 9

Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet. I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The key to the big hole that has no bottom was given to the angel. **2** He opened the big hole and smoke came out. It was like the smoke of a very big fire. The sun and the air were made dark by the smoke from the big hole.

3 Then out of the smoke came locusts on the earth like big grasshoppers. They were given the power to hurt people the way that scorpions do. **4** They were told not to spoil any of the grass, nor any green plant, nor any tree on earth. They were told to hurt only the people who did not have God's mark on their

foreheads. **5** They were told not to kill them, but to trouble them for five months. The pain they give is like the pain a scorpion gives when it strikes a person. **6** In those days people will look for death, but they will not be able to find it. They will want to die, but death will fly away from them.

7 The locusts looked like horses ready to go to war. On their heads were gold crowns. And they had faces like people. **8** Their hair was like women's hair and their teeth like lions' teeth.

9 Their bodies were covered by something like pieces of iron. The noise of their wings sounded like many wagons and horses running to war.

10 The locusts had tails like scorpions that could strike people and hurt them for five months.

11 The king of the locusts is the angel of the big hole that has no bottom. His name is Abaddon in the Jew's language and Apollyon in the Greek language. (This means, the one who destroys.)

12 The first trouble is gone. Two more troubles are coming after it.

13 The sixth angel blew his trumpet. I heard a voice from the four horns of the gold altar in front of God. **14** The voice said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 'Untie the four angels who are tied at the big river Euphrates.'

15 So the four angels were let free. They were ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year when they would kill a third of the people.

16 In their army were many, many thousands of men on horses. I heard the number of them.

17 I saw what the horses and the men that sat on them looked like. The bodies of the men were covered by pieces of iron that looked red like fire and blue, and yellow. The heads of the horses were like lions' heads. Fire, smoke and dust came out of their mouths. The dust was sulphur which choked and killed people when it burned in the fire. **18** By these three big troubles a third part of the people were killed. They were killed by the fire, smoke, and choking sulphur dust that came out of the mouths of the horses. **19** The power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails. Their tails have heads and are like snakes. They hurt people with them.

20 The other people were not killed by these big troubles. But they did not stop worshipping what they had made with their hands. They did not stop worshipping bad spirits and idols made of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood. These idols cannot see or hear or walk. **21** And they did not

stop their killing, or their witchcraft, or their wrong ways of using sex, or their stealing.

CHAPTER 10

The angel and the small book

Then I saw another strong angel coming down from the sky. A cloud was around him and a rainbow was over his head. His face was like the sun and his legs were like posts of fire. **2** In his hand he had a small book that was open. He put his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land. **3** He called in a very loud voice like a lion roaring. When he called, it was like the voices of seven thunders. **4** When the seven thunders had spoken, I was going to write down what they said. But I heard a voice from the sky that said, 'Do not tell what the seven thunders said. Do not write it down.'

5 The angel that I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand toward the sky. **6** He made a promise in the name of the one who lives for ever and ever. He made it in the name of the one who made the sky and everything in it, who made the earth and everything in it, and the sea and everything in it. He said, 'There is no more time. **7** But when the seventh angel calls by blowing his trumpet, then the secret plan of God will be finished. It will happen just as God told his servants, the prophets.'

8 The voice I heard in the sky talked to me again. It said, 'Go to the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land. Take the open book from his hand.' **9** So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little book.

He said to me, 'Take it and eat it. It will be bitter inside you, but it will be sweet like honey in your mouth.' **10** So I took the little book from the angel's hand and ate it. It was sweet like honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. **11** Then he said to me, 'You must tell again what God is saying to many nations, countries, languages, and kings.'

CHAPTER 11

The two men and the beast

Then I was given a long stick. And he said, 'Go and measure God's temple and the altar, and count the people who worship there. **2** Do not measure the part outside the temple. Leave it out, because it has been given to the people who do not believe in God. They will walk in the holy city for forty-two months. **3** I will give

power to the two men who speak for me. They will speak words from God. They will continue to speak for forty-two months. They will wear clothes like people wear to show they are sad.'

4 These two men are the two olive trees and the two lamps which stand in front of the Lord of the earth. **5** If anyone wants to hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths and burns up their enemies. If anyone wants to hurt them, he must be killed in this way. **6** These two men can stop the sky from raining all the days that they speak words from God. And they can turn the water into blood. They can bring all kinds of trouble to the earth as often as they want.

7 There is a beast which is a wild animal in the big hole that has no bottom. When the two men have finished talking, the beast will come up out of the hole. It will fight with the men. It will win over them and kill them. **8** Their dead bodies will lie in the street of the big city. This city is called, 'Sodom' and 'Egypt,' because it is like them. Also it is where our Lord was nailed to a cross. **9** People from many nations, tribes, languages, and countries will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days. They will not let anyone bury them. **10** The people on earth will be very glad to see them dead. They will have a happy time. They will give gifts to each other because these two men from God had troubled the people on the earth.

11 But after the three and a half days, life came into them. They stood on their feet. And all those who saw them were very much afraid.

12 Then they heard a loud voice from the sky saying to them, 'Come up here!' They went up into the sky in a cloud. And the men who hated them saw them go up. **13** At that time, the earth shook very much. A tenth part of the city fell down. Seven thousand people were killed by the shaking of the earth. The other people were very much afraid and they give glory to God in heaven.

14 The second trouble is gone. The third trouble is coming soon.

The seventh trumpet

15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet. Loud voices were heard in the sky. They said, 'The kingdom of the world now belongs to our Lord and to his Christ. He will rule for ever and ever.' **16** Then the twenty-four leaders who sat on their thrones in front of God kneeled down and worshipped God. **17** They said, 'We thank you, Lord God, who has all power. You live now

and you always have lived. We thank you because you have now used your power and started to rule.

18 'The people who did not believe you became angry. But now you are angry. It is time for dead people to be judged. And it is time to reward your servants, the prophets of God, and your holy people and all who respect your name - those who are great and those who are not so great. It is time to destroy those who destroy the earth.'

19 Then the temple of God in heaven was opened. The box where his agreement was kept was seen inside the temple. And there was lightning, loud noises, and thunder. The earth shook and much rain, like stones, fell.

CHAPTER 12

The woman and the dragon

I saw a wonderful thing in the sky. A woman was wearing the sun like a dress. She stood on the moon. On her head she had twelve stars in a big ring like a crown. She was going to have a baby. **2** She cried out in pain because it was time for the baby to be born. **3** And another wonderful thing was seen in the sky. It was a big red dragon. He had seven heads and ten horns. He had seven big rings on his heads. **4** His tail struck a third part of the stars from the sky to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who would soon have a baby. He wanted to eat her baby when it was born. **5** Then her baby boy was born. He will rule all the countries with an iron stick. Her child was taken up to God, to God's throne. **6** The woman ran away into the wilderness. There God had made a place ready for her. There she will have food for forty-two months.

7 Then there was fighting in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back. **8** But they did not win the fight and no longer were they allowed to stay in heaven. **9** The dragon was thrown down. He was that old snake who is called the devil and Satan. He fools all the people in the world. He was thrown down to earth and his angels were thrown down with him.

10 I heard a loud voice in the sky. It said, 'Now the time has come for God to save people. He will use his strength. His kingdom will come and his Christ will use his power. The one who says bad things about our brothers to God day and

night has been thrown down. **11** They have won the fight against him by the blood of the Lamb's death, and by what they said. They did not try to save their lives, but were willing to die.

12 Heaven, and those who live in heaven, be glad because of it! Big trouble will come to the earth and sea! The devil has come down to you. He is very angry. He knows that he has only a short time!'

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to earth, he troubled the woman to whom a baby boy had been born. **14** But the woman was given two wings like a big eagle's wings. With them she could fly away from the dragon into the wilderness to her place where she would have food for three and a half periods of time. **15** The dragon poured water like a river out of his mouth after her. He wanted the water to carry her away. **16** But the earth helped the woman. It opened a big hole. And the river which the dragon had poured out of his mouth went down the hole. **17** Then the dragon was very angry with the woman. He went away to fight against the other children of the woman. They are the ones who keep the laws of God and tell the truth about Jesus.

CHAPTER 13

The two wild beasts

Then I stood on the sand by the sea. I saw a wild animal come up out of the sea. The beast had seven heads and ten horns. On its horns were ten big crowns. On its heads it had names that did not respect God.

2 The beast I saw was like a leopard. It had feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. The dragon gave it his own strength, his own throne, and great power. **3** One of its heads had a cut, bad enough to kill it. But the bad cut was healed. All the people on earth were much surprised and followed the beast. **4** They worshipped the dragon because he had given this power to the beast. And they worshipped the beast too. They said, 'Who is like this beast? Who can fight against it?'

5 The beast was given a mouth that spoke proud words against God. It was given power to rule for forty-two months. **6** It opened its mouth to speak against God, to speak against his name and the place where he lives, and to speak against those who live in heaven. **7** It was also given power to fight against God's people and to win the fight against them. It was given power to rule over every tribe, nation, language, and

country. **8** Everyone on earth will worship the beast, if they do not have their names in the book of life. The book of life belongs to the Lamb who was killed. That was God's plan since the world was made.

9 He who can hear should listen: **10** Anyone who puts people in prison will go to prison. Anyone who kills others with a long knife or sword will be killed by a long knife or sword. This is why God's people are patient and keep on believing.

11 Then I saw another beast come up out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb but talked like a dragon. **12** It uses all the power of the first beast and stands with it. It makes all the earth and those who live on it worship the first beast. That was the beast whose bad cut was healed. **13** The second beast does wonderful things. It even makes fire fall from the sky to the earth for everyone to see. **14** It fools the people who live on earth by the wonderful things which it has been given power to do, while the first beast looks on. It tells the people on earth to make an idol like the first beast that was cut by the big knife but lived. **15** It was given power to make the idol of the beast live. The idol of the beast could speak and command all those who would not worship the idol to be killed. **16** It makes all the people take a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads. That means all people, those who are great and those who are not great, the poor, free men, and slaves. **17** No one could buy or sell anything if he did not have this mark. This mark is the name of the beast or the number of its name. **18** Here wisdom is needed. If a person understands, he should count the number of the beast. It is the number of a man's name. Its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

CHAPTER 14

The song of the 144,000

Then I looked and saw the Lamb standing on a hill called Zion. With him were one hundred and forty-four thousand people. They had his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. **2** I heard a sound from the sky like the sound of much water flowing, and like the sound of much thunder. The sound I heard was like people playing music on their harps. **3** They were singing a new song in front of God's chief chair, in front of the four living beings and the leaders. No one could learn that song but the

one hundred and forty-four thousand people. They have been bought from the earth. **4** They are the people who have not had sex with women. They are clean. They are the people who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They lived among people on earth. They have been bought from the earth. They are the first among men to have been bought for God and the Lamb. **5** They never told lies. They are found to be without any wrong ways as they stand before the throne of God.

The messages of the three angels

6 Then I saw another angel flying across the sky. He had good news that will last for ever to tell the people who live on the earth. The good news is for every country, tribe, language, and nation. **7** He said in a loud voice, 'Respect and honour God and give him glory! The time has come for him to judge people, to tell them how good or bad they are. Worship him. He made heaven and earth, the sea, and the rivers.'

8 A second angel followed him. He said, 'The great city of Babylon has fallen down. It has fallen down because it filled all the countries with its wrong ways. It has made people to suffer God's anger.'

9-10 A third angel followed the other two. He said in a loud voice, 'Any person who worships the beast or its idol, and takes its mark on his forehead or on his hand, will also feel God's anger. He is very angry. That person will be burned with fire and dust that chokes people when it burns. He will be burned in front of the holy angels and the Lamb. **11** The smoke of that fire goes up for ever and ever. Those who worship the animal and its idol, and anyone who takes the mark of its name, will get no rest day or night.'

12 This is why God's people must be patient. They are the ones who keep the laws of God and believe in Jesus.

13 I heard a voice from the sky. It said, 'Write this: From now on, happy are those who die believing in the Lord.'

'Yes,' says the Spirit. 'They will have rest from their troubles. The good things they have done will go with them.'

The harvest of the earth

14 I looked and saw a white cloud. I saw someone like the Son of Man sitting on the cloud. He had a big gold crown on his head and a sharp harvest knife in his hand. **15** Another

angel came out of God's temple. He called in a loud voice to the one who was sitting on the cloud. He said, 'Take your knife and cut the harvest. The time has come to take in the harvest because the earth is ready.' **16** So the one who sat on the cloud used his knife on earth. And the harvest on earth was cut.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven. He also had a sharp knife. **18** And another angel came from the altar. He had power over fire. He called in a loud voice to the angel who had the sharp knife. He said, 'Take your sharp knife and gather the fruit that grows on the vine on the earth. Its fruit is ripe.' **19** So the angel used his knife on earth. He gathered the fruit of the vine on the earth. He put it in the big place where the water of the fruit is pressed out. This place is God's anger. **20** It was outside the city that they pressed the fruit. Blood ran out of the place. It came up as high as the horses' heads for about two hundred miles.

CHAPTER 15

The angels with the last big troubles

I saw another big and wonderful thing in the sky. I saw seven angels who carried the seven big troubles. They are the last troubles. When these troubles have come, God's anger is ended.

2 I saw something that looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire. And I saw those people who had won the fight against the beast, and its idol, and its mark, and the number of its name. They were standing on the sea of glass and they had the harps of God in their hands. **3** They sing the song of Moses who is the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. They say, 'Lord God who has all power, the things you do are great and wonderful! King for ever, your ways are right and true! **4** Who will not respect and honour you and praise your name, Lord? You are the only one who is holy. People from all countries will come and worship you because they have seen that you are right and fair.'

5 After this I looked. The temple in heaven was open. It was the place where God's agreement was kept. **6** The seven angels who carried the seven troubles came out of the temple. They were wearing linen clothes, clean and shining. Around their chests they wore gold belts. **7** One of the four living beings gave the angels seven gold bowls. The bowls were full of the anger of God who lives for ever and ever. **8** The temple was full of smoke because God is so great and

has so much power. No one could go into the temple until the seven troubles, which the seven angels had, were ended.

CHAPTER 16

The bowls of God's anger

I heard a loud voice coming from the temple. It said to the seven angels, 'Go and pour the seven bowls of God's anger on the earth.'

2 So the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth. Then a bad, dirty sore came on the people who had the mark of the animal on them, and who worshipped its idol.

3 The second angel poured his bowl on the sea. It turned into blood like that of a person who has been killed. Everything in the sea that had life died.

4 The third angel poured his bowl on the rivers and the places where there was water. They turned into blood. **5** And I heard the angel of the water say, 'Holy One, you who live now and who always have lived, and will live for ever; you are right because you have punished them this way. **6** They killed God's people and the prophets. Now you have given them blood to drink. This is what they should get!' **7** I heard the people under the altar say, 'Yes, Lord God, you have all power! The way you punish is true and right!'

8 The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun. Then the sun was given the power to burn people with fire. **9** People were burned because the sun was so hot. And they spoke wrongly about the name of God, cursing him because he had the power to send these troubles. But they would not stop the wrong things they were doing. They would not respect and honour God.

10 The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast. The place where he ruled became dark. People bit their tongues because of the pain they had. **11** They cursed God in heaven because of their pain and sores. But they did not stop the wrong things they were doing. They would not turn back to God.

12 The sixth angel poured his bowl on the big river Euphrates. Its water dried up so that a road was made ready for the kings to come from the east. **13** I saw three bad spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the prophet who is not true. **14** They are the spirits of gods who are not true, and they do wonderful things. They go to the kings

of the whole world and gather them to fight on the great day of God who has all power

15 [The voice of Jesus said] 'Look! I will come like a thief. The person who stays awake and dressed will be glad he did! He will not be without clothes and he will not be ashamed.'

16 They gathered at the place called Armageddon in the Hebrew language.

17 Then the seventh angel poured his bowl into the air. A loud voice came from the temple and the chair. It said, 'It is finished!' 18 There were lightnings, loud noises, and thunder. The earth shook very much. It shook more than it had ever shaken since people have been on earth.

19 The big city was broken into three parts. And the cities of the nations fell down. God remembered Babylon, the big city. He made it feel all of his great anger. 20 The islands all went away, and the mountains could not be seen. 21 Rain like big stones fell from the sky on men. Each stone weighed about a hundred pounds. Men cursed God because the big rain of stones fell on them. The trouble was very bad.

CHAPTER 17

The bad woman is punished

One of the seven angels who had carried the seven bowls came and talked to me. He said, 'Come, and I will show you the woman who has given herself over to wrong ways of using sex. She is sitting over many waters. I will show you how she will be punished. 2 The kings on earth have been with her and copied her. And the people on earth gladly copy her wrong ways.'

3 Then the angel took me away in the Spirit to a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast that had names against God written all over it. It had seven heads and ten horns.

4 The woman was wearing blue and red clothes. She was shining with gold, fine stones, and pearls. In her hand she held a gold cup. It was full of the wrong things she did and of her dirty ways of using sex. 5 A name was written on her forehead. It has a secret meaning. The name is Great Babylon, the mother of all people who give their bodies for wrong ways of using sex. The mother of all things done on earth too bad to talk about.

6 And I saw the woman was drunk because of the blood she drank. It was the blood of God's people, and the blood of people who had been killed because they belonged to Jesus.

When I saw her, I was very much surprised.

7 The angel asked me, 'Why are you surprised? I will tell you the secret meaning of the woman and the beast with seven heads and horns that carries her.'

8 'The beast that you saw was alive at one time, then it was dead. It will come up from the big hole that has no bottom and it will be killed. The people on earth will be surprised when they see the beast, because it was alive and then it was dead, and it comes alive again. These are the people who do not have their names written in the book of life from the time the world was made.'

9 'To understand this, one must be wise. The seven heads are the seven hills on which the woman is sitting. 10 They are also seven kings. Five have already lost their power. One is ruling now, and the other one has not yet come. When he comes he will rule for a short time. 11 The beast that was alive at the one time, and then was dead, is the eighth king. He is really one of the seven. He will be killed. 12 The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet ruled. They will have power for one hour to rule with the animal. 13 These ten all think the same way, and they give to the beast their power and right to rule. 14 They will fight against the Lamb, but the Lamb will win the fight against them. He will win because he is Lord of lords and King of kings.'

'Those who are with the Lamb will also win. God has called them and chosen them, and they believe in him.'

15 And the angel said to me, 'You saw the water on which the bad woman is sitting. The water is the many nations, many people, many countries, and many languages. 16 You saw the ten horns and the animal. They will hate the bad woman. They will take away everything she has and her fine clothes. They will eat her body and burn her up in a fire. 17 God has put it into their hearts to do what he wants done to her. They will all agree. They will give to the beast their power to rule until what God has said comes true.'

18 'The woman whom you saw is the big city that rules over the kings on earth.'

CHAPTER 18

Babylon is broken down

After that I saw another angel coming down from the sky. He had much power. The bright light that shone from him lit up the earth. 2 He

called in a loud voice and said, 'The big city of Babylon has fallen down! It has fallen down! Bad spirits live in it. All bad spirits hide there. And all kinds of dirty birds that people hate hide there. **3** All the nations are broken down because they are full of its wrong ways. The kings of the earth have joined with it. The traders of the earth have become rich because of its wrong ways.'

4 Then I heard another voice from the sky that said, 'Come out of it, my people, so that you will have no part in the wrong things it does. Come out of it so that you will not have the big troubles it will have. **5** Its wrong ways are piled as high as the sky and God has remembered the wrong things it has done. **6** Do to it what it did to you. Yes, do two times as much to it as it did to you! From the cup it gave you to drink, give it two times as much to drink as it gave to you. **7** It is proud of itself and has done wrong things. Give it that much trouble and crying. It says in its heart, "I am like a queen. I am not like a woman who has lost her husband. I will never know sorrow." **8** So then, its big troubles will come in one day. Those troubles are death, crying, hunger, and being burned in a fire. The Lord who has punished it is strong.'

9 'And the kings of the earth were joined with it in its wrong ways. They will cry and be sad about it when they see the smoke while it burns. **10** They will stand far away from it because they are afraid of the trouble it is having. They will say, "Trouble! Trouble! You big, strong city Babylon! In one hour your punishment has come!"

11 'And the traders of the earth will cry and be sad about it, because no one buys the things they bring to sell. **12** They have many things to sell: gold, silver, fine stones, and pearls. They have linen clothes and blue cloth, silk cloth and red cloth. They have all kinds of sweet-smelling wood. They have all kinds of things made of ivory. They have all kinds of things made of wood that costs much money, of brass, of iron, and of a stone called marble. **13** They have spices and perfume. They have incense and a sweet-smelling oil. They have frankincense and wine and oil. They have fine flour and wheat. They have cows, sheep, horses, and wagons. They have slaves and people to sell. **14** The things that your heart wanted are gone from you. All your fine food and clothes are gone from you. You will never find them again. **15** The traders will sell these things and got

much money from the city. They will stand far away from it because they are afraid of the trouble it is having. They will cry and be sad about it. **16** They will say "How terrible for you, you big strong city! You were wearing linen clothes and purple and red clothes. You were shining with gold, fine stones, and pearls. **17** In one hour all your great riches are lost."

'And all the captains of the boats and all the seamen, the sailors, and all that do business on the sea stood away from it. **18** They called out loud when they saw the smoke while it burned. They said, "What city is like that big city?" **19** They threw dust on their heads and they called out loud. They cried and were sad. They said, "How terrible for that big city! All the men who had boats on the sea became rich because it was rich. In one hour it is all lost."

20 'Be glad for what has happened to it, all you who are in heaven, God's people, apostles and prophets. God has punished it for what it did to you!'

21 Then a strong angel took up a very heavy stone and threw it into the sea. He said, 'So hard will Babylon the big city be thrown down. It will not be seen again. **22** People will not hear music in you again. No harps, no singing, no pipes or horns will ever be heard in you again. No one will make things in you again. The noise of people grinding grain will not be heard in you again. **23** No lamp will shine in you again. No one will hear the voice of people being married. Your traders were the big people of the world. All the countries were fooled by your witch doctors. **24** The blood of prophets and of God's people and of all who have been killed on earth was found in that city.'

CHAPTER 19

The sound of praise

After this I heard a loud sound in heaven. It sounded like many people calling. They said, 'Praise our God! He saves people. He is great and power belongs to him. **2** The way God punishes is true and right. He has punished the bad woman who spoiled the earth with her wrong ways. He has made her pay for the killing of his servants.' **3** They said again, 'Praise God! The smoke where she burns goes up for ever and ever!'

4 Then the twenty-four leaders and the four living beings knelt down. They worshipped

God who was sitting on his throne, and they said, 'Amen! Yes, it is so! Praise God!'

The wedding feast of the Lamb

5 A voice from the throne said, 'Praise our God, all his servants, all who respect and honour him: you who are great and you who are not great, praise him!' **6** Then I heard a sound in heaven. It sounded like many people and much water flowing and like loud thunder. They said, 'Praise God! The Lord our God, who has all power, rules!' **7** We will be glad and very happy! We will praise him. The time has come for the Lamb to marry. The woman who will marry him is ready. **8** She was given the right to wear fine linen, shining and clean.' The fine linen means the good things God's people have done.

9 The angel said to me, 'Write this: God blesses those who are called to come to the wedding feast of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are the true words of God.'

10 Then I knelt down in front of him to worship him. But he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am only a servant like you and like your brothers who tell about Jesus. Worship God! Those who tell about Jesus have the spirit of a prophet.'

The rider on the white horse

11 Then I saw heaven open, and I saw a white horse! The One who rode him is called 'One who can be Trusted' and 'The True One'. He punishes and makes war in the right way.

12 His eyes were like a flame of fire. On his head were many crowns. He had a name written on him, but no man knew what it was but he himself. **13** He wore clothes that had been dipped in blood. His name is 'The Word of God'.

14 The armies of heaven followed him on white horses and they were dressed in fine linen, shining and clean. **15** A long knife or sword comes from his mouth. With it he will punish and control the people of the nations. He will rule them with an iron stick. He is like the winepress that presses the water out of the fruit. It is the place where God, who has all power, shows his great anger. **16** A name is written on his clothes and on his leg: it is King of kings, and Lord of lords.

17 I saw an angel standing in the sun. He called in a loud voice to all the birds that fly across the sky. He said, 'Come, gather for God's big feast.'

18 Come to eat the bodies of kings, the bodies of captains, the bodies of strong men, the bodies of horses and those who ride them, the

bodies of all free men and of slaves, those who are great and those who are not great.'

19 I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies. They were gathered to fight against the One riding the horse and his army.

20 Then the beast was caught and the prophet who is not true was caught. The prophet had done big works for the beast to see. By the things which he did, he had fooled the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped its idol. The beast and the prophet were thrown alive into the big fire which burns with dust that chokes people. **21** Their armies were killed by the man riding the horse. He killed them with the sword that came out of his mouth. All the birds ate all they wanted of their dead bodies.

CHAPTER 20

The thousand years

Then I saw an angel coming down from the sky. In his hand he had the key to the big hole that has no bottom, and a big chain. **2** He caught the dragon, that old snake who is called the devil and Satan. The angel tied him for a thousand years. **3** Then the angel threw him into the big hole that has no bottom. He shut it and locked him in. He did this so that the devil would not fool the nations again until the end of the thousand years. After that, the devil will be let free for a short time.

4 Then I saw thrones. Those who sat on them were given the right to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had their heads cut off because they told about Jesus and God's word. They had not worshipped the beast or its idol. And they had not taken its mark on their foreheads or on their hands. They became alive again and ruled with Christ for a thousand years. **5** The other dead people did not live again until the end of the thousand years. This is the first rising from death. **6** God has blessed those who rise this first time, and they are holy. They will not die the second kind of death. But they will be priests of God and of Christ. They will rule with him for the thousand years.

7 When the end of the thousand years comes, Satan will be set free from his prison. **8** He will go out to fool the nations all over the world. He will fool Gog and Magog. He will gather them to fight. They are many, as many as the sand on the seashore. **9** They marched far over the earth. They went all around the camp of God's people and the city his people loved. Then fire

came down from the sky and burned them. **10** The devil who fooled them was thrown into the big fire which burns with dust that chokes people. The animal, and the prophet who is not true, were already in the fire. They will have a very hard time day and night, for ever and ever.

Everyone is judged

11 Then I saw a big white throne and the person sitting on it. The earth and sky went away from him. They were not there anymore.

12 I saw the dead people, those who were great and those not great. They were standing in front of God's throne. Some books were opened. And another book was opened which is the book of life. The dead people were judged by the things they had done, which were written in the books. **13** The dead people in the sea came out. People came out of death and the world of the dead. One by one, each one was judged by the things he had done. **14** Then death and the world of the dead were thrown into the big fire. This fire is the second death.

15 Every person whose name was not written in the book of life was thrown into this big fire.

CHAPTER 21

The New Jerusalem

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had gone away. There was no sea any more. **2** I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It was all ready and waiting, like a woman dressed for her wedding and ready to meet her husband. **3** I heard a loud voice in heaven. It said, 'Look! God's house is now set up among the people. God will live with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them. **4** He will wipe every tear from their eyes. No one will die. No one will ever cry or be sad for any reason. No one will ever have trouble. The old things are gone.'

5 The One who sat on the throne said, 'Look, I make all things new.' And he said, 'Write this, because these words can be trusted. they are true.'

6 He said to me, 'It is finished! I am the First and the Last! I am the Beginning and the End. I will give the river of water that gives life to those who are thirsty. It will cost no money. **7** The one who wins will have these things. I will be his God and he will be my son. **8** Some people will be thrown into the big fire which burns with sulphur dust that chokes people.

These are the people: those who give in to fear, those who do not believe, those who are bad, those who kill, those with wrong ways of using sex, the witch-doctors, those who worship idols, and all those who love lies. That fire is the second death.'

9 Then one of the seven angels who carried the seven bowls full of the last troubles came and talked to me. He said, 'Come, I will show you the young woman who is the wife of the Lamb.'

10 The angel took me away in the Spirit to a very big hill. He showed me Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God.

11 The light of God was shining from it. It was bright like a very fine stone called jasper. It was as clear as glass. **12** The city had a wall that was big and high. It had twelve doors. At the doors were twelve angels. Names were written on the doors. They are the names of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel. **13** There were three doors on the east side. There were three doors on the north side. There were three doors on the south side and three doors on the west side. **14** The wall of the city had twelve foundation stones. On them were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The angel who talked to me had a gold stick to measure the city, its doors, and its walls.

16 The city is square. It is as long as it is wide. The angel measured the city with his stick and it was about fifteen hundred miles. It is as long as it is wide and as high as it is long. **17** Then he measured its wall. It was two hundred and sixteen feet by the way a man measures. That is the way the angel measured.

18 The wall of the city was made of a very fine stone called jasper. The city was all made of pure gold. It was clear like glass. **19** The bottom of the city wall was covered with all kinds of fine stones. The first stone was red jasper. The second stone was blue sapphire. The third stone was of many colours called agate. The fourth stone was green emerald. **20** The fifth stone was onyx. The sixth stone was red carnelian. The seventh stone was green chrysolite. The eighth stone was green beryl. The ninth stone was yellow topaz. The tenth stone was green chrysoprase. The eleventh stone was red jacinth. And the twelfth stone was a blue amethyst.

21 The twelve doors were twelve pearls. Each door was made from one big pearl. The street of the city was all pure gold. It was as clear as glass. **22** I did not see any temple in the city.

The Lord God, who has all power, and the Lamb, are its temple. **23** The city does not need the sun or the moon to give light in it. The glory of God gives light, and the Lamb is its lamp. **24** Those who are saved will walk in its light. The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. **25** The doors of the city will never be shut in the day time, and there will be no night. **26** The glory and the honour of all nations will be brought into the city. **27** Nothing that is not holy will ever go in. People who do wrong things and tell lies will never go in. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will go in.

CHAPTER 22

Jesus is coming soon!

Then the angel showed me a river of the water which gives life. It was as clear as glass. It flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. **2** It flows through the middle of the street of the city. On each side of the river is the tree which gives life. It has twelve kinds of fruit, and it bears its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree could heal the people of all nations. **3** Nothing that God hates will be in the city any more. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be there. And his servants will serve him. **4** They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. **5** There will be no night there. They do not need the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun. The Lord God will give them light. They will rule for ever and ever.

6 Then the angel said to me, 'These words can be trusted. They are true. The Lord God who gave his Spirit to the prophets has sent his angel to show his servants what must happen soon.'

7 'Look! I will come soon!'

God will bless the person who obeys the words in this book. **8** I, John, heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them I knelt down to worship in front of the angel who showed them to me. **9** But He said to me,

'You must not do that. I am only a servant like you and your brothers, the prophets, and those who obey the words of this book. Worship God.'

10 The angel said to me, 'Do not keep secret the words of God's message in this book. The time is near. **11** Let the bad man keep on doing wrong things. Let the person who does dirty things, keep on being dirty. Let the good person keep on doing what is good. Let the holy person keep on being holy.'

12 'Look, I will come soon! When I come, I will pay every man for what he has done. **13** I am the First and the Last. I am the Beginning and the End.'

14 God will bless the people who do what he says and keep themselves pure and clean. They can eat fruit from the tree that gives life. And they can go through the doors into the city.

15 Outside the city are the dirty people, and the witch-doctors, and those with wrong ways of using sex, those who kill people, those who worship idols, and all those who like lies and tell them.

16 'I, Jesus, have sent my angel to tell these things to you in the churches. I am the root and the branch of David. I am the bright star in the morning.' **17** The Spirit and the Lamb's wife say, 'Come.' He who hears should say, 'Come.' He who is thirsty should come. Anyone who wishes should drink the water that gives life. It costs no money.

18 I am talking to everyone who hears the words of God's message in this book. If anyone adds anything to this book, God will add to him the troubles that are written in this book. **19** If any one takes away any of the words of God's message, God will take away from him his share of the tree which gives life and the holy city. This book tells about them.

20 He who shows these things says, 'Yes, I will come soon.' Amen, Lord Jesus, come!

21 May the love and mercy of the Lord Jesus bless you all. Amen.

List of Bible words and what they mean

abba	A Hebrew word used by a child for 'father'.
Abraham	A man who had great faith in God, who lived many years before Jesus. He was from the family of Shem, one of the three sons of Noah who survived the Flood. He is the father of all the Jews and many other peoples. (See: Noah)
Adam	The first man made by God. The first woman made by God was called Eve. All the people of the world are children of Adam and Eve. We are all like them. At first, Adam was good and perfect, just like Jesus Christ. But Adam did a wrong thing – he disobeyed God – he did something God told him not to do. Adam did this selfish thing and took control of his own life. Because we are children of Adam we are all like him and try to live for ourselves – we disobey God. But if we follow Jesus, he will put us right with God. (See: Jesus.)
adultery	Having sex with a person who is married to someone else. (See: sex.)
agreement	Something that people promise to do that cannot be changed. See: commit, covenant.
altar	Holy table for making sacrifices (gifts) to God.
Amen!	I agree! Yes, it is so!
angel	A good spirit sent by God to give a message. Angels can be seen. It was the angel Gabriel who visited Mary the mother of God's Son, Jesus Christ. (See: Jesus.)
apostle	A man sent by God to tell the Good News of Jesus. The first apostles were some of the twelve disciples of Jesus.
Areopagus	A hilltop meeting of clever people at Athens who talked a lot about religion.
arise (arose)	(1) get (got) up. (2) Get up from sleeping. (3) Come back to life again.
ascension	The time when Jesus was lifted up into the clouds to go back to God his Father. (See: Mark 16:19; Luke 24: 50-52; Acts 1: 6–11.) See: Olives (Mount of).
ashes	The fine powder that is left after things have burnt up. In some countries, people cover themselves with ashes to show they are sad or have done wrong.
ashamed	Feeling guilty, sorry; made sad by doing or thinking wrong things or not obeying God.
Asia Minor	That part of Turkey which is in Asia. Includes Ephesus, Colossae and Galatia.
astrologers	Clever people who study the stars to try to tell what is going to happen. In Matthew 2 they are called 'wise men.' (See: clever)
baptize	Put someone under water and lift them out again. This is done as a sign that they want to die to the bad old life and start a new life with Jesus. Jesus told his followers to baptize people if they believed in him. (See Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15,16.)
baptizer	The person who baptizes people. A prophet called John baptized Jesus in the River Jordan.
basket	Something to hold things in made from twigs or thin sticks.
beads	Pretty stones, pearls or jewels which are usually joined together on a string to hang round the neck, arms or legs.
behaviour	The things people say or do which show how good or bad they are.
belief	Faith or trust in someone or something.
believe	To have belief in.

believer	A person who has belief. The word Christians use to describe other Christians. (See: Christian.)
bless	Say or do much good to a person. To give much happiness, joy and peace.
blessing	Kindness, peace, protection, provision and happiness which may be given to believers by God at certain times or through believers praying to God for each other. (See: believer.)
brass	Yellow shiny metal made from a mixture of copper and other metals..
break bread	A simple meal of bread and wine shared by the followers of Jesus. This is done today to remember the way the Lord Jesus broke bread at the last meal before his death. Known as 'The Lord's Supper' or 'Communion'. The bread is broken to make us think of the body of Jesus Christ being broken or nailed to the cross; the wine is to make us think of his blood which came from his body on the cross. (See Matthew 26:26–28; Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.)
brothers	When speaking about Christians, this means other believers. See: believer.
bull	Male cow.
bury	To place a dead person's body in a grave, tomb or box in the ground.
Caesar	The man who ruled Rome at the time of Jesus and many countries. (See: Roman.)
calf (calves)	Young cow (cows) or other cattle.
calm	To have peace. To be like a sea with no waves.
camel	Large animal with a long neck. It has one or two large humps on its back that people can ride on. It can make long journeys in deserts without needing water to drink.
carpenter	Man who makes things out of wood.
cattle	Animals such as bulls, bullocks, oxen, cows, and their calves.
chaff	The useless outside covering from grain seeds such as wheat.
chain	A strong rope made of metal rings linked together.
Christ	Messiah or God's chosen ruler of his kingdom. It also means Saviour or person sent to save people from God's punishment for their bad, selfish ways. Christians believe that Jesus is the Christ. He is the One who can put people right with God and set them free from their wrong, selfish ways. He proved this by dying on a cross in our place and coming back to life again. He will come again soon to rule over God's kingdom. (See: Jesus)
Christian	Person who follows Jesus Christ and his teaching, and believes he is the Son of God and saviour of the world. (See: Saviour; salvation.)
church	A group of people who follow and believe in Jesus Christ. (NOT a church building.)
circumcise	Cut off loose skin from the tip of the sex part of a boy or man. God told Abraham to do this to all the males in his family and their children. It was very important for Jews to obey this law and to have this special mark to show they belonged to God.
clay	Thick mud which is dug from the ground to make bricks, pots and pans when dried.
clever	Knowing a lot of things. Full of knowledge and well-educated. See: wisdom.
cock	Male chicken which calls out and makes a loud noise early in the day. Cockerel. Rooster.
commit	To give, say or do something which you cannot change or take back.
communion	See: break bread, Lord's Supper.
conceive	When a baby begins life inside its mother.
cornerstone	A large stone at the corner of a building (or wall or gateway) which makes it strong

and keeps everything in place. This was a name given to Jesus.

correct	Right and true. To put someone or something right. To tell someone they are not right and have done wrong (and sometimes to punish them for their wrong ways).
courage	To be strong and not afraid when things are difficult.
court	Place where people go to be judged. See Judge (1).
courtyard	The place in front of a court building or other important house. Often the ground is covered with flat stones.
covenant	Agreement between people which commits them to do something for all time. In the Bible, this is usually between God and his people. (See: agreement, commit.)
create	Make or build something from nothing. God created the world from nothing.
creation	The world that God made (created) and everything in it, on it, under it, and above it.
creatures	The living beings that God made: animals, fishes, birds, snakes, insects and people.
cross	Two pieces of wood fixed together, one across the other. The Romans punished people by nailing them to a cross to die. Jesus was killed this way. That is why the cross is now the sign used by the Christian church. (See: crucify.)
crown	A head band in the shape of a circle worn by a king or given to someone as a reward.
crucifixion	The method used by the Romans to put bad people to death. The Jewish leaders asked the Romans to use this method to kill Jesus. See: cross; crucify.
crucify	To nail or tie someone to a cross made of wood and hang them up to die. This was the terrible method of punishment the Romans used at the time of Jesus. Jesus died this way. He did nothing wrong. He died in the place of all people who have done wrong. Because we all have done wrong in our lives, Christians believe that Jesus died in our place. Through his death and coming back to life again, we have the chance to start a new life, free from doing wrong, if we believe in him. (See: resurrection.)
curse	(1) To use bad words. Say something bad to a person. (2) The unhappiness that comes to a person because of the bad words.
curtain	See veil.
David	A prophet of God and a great king of Israel who lived many years before Jesus. (See: Son of David.)
debt	Money or things that you owe to someone, which you must pay back.
desert	Part of the country which is very dry. Only a few people live there.
despise	Think badly of someone or something. Hate.
destroy	Kill, ruin, spoil.
devil	A bad spirit. The chief bad spirit is called the devil or Satan. He tries to make us disobey God. See: Adam; disobey.
Diana	The Greek goddess of people living at Ephesus at the time of Jesus. A silver idol.
disciple	Person who believes in Jesus and follows his teaching. A follower in the ways of Jesus. Jesus had 12 special disciples. He taught them and showed them God's truth.
disobey	Not do what we should do. See: obey.
dogs	Animals which are sometimes kept as family pets. Most dogs at the time of Jesus were treated badly like outcasts (Matthew 15:26). They were dirty and stole food.
donkey	Animal which looks like a small horse with big ears. It does not go very fast usually. Normally used for carrying heavy loads over rough ground.

dough	Flour and water mixed together ready to make bread. Usually yeast is added to the mixture to make it swell and lift up. See: yeast; unleavened bread.
dove	Large white bird. A sign of peace. Sometimes a sign of God's Holy Spirit and his love.
drunk	Bad behaviour caused by drinking too much strong drink such as beer or wine.
eagle	Very large, strong bird which flies up high and can see a very long way.
earthquake	Big shaking and breaking of the ground and buildings due to the earth moving up and down.
elements	The tiny bits that makes up the world and everything in it. Each element on its own is too small to see by eye but together they make big strong things. (See 2 Peter 3:10.)
Elijah	Prophet of God who lived many years before Jesus.
evangelist	Person who tells people the Good News of Jesus.
Eve	See Adam.
everlasting life	Christians believe our spirits live for ever with God (after our bodies die) if we first believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. See: heaven, resurrection
evil	Wrong, selfish thoughts, words or actions (behaviour). Bad things which God does not want us to think, say or do. Jesus can set us free from the evil in us and around us, if we believe in him.
evil one	Satan or the chief devil, who wants us to do wrong and disobey God.
fail	Not able to do something good. Not good enough. Doing what is wrong instead of what is right. To break God's Law. To disobey God.
faith	Belief and trust in God and in Jesus his Son.
fan	To blow away the chaff or covering skin from grain seeds of wheat and barley.
fanner	Flat piece of wood or cloth for fanning.
fasting	Going without food for a time. Sometimes people fast to spend more time talking to God.
fault	Something wrong. Error.
feast	Time of great joy when people meet together to give thanks to God and share food and drink.
fever	Bad sickness which makes people hot and weak.
figs	Fruit from a tree which grows in Israel and other warm countries.
fits	Sickness which makes people fall about and shake. An illness called epilepsy.
Flood	The time before Abraham when God flooded everything with water from the deep parts of the world, called 'The Great Flood'. God did this because he was unhappy with the bad people in the world. He destroyed everyone except Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives. See: Noah; selfish; sin. See: 2 Peter 2:5.
follower	Believer in Jesus who follows his ways and teachings. See: disciple.
forbid	To tell someone not to do something.
foundation	The first part of a building put into the ground to make the building strong.
fox	Small animal that lives in a hole in the ground which is sly, cunning and tricky.
frankincense	Stuff which makes a sweet smell when it burns.
Galilee	The land of Galilee was part of Israel, north of Jerusalem, round the Lake or Sea of Galilee (also known as the Sea of Tiberius).
ghost	A dead person which people think they sometimes see alive.

Glory	(1) Great praise and honour. (2) The beautiful light around God.
goat	Animal which gives milk and meat, similar to a sheep but with short hair.
gown	Long dress or robe worn by people.
grain	Seeds of plants such as corn, maize, rice, wheat, used to make flour for bread and cakes.
grapes	Fruit used to make the drink called wine.
grave	Place for a dead body in the ground or in a rock. See: tomb.
Greek	The language of Greece which was spoken in most countries at the time of Jesus.
greetings	To say or send kind words to someone you have not seen for a time.
grind	(1) Make flour from grain by rubbing between two large stones. (2) Make noises with teeth to show anger, mourning or sadness.
guard	(1) To look after a person or place. (2) A person who looks after a person or place.
harp	Instrument with many strings for making music.
harvest	Time when grain and fruit are ready to be picked. The food picked at that time.
heaven	Place of everlasting happiness where God lives and rules. Christians believe there is a place kept for them in heaven when they die.
Hebrew	(1) A Jewish person. (2) The language of Jewish people.
hell	Place of everlasting unhappiness, shut away from God. A place of punishment after death for those who have turned away from God.
helmet	Metal hat worn by soldiers to protect their heads.
Herod	Several rulers of Israel who had the same first name. One Herod lived at the time of the birth of Jesus. One lived at the time of his death. One lived at the time of Paul's work for the church. They ruled under Caesar, the chief ruler in Rome.
holy	Good, with nothing bad or selfish in it. God is the only one who is truly holy.
holy writings	Here this means all the old writings (Scriptures) by Moses and the prophets of God. Christians call these writings the Old Testament, which is part of the Bible.
Holy Spirit	God's Spirit sent by Jesus to help people and live in people. Jesus promised to send the Spirit to all who believe in him as the Son of God. The Spirit helps them to be followers of Jesus and to do good things.
honey	Very sweet food made by bees.
honour	Reward, position or respect given with praise.
hymn	Religious song, sung when followers of Jesus meet together to praise God.
idol	A false god made of wood or stone or metal for people to worship instead of the One True God.
incense	Something that gives a sweet smell when it burns, used in the temple in Jerusalem.
insect	Small creature or bug with wings and six legs.
Israel	(1) Another name for Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham; (2) The people or the land of the Jews (who are the children of Israel).
ivory	Beautiful white bone from an elephant's tusk.
jealous(y)	To hate someone because they have or get what you want. Envy with hatred.
Jerusalem	The chief city in Israel. The temple was here at the time of Jesus for the Jews to worship God. Often called the Holy City. The Romans destroyed the temple in AD

70.

Jesus	The name the angel Gabriel told Mary to give to her first-born son which was God's son. Jesus was later called Jesus the Christ (or Jesus Christ) by his followers. This is often changed to Christ Jesus. See: angel; Christ; Messiah.
Jews	God's special, chosen people, known as the people or children of Israel. Also known as Israelites and Hebrews. See: Israel.
Job	Man in the Old Testament part of the Bible. He had many troubles but was faithful to God. God made him very patient.
Jonah	A prophet of God who lived over 700 years before Jesus came to live on earth. He tried to run away from doing God's will but couldn't. He was swallowed for three days by a very large fish or whale. Then the whale coughed him up alive onto the sea shore. Afterwards he obeyed God and became a prophet to people who were not Jews. Jesus said that the story of Jonah was a sign about himself (Matthew 16:4): after three days inside the tomb he would come out alive; then his teachings would be believed all over the world by people who were not Jews.
Jordan	Main river in Israel used by John the Baptizer for baptizing his followers. (See: baptize)
Judea/Judah	Land where the Jews lived. Largest part of Israel near to Jerusalem. Judah was the chief son of Jacob (Israel).
judge	(1) Person who decides in a court of law if someone has done something wrong. (2) To say what you think about another person.
judgment	Final words given by a court of law or head person that prove something or someone is right or wrong.
juice	'Water' from fruit such as grapes, used as a drink.
kilometre	A distance, just over half a mile.
kingdom	Land ruled by a king, the head person of a country.
kingdom of heaven	Kingdom of God. Where the Spirit of Jesus rules in people's lives now, or in the time to come. A place or condition of much happiness.
knowledge	Things people know. Knowledge from God is called truth. (See: wisdom.)
lamb	Young sheep, often killed by the Jews and given as an offering to God to forgive sins. (See: sacrifice; sin.)
Lamb of God	Special name given to Jesus which shows he was sacrificed (killed) for us to have our bad, selfish ways forgiven by God.
lame	Not able to walk well.
Last Supper	The last meal Jesus had with his disciples before he died. Part of this meal is copied by his followers today and called the Lord's Supper or communion. See: break bread.
Law	God's rules given to Moses which are part of the holy writings of the Old Testament. The Law tells people about good ways and bad ways.
law	(1) Rule made by leaders which people must obey. For example: people who work must pay taxes. (2) Rule of Nature. For example: water always runs downhill.
leopard	Wild animal which looks like a large cat with black spots.
leprosy	Sickness which gives white skin and destroys fingers and toes. In the time of Jesus, people with leprosy (lepers) were made to live away from other people.
Levite	Jewish person who had special duties in serving God at the temple in Jerusalem.
Light	A special name given to Jesus because he came to speak words that show people

what is God's truth and love.

lion	Very strong wild animal, largest member of the cat family.
locusts	Large grasshopper-like insects which eat the leaves of plants.
lord	Very great man you should honour and obey. Master.
Lord	A name we use for Jesus when we follow and obey him.
Lord's Supper	A time when Christians remember the Lord's last supper with his disciples. Communion. See: break bread.
master	Man you work for and must obey.
meek	Not proud, not showing off, not making yourself more important or more clever than you really are.
mercy of God	Loving kindness and goodness of God shown to all people, especially when we are sorry for doing wrong. Being forgiven by God even when we do not deserve it.
Messiah	The great king and leader chosen by God everyone is waiting for. Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah; he was with God when the world was created; he was sent by God 2000 years ago to live on earth for 33 years; and he will come back again soon. He died to save all people from God's punishment for doing wrong, if they believe in him. God sent him to set people free from their bad, selfish ways. Christians believe he will come again to rule God's Kingdom. He will come to rule over Jews, Moslems, Christians and all peoples everywhere. See: Christ; Olives (Mount of).
mile	A short distance to walk, nearly two kilometres.
moan	Make a sad noise. Cry, mourn. See: mourn; grind (2).
Moses	Prophet of God and leader of Israel many years before Jesus. He led the Jews out of Egypt into Palestine. He passed to them the Law and holy writings from God.
mourn	To be sad when a friend or relative has died. Sometimes this is done quietly, alone. Sometimes done with much noise, with family and friends. See: ashes; moan
myrrh	Sweet-smelling spice which helps to take away pain.
nations	Peoples of different races, tribes, countries.
Nature	The life and ways of the natural world around us.
nature	The life and ways of our own selves. Behaviour.
neighbour	Person who lives near you.
New Testament	The part of the Bible written about Jesus after he lived on earth.
Noah	Good man who lived many years before Jesus. God told him to build a boat (ark) to save his family from the great flood of water which covered the world. See: Flood.
nurse	Look after a baby; give it milk.
obey	Do what we are told to do. God wants us to obey him. Satan wants us to disobey God.
offering	Before the time of Jesus: something sacrificed at the temple to obtain forgiveness from God. When Jesus came to live on earth he said God wanted people to stop temple sacrifices and to serve him by doing good things as an offering. Jesus offered himself as the last big sacrifice (on the cross), to obtain forgiveness from God for all people, for ever. See: Lamb of God; priest (1); sacrifice.
officer	An important leader in the army or government.
Old Testament	The part of the Bible written before Jesus lived on earth. The holy writings.
olives	Fruit of the tree from which you get olive oil.

Olives (Mount of) ox(en)	The hill outside Jerusalem near Bethany, which is the site of Jesus' ascension, where he will return again. See: ascension. (See: Luke 24:50; Acts 1:11,12.) Type of cattle used for pulling a plough to dig the land and used for pulling loads. Also used for meat and for animal sacrifices at the time of Jesus.
parables	Stories that Jesus told to the people or to the Jewish leaders which had hidden meanings. The stories were about simple everyday events but also showed things about heaven and the kingdom of God for those who understood.
Paradise	Garden of God, the place in heaven where followers of Jesus will go when they die.
Passover	The time each year when the Jewish people remember how God saved them from being slaves in Egypt. At the time of Jesus, they came to Jerusalem, to meet in the temple together. They also share special food at home. A feast at which the Jews use bread which has no yeast in it (called unleavened bread).
pearl	Small white bead with beautiful colours which costs a lot of money.
Pentecost	The time each year when Jews thank God for the food grown in their fields. Harvest thanksgiving. Also the time when God gave the Holy Spirit to the church (Acts 2).
perfume	Sweet-smelling oil; scent.
Pharaoh	The name for the king of Egypt in the old days at the time of Moses.
Pharisees	Group of Jews who thought they kept all of God's laws. They did not like the teaching of Jesus. They thought they did not have any wrong ways, so they were very proud.
Pilate	Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of the land of the Jews. He made sure that the Roman laws were kept by the Jews. Pilate could not find any wrong thing in Jesus but he let the crowds take Jesus away to be killed on a cross of wood. See: crucify.
potter	Person who makes pots and pans out of clay.
pray	Talk to God: to thank him, to worship him, to ask him for help for ourselves and others, or to say sorry for the bad things we think or do.
prayer	The words we say when we talk to God.
priest	(1) Before the time of Jesus: Jewish leader who made sacrifices in the temple to God for the Jews to help them get right with God. See: offering. (2) After the time of Jesus: any person who helps people to get right with God.
prison	Building or place where people are kept to punish them.
prophet	Person who speaks words from God. Many parts of God's holy writings were written by prophets long ago. They told people to give up their bad ways and to get right with God. They warned people what would happen to them in the future. They also spoke about the coming Messiah. See: Messiah.
Psalms	Part of the Old Testament. A book of poems. Many psalms were written by King David.
purple	Deep red colour mixed with blue used for making beautiful cloth.
quarrel	To argue. To say something to someone which upsets them.
rabbi	Jewish teacher of God's Law.
respect	Honour, or fear someone. Show much regard towards someone.
resurrection	The coming back to a new life of a dead body. Jesus came back to life after three days in the grave. He has a new body but it shows the marks of the wounds from when he was nailed to the cross of wood. His new body looks like the old body, but he is able to go anywhere in heaven or on earth at any time without needing food or drink. Christians believe that those who believe in Jesus will one day be given

new bodies. These new bodies will be called resurrection bodies. See: arise (3).

reward	Gift or something good given to a person after doing good work or being faithful.
Roman	Person who came from or belonged to the city or nation of Rome. In the time of Jesus the Romans ruled the country of the Jews and most other countries of the world.
Sabbath	The Jewish holy day of rest – Saturday. (From sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday.) God told Moses to tell the people not to work on the Sabbath. A day set aside to worship, honour and speak to God. Today, most Christians set aside Sundays, to remember the day that God brought Jesus back to life again.
sacrifice	(1) At the time of Jesus: a gift to God, often an animal or bird, by the Jews to have their wrong ways forgiven by him. The animal or bird was usually sacrificed (killed) at the temple in Jerusalem. (2) After Jesus came, the temple was destroyed by the Romans and animal sacrifices ended. Sacrifices then came to mean an offering of one's own self to work for God. See: offering.
Sadducees	Group of Jewish leaders who did not believe in life after death.
sail	Piece of cloth that lets the wind drive a boat along.
salvation	Freedom and forgiveness by God when we are sorry for our wrong ways and ask Jesus to forgive us. We are then 'saved' from the punishment for our wrong ways and become followers of Jesus. See: Christian.
Samaritan	Person who lived in Samaria. The Jews and the Samaritans did not like each other.
Satan	A name for the chief bad spirit. The chief devil. See: devil; evil one.
Saviour	Someone who will save people from the control of their bad ways or the bad ways of others. A special name given to Jesus because Christians believe he is the Saviour of the world. He came to save (set people free) from their bad ways and give them a new life.
scholars	People who go to school, college or university to read books and learn a lot of useful things.
scorpion	Insect that can sting and hurt you very badly.
scribe	A Jew who was very clever and knew the holy writings.
selfish	Loving yourself but not loving others. Doing what you want to do without thinking about or caring for others. Not obeying others, especially God. This is the first sin that Adam did which made him go away from God. See: Adam.
serious	Important, urgent. To think about something very much.
servant	Someone who works for another person for pay. See also: slave.
sex	To have sex with someone is to make love together. Right sex is when a man and his wife make love together. The Bible teaches that wrong sex is when a man and a woman who are married to other people make love together (adultery) or when a man and a woman make love together before they are married (fornication) or when two men try to make love to each other (homosexual sex) or when two people in the same family have sex together (incest) or when someone has sex with an animal (bestiality). This is not what God wants. Jesus said that it is wrong even to think about such things.
sheep	Useful animals with usually white hair (wool) which is used for clothes. They are also used for food. Used for sacrifices at the time of Jesus. (See lamb.)
sheep pen	Safe place to keep sheep away from thieves and wild animals.
shepherd	Person who looks after sheep. Jesus called himself the Good Shepherd.
sin	Wrong, selfish ways or bad thoughts which disobey God's Law and stop us from

having everlasting life with him.

skull	Largest bone of the head. Head of a dead person.
slave	A person who is not free. Slaves must work for their master. In Bible times, slaves were sometimes hired servants who sold themselves to pay off debts.
snake	A long animal that moves on the ground without legs.
snow	White, soft flakes which fall instead of rain when it is very cold.
Sodom and Gomorrah	Two towns in the days long before Jesus. Their men used sex in the wrong way. God destroyed them with fire and sulphur. See: sex; sulphur.
soldier	A man who fights for or protects his country.
Son of David	A special name the people called Jesus on his last visit to Jerusalem. Jesus was born into a family that came from King David. (Matthew 1:1 and Luke 3:23).
Son of Man	Name that Jesus often used for himself to show that he was both God and man. This name was used for the Messiah by Daniel, a long time before Jesus was born.
soul	That part of us which makes us different to everyone else. The part of a person that lives after we die. See also: spirit.
sparrow	Small bird.
spear	Stick with a sharp point on the end, used as a weapon by soldiers.
special	Great and important; helpful; unusual; different; particularly good; for a purpose.
spice(s)	Dried parts of plants that give a strong taste or sweet smell.
spirit	Part of a living person, which we cannot see, that decides what to do – good and bad things. It lives on after we die.
Spirit	See: Holy Spirit
sponge	Something soft which takes in and holds water.
spy	Person who finds things out secretly without anyone knowing.
steal	Take money and things from people by force or without them knowing. To rob.
stumble	(1) To trip up and nearly fall down. (2) To be unsure or confused over what to do for the best. To do what is wrong without knowing what is right. To make a mistake.
suffer(ing)	To have many troubles.
sulphur	A very bad smoke given off by volcanoes (fire-mountains) which smells bad and causes terrible choking, loss of breath, and death.
sword	Long knife used by soldiers as a weapon.
tax(es)	Money you must pay to the ruler of the country.
tax collector	Person in charge of taking tax money from people. At the time of Jesus, the Jews hated tax collectors, because the money taken was given to the Romans. Tax collectors often took too much money because they were not honest people.
temple	House built for Jews to worship God at Jerusalem. See: Jerusalem.
tent	Kind of house made of cloth or skins, that can quickly be moved from place to place.
thorns	Sharp points which grow on some bushes or trees.
throne	(1) Special seat of a king or queen. (2) God's special place in heaven.
tomb	Hole in a rock or cave to keep the body of a dead person. It is usually big enough to walk inside. This kind of grave was used for important people. The body of Jesus was placed in a tomb which belonged to Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57).

tongue	The part of our body inside the mouth that helps us to talk and taste.
tongues	Something like flames of fire given by God's Holy Spirit. This gift helped the apostles to speak about God in different languages to the crowds. (See Acts 2:3,4.)
trader	Person who buys and sells things to earn money or to change for other things. A market stall owner.
trouble	Something which makes you unhappy.
trumpet	Something you can blow which makes a very loud noise like a horn. Used to make music or used as a warning.
truth	True knowledge given by God.
understand	Listen and learn well so that the truth is known.
unleavened bread	Thin, flat bread which is cooked without yeast. Eaten at the time of the Passover.
upset	To be troubled about what is said or done. To become unhappy.
vegetables	Plants people grow to give food.
veil	The beautiful, big cloth curtain that hung in the temple in Jerusalem. It stopped people getting near to the most holy place of God. Only the temple priests were allowed to go behind the veil. The veil was cut in two from top to bottom at the time of Jesus' death (Matthew 27:51). When this happened, Christians believe that this was God's way to show all peoples can come close to God without the need to have a priest. See: priest.
vine	Plant that grows the fruit called grapes, from which wine is made.
virgin	A woman or girl who has not had sex with a man.
vision	Picture of something in the mind like a dream but which has a real purpose.
war	Much fighting between people of different tribes or countries.
warn	To tell someone about something which is wrong or which might hurt them.
weeds	Plants that are not for food but which get in the way of plants that are used for food.
widow	Woman whose husband has died.
wilderness	Dry land which is no good for growing food. Desert.
wine	Drink made from the juice of the fruit of grapes.
wineskins	Bags made from the skins of animals to hold wine.
winter	Cold time of the year.
wisdom	The actions or sayings of a wise person. Knowledge with understanding how to use it for good. A clever person who uses his knowledge with fairness, goodness and kindness, shows wisdom. See: clever.
witch-doctor	Person who says he can use spirits to get things done. Christians say this is wrong because we should pray to God, not to the spirits.
wolf (wolves)	Wild animal(s) which look like dogs and that kill sheep.
wool	The white hair of a sheep from which clothes are made.
Word, the	(1) Special name given to Jesus who was sent by God to tell us the words of God's truth. (2) The written words of God in the Bible or the spoken words of God by his prophets and apostles.
worship	To honour, or give thanks to God and Jesus. Usually done together with other believers, with prayers and singing.

- yeast** Special powder mixed with flour before cooking to make bread rise up. See: dough; unleavened bread.
- Zion** The holy city of Jerusalem. Sometimes used to mean heaven.