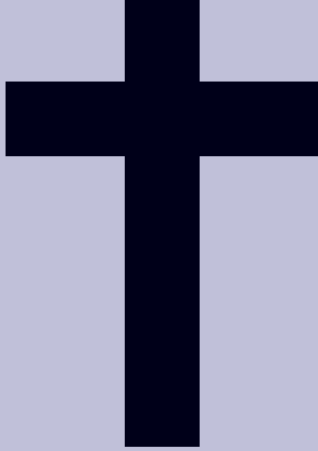


Anindilyakwa English Bible



Portions of the Holy Bible in English easy for Anindilyakwa
speakers in Australia to understand.

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Luke

The book of Luke tells us what Jesus Christ did and what he taught his disciples.

Luke tells us that God's Spirit is very powerful. And he tells us about Jesus teaching his disciples to pray. Luke also tells us about Jesus forgiving people and being kind to women and that many women helped him.

Introduction

¹ My name is Luke, and today I am writing this letter to you, Theophilus. You know that many people have already written a report about the things Jesus did while he was here with us. ² But they didn't see Jesus with their own eyes. Many other people saw Jesus from when he started until he finished the work God gave him to do. And they told those people so that they could write down what they had heard, and they told us too about everything they had seen.

³ So, Master, I have learnt the things Jesus did from when he started until he went back to his Father. I learnt very carefully so I wouldn't forget. Then I decided to write things down too so that I can send my own report to you. I want to tell you everything from the beginning to the end, ⁴ so that you don't miss anything and you can easily understand what happened. And also I want to tell you so you will know that what other people have already taught you is true.

About Gabriel speaking to Zechariah

⁵ Years ago, while Herod was king of Judea, there were many priests. They were all in groups named after the priests of long

ago. Some were from Abijah's family, and there was one man called Zechariah who belonged to that group. His wife was Elizabeth, and her father was also a priest.

⁶ Zechariah and Elizabeth were both good people. They obeyed all the laws of the Lord God, and God could see that they were good. They went on obeying God all the time. ⁷ And now they were both old. They had no children. They wanted them, but Elizabeth couldn't have any.

⁸⁻⁹ One day Zechariah was working in the temple. All the priests worked there but they took turns. First some of them worked and then others, and now the men from Abijah's family took their turn to work there. They had different kinds of work to do. Every day one of them burnt something like gum so that sweet-smelling smoke would rise from it as it burnt. He did this because long ago God had told the priests to do it for him. When they chose the man for that job, first of all they wrote all their names down on paper in any order. Then they took turns according to the list. And now it was Zechariah's turn and he burnt the gum in the building that only the priests went into and no one else.

¹⁰ While Zechariah was burning the gum he was alone inside the building. The people who had come to the temple stood outside praying to God. ¹¹ And while he was there alone, an angel of the Lord God came and appeared to him. Zechariah saw the angel standing on the right-hand side of the altar on which he was burning the gum. ¹² He got a fright and was very afraid.

¹³ The angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. You have

prayed to God and he has heard you. Later on your wife will have a son and you will call him John.
¹⁴ And you will be very happy because God has given you a son. Many other people will also be happy when he is born."

¹⁵ Then he said, "Your son will be very important. The Lord God will say, 'He is a great man.' When he grows up he mustn't drink wine or strong drink that makes people drunk. The Holy Spirit will fill him and control him. It will control him when he is born and it will stay with him all the time."

¹⁶ "He will teach people about the Lord their God. And when they hear him many of the people of Israel will stop doing wrong and do what is right. They will obey the Lord their God, just as their ancestors did long ago."

¹⁷ "Yes," the angel said to Zechariah, "your son will go ahead of the Lord and he will be very strong. God's Spirit that made Elijah strong long ago will make your son strong too. And when they hear him, fathers will love and care for their children again. And people who haven't obeyed God will change and start thinking straight. Then they will obey God in the same way as other people who think straight obey him. Many people will be waiting to see what the Lord God will do. And they will listen to him because they listened first to your son."

¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel, "How will I know this is true? I am an old man now and my wife is old too. How can this happen to us?"

¹⁹ The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I am God's helper and I stand near him all the time. He has sent me to you to tell you this good news. ²⁰ But because you haven't believed me you won't be

able to speak until your son is born. You don't believe me, but what I am telling you today will happen. Your wife really will have a son."

²¹ While Zechariah was still inside the building the people were waiting for him outside. They kept on waiting and waiting and said to themselves, "What is stopping him from coming out? He has been inside for a long time."

²² Then at last Zechariah came out, but he couldn't speak. He just moved his hands and the people said to themselves, "Maybe he has seen God in a vision."

²³ After a while the old man finished his work in the temple and he left Jerusalem and went home and stayed there.

²⁴ Five months went by and his wife Elizabeth kept away from people and hid herself in the house. Then she knew that she was pregnant, ²⁵ and she said, "The Lord God has been kind to me, because I used to be ashamed of having no children. But I am not ashamed any more."

About Gabriel speaking to Mary

²⁶ After another month the same angel called Gabriel went to Nazareth, a town in Galilee.

²⁷ God sent him to a young girl called Mary. She was promised to a man called Joseph, but they hadn't been married yet. Joseph was a descendant of King David.

²⁸ Gabriel said to Mary, "The Lord God is very pleased with you. He is with you."

²⁹ Mary was upset by his words and she said to herself, "What does it mean? Why has he told me that?"

³⁰ Gabriel said to her, "Don't be afraid, because God is pleased with you. ³¹ You will become pregnant and have a son and you will call him Jesus. ³² When he grows up he will be a great king."

And people will say, 'He is the Son of God, the one who is the greatest God.' The Lord God will make him a king and he will rule just as his ancestor King David ruled long ago. ³³ He will rule over the descendants of Jacob forever."

³⁴ Mary said, "I have never slept with a man, so how can I have a son?"

³⁵ Gabriel answered, "God's powerful Spirit will come and touch you and then you will be carrying a baby. Because of that, people will say, 'This holy child is the Son of God.'

³⁶ "Look, your relative Elizabeth is also having a baby, even though she is an old woman. She hasn't been able to have children all these years, but now she has been pregnant for six months. ³⁷ When God decides to do something he will do it."

³⁸ Mary said to him, "I have heard your message, and I am a servant of the Lord God, so I won't refuse." Then the angel left her.

About Mary visiting Elizabeth

³⁹⁻⁴⁰ Mary wanted to go straight away to visit Elizabeth. So she left Nazareth and travelled south. She went up to the hill country of Judea and kept on going up until she found the place where Zechariah lived. When she arrived at his house she went in and she and Elizabeth talked together inside the house. Mary said to Elizabeth, "Are you well? May God be with you."

⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's words, her baby moved inside her. And at the same time the Holy Spirit filled her and controlled her.

⁴² Then she spoke in a loud voice because she was so happy, and said to Mary, "God is pleased with you and he has chosen you. So now you are the most important woman of all. And God will be

pleased with the child too. ⁴³ You are the mother of my Lord, but you have come here to me today.

⁴⁴ "When I heard you, my child jumped for joy inside me. ⁴⁵ Good things will happen to you because you knew God's word was true and you trust him, because everything the Lord God has told you will surely happen."

About the song that God gave Mary

⁴⁶ Then Mary said, "I am praising the Lord God all the time.

⁴⁷ He is the one who is saving me and I am rejoicing.

⁴⁸ Even though I am so unimportant, he has looked after me.

I am only his servant.

From today everyone will say, 'The Lord God has blessed her.'

⁴⁹ They will say that about me because God is very powerful and he has done great things for me.

He is mighty and his name is holy.

⁵⁰ God has had pity on our people from long ago until today.

And he will have pity on our children and on their children too.

He will have pity on all of us who obey him.

⁵¹ But he has stretched out his strong arm

and chased away those who were proud and only thought about themselves.

⁵² He has got rid of proud kings, and made ordinary people rulers.

⁵³ God has given food to hungry people,

and sent rich people away with empty hands.

⁵⁴ Long ago God told our ancestors that he would help them,

and that he would look after us today.

He hasn't forgotten his promise,
and he has come here today to help us his people.

⁵⁵ He remembered his promise of long ago and had pity on Abraham.

And today he has pity on us too,
and he will have pity on our children and on our descendants.

God will go on doing that forever."

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months, and then she went back home to Nazareth.

About John the Baptist being born

⁵⁷ The day came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son. She was very happy.

⁵⁸ Her family, her relatives and others who lived near her, heard about her. They knew that the Lord God had been kind to her, and they too were happy.

⁵⁹ When the baby was eight days old they circumcised him. Some people there wanted to call him Zechariah, the same name as his father. ⁶⁰ But his mother didn't want them to. "No," she said. "His name is John."

⁶¹ But they said, "You haven't any relatives called John." ⁶² They looked at Zechariah, making signs with their hands, wanting him to say the name.

⁶³ Zechariah made signs to ask for writing things. They gave them to him and he wrote, "His name is John."

"Oh!" they all said. ⁶⁴ Straight away, as Zechariah was writing the name, he was able to speak and he praised God.

⁶⁵ The people there were very frightened, and others who lived near Zechariah's place were

afraid too. And they told other people all around there the news about what had happened until everyone in the hill country of Judea had heard the story. ⁶⁶ They didn't forget, they kept thinking about it. They said, "When this child grows up, what sort of person will he be?" They knew that the Lord God was really looking after the child.

About the message that God gave to Zechariah

⁶⁷ God's Holy Spirit filled and controlled John's father Zechariah, and he spoke God's message.

⁶⁸ "Let us praise the Lord, the God of the people of Israel,
because he has come among us now.

He has helped us his people and set us free.

⁶⁹ He has given us a powerful King,
a descendant of David,
and he will save us.

⁷⁰ Long, long ago God gave his people a promise,
and his prophets kept it for us.

⁷¹ God told our ancestors that he would save us,
and set us free from those who hate us and keep making trouble for us.

⁷² God told our ancestors that he would have pity on them and also on us today.

And he told them that he would always remember his covenant.

⁷³ God spoke strong words to our ancestor Abraham.

⁷⁴ He told him that he would set us free from those who hate us,

so that we wouldn't be afraid, but work for God,

⁷⁵ and so that we would be his people,

walking straight in his way all the time."

⁷⁶ Then Zechariah spoke to the little child John.

“People will call you God’s prophet,

because you will tell them God’s message.

He is the greatest God.

And when you grow up you will go ahead,

so that you can make the Lord’s road ready for him.

⁷⁷ You will tell people that God will save them

because he will forgive their sins.

⁷⁸⁻⁷⁹ Today we are in the dark and afraid of death.

But our God is very kind and he has pity on us.

Just like when the dawn comes, God will light up the world.

And he will send here the one he promised to send, the one who will be the light of the world for us and who will save us.

At that time it will be just like daylight.

When we walk in the daytime we can see the road to walk on.

And the Lord will teach us to go on God’s good road.

He will teach us so that we can be happy and live in peace.”

⁸⁰ The child John grew up and learnt about God and obeyed him. He lived in the desert. And then at last he came out and showed himself to the people of Israel. And his people saw him.

2

About Jesus being born

¹ At that time in another place called Rome there was an important ruler called Augustus. He was very powerful and he controlled many different countries and ruled over many different

people. Augustus decided to count the names of the people in all those countries. ² So the rulers who were under him counted them all. One of them was called Quirinius and he governed in Syria. ³ All the people went to their own towns to write down their names.

⁴⁻⁵ So Joseph left the town of Nazareth in Galilee and went to his own town with his promised wife Mary, who was pregnant. They went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. It was Joseph’s town because his ancestors belonged there and long ago King David belonged to the same line as Joseph. So Joseph and Mary went from Galilee to Bethlehem to write their names down there.

⁶⁻⁷ They went a long way, and when they arrived in Bethlehem Mary was ready to have her baby, but there was nowhere for them to stay in any of the houses. So they stayed in a little building where they kept the animals. And Mary gave birth to her first son, and she wrapped him in some cloth and put him in the box used for the animals’ food.

About the angel of the Lord God telling good news to the shepherds

⁸ At that time, in a place near Bethlehem, there were some men looking after their sheep. They stayed with them, taking care of them during the night. ⁹ And the Lord God sent an angel down from heaven, who appeared to them. God made the whole place shine with light, and the men were very frightened.

¹⁰ The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, but listen to this news I am telling you, because I have come here to bring you good news. When you hear it and when others hear it too, you will all be full of joy.

¹¹ “This very day in David’s town a little boy has been born. Long ago God told your ancestors that he would send you his Messiah, and now the Messiah has been born. He is the Lord and he will save you all.

¹² “You will find the baby wrapped in cloth and lying in a box, in a little building where they keep the animals. When you find him, you will know that this message is true.”

¹³ Then the men saw many angels. They suddenly appeared in the sky and they all sang together, praising God ¹⁴ and saying:

“Let us praise God who lives in heaven.

He is pleased with people who obey him.

So may they go in peace.”

¹⁵ Then they all went away, going back to heaven.

The men said to each other, “Let us go to Bethlehem to see the baby the Lord God has told us about.”

¹⁶ And they hurried off.

They went to Bethlehem and found Joseph and Mary, and saw the baby lying in the box in the place where they kept the animals. ¹⁷ They told them what the angel had said about the baby. ¹⁸ Then they told other people as well, and when they heard it they were all very surprised. ¹⁹ And Mary remembered all these things and kept thinking about them.

²⁰ Then the men went back to their sheep, praising God for the wonderful things they had seen and heard. They had found everything just as the angels had told them.

About Jesus’ name

²¹ After eight days they circumcised the baby and called him Jesus. It was the same name the angel had called him before his mother became pregnant.

About the baby Jesus being taken to the temple

²²⁻²⁴ Joseph and Mary and the baby Jesus stayed in Bethlehem for one month. Then Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem, taking the baby with them. When they arrived, they went to the temple to give their baby to the Lord God, following the law that Moses had given to the people of Israel. First God told Moses and then Moses told the people God’s laws. The Lord God said,

“All your firstborn baby boys belong to me.”

He also said,

“When a woman gives birth to a child she must take two doves, or if she hasn’t any doves, then she must take two pigeons, and go to the temple and give them to the priest. She must say to him, ‘These two birds are for God.’ Then the priest will kill them.”

So Mary did that in the temple so she would be cleared from the law.

²⁵ In Jerusalem there lived an old man called Simeon. He was a very good man who always listened to God’s word. He had been waiting for the Messiah, because the Messiah would set Israel free. God’s Holy Spirit was with the old man, ²⁶ and had said to him before, “You won’t die until you have seen the one the Lord God will send here called the Messiah.”

²⁷ Now the Spirit said to him, “Go to the temple now.” And so the old man went. While he was in the temple, Joseph and Mary arrived and Simeon met them there. ²⁸ The old man took the baby and held him in front of him. And he praised God and said,

²⁹ “Lord, I have done your work now, and it is finished.

So let me go and rest in peace, because your word is true.

³⁰ Let me go because now I have seen the one you sent to save your people.

I have seen him with my own eyes.

³¹ You sent him so that all people everywhere could see him.

³² He will be like a light. He will show the people who don't belong to Israel what God wants them to do.

When they see that light then they will praise your people of Israel."

³³ Mary and Joseph were very surprised at the words the old man said about the child. ³⁴ Then Simeon prayed to God and asked him to bless Joseph and Mary and Jesus.

And Simeon said to Jesus' mother, "God has chosen this baby and sent him into the world so that some of us Israelite people will die but some will be saved. When he grows up he will teach people what God is like. But many people will reject him. ³⁵ At that time those people who reject God will no longer hide what is in their minds. But you will be very sad, just as though a sharp knife was pushed through your chest."

³⁶⁻³⁷ An old woman called Anna lived in the temple. She was always telling people God's word. Her father was Phanuel from the family of Asher. She was now 84 years old. A long time ago she and her husband had lived together for seven years, but her husband had died, so she had been a widow for a long time.

The old woman never left the temple. Day and night she praised the Lord God. Sometimes she ate food but sometimes she went without food and just prayed.

³⁸ While Joseph and Mary and Jesus were still in the temple, the old woman came to where they

were. When she saw the baby, she praised God for the birth of the child. From then on she talked about him. She kept on speaking about him to all the people who were waiting until God set the people of Jerusalem free.

About Joseph, Mary and Jesus going back to Nazareth

³⁹ Joseph and Mary finished everything they had to do in the temple to obey God's law. Then they returned to their town of Nazareth in Galilee. ⁴⁰ The child Jesus grew and became strong and wise and God was pleased with him and stayed with him all the time.

About the boy Jesus going to the temple

⁴¹ Many Israelite people used to go to Jerusalem every year at the end of the cold season. They went for the Passover ceremony, and Joseph and Mary used to go too.

⁴² Jesus was twelve years old now, and Joseph and Mary took him with them to Jerusalem for the ceremony. They went with many other Jewish people.

⁴³ When the Passover ceremony had finished, Joseph and Mary left Jerusalem to go home to Nazareth. Many of their relatives went with them, but Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents didn't know that he had stayed there. ⁴⁴ They thought he was with some of the other people.

They kept on going through the day and then they looked for him, but Jesus wasn't with the others. They asked everyone if they had seen Jesus, ⁴⁵ but they said they hadn't seen him.

Then Joseph and Mary searched and searched, but they didn't find him. They slept until morning, and then they returned to Jerusalem. When they arrived

there it became dark and they slept until morning. Then they began searching in Jerusalem, on the roads and in the buildings. ⁴⁶ And then they went back to the temple, and they found him there.

Jesus was sitting with the teachers of Moses' law. They were talking together, and Jesus was listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ They also asked Jesus questions. When they heard his answers all the people there were very surprised because he was so wise and he gave them such good answers.

⁴⁸ Joseph and Mary were very surprised when they saw Jesus sitting with the teachers. His mother said to him, "Son, why didn't you come with us? Your father and I have been very worried about you. We have been searching everywhere for you."

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "Why did you go looking everywhere else? You should have come here first. Didn't you know I would be busy here in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they didn't understand what Jesus was saying.

⁵¹ So Jesus got up and left Jerusalem and went home to Nazareth with Joseph and Mary and he always obeyed them.

Mary kept on thinking about all the things she had seen and heard and kept them in her mind.

⁵² Jesus grew up and he became wise. God was pleased with him and people were pleased with him too.

3

About John the Baptist preaching to people

¹ At that time there was another important ruler in Rome called Tiberius, who ruled over very

many people in different countries. He had been ruling for fifteen years. A man called Pontius Pilate ruled over all the people of Judea. And another man called Herod ruled over all the people of Galilee. Herod's younger brother Philip ruled over two countries called Iturea and Trachonitis that were near Galilee. And there was another man called Lysanias who ruled in another country called Abilene. ² At the same time as they were ruling in those places, there were two high priests in Jerusalem called Annas and Caiaphas.

At that time Zechariah's son John, the one I have told you about, was living in the desert. He stayed there all the time until God spoke to him and said, "Tell your people to obey me." ³ When John heard that, he went down to the Jordan River and went through all the country near the river teaching God's message to the people.

He said to them, "Stop doing the wrong things you have been doing and obey God. Then I will baptize you so that people will know that you are obeying God now. And God will forgive your sins."

⁴ Long ago there was a man called Isaiah who was a prophet. He said,

"Someone is calling out in the desert, and these are his words:

'Get the road ready for the Lord.

Make a straight path for him to walk on.

⁵ Fill up the valleys

and make the hills flat.

Make the crooked roads straight,

and make the rough paths smooth.

⁶ Everyone will know that God will save his people!'

Isaiah spoke those words long ago and they were written in God's

book. And John is the person those words were telling us about.

⁷ Crowds of people went to John because they wanted him to baptize them in the river. But he said to them, "You wicked people! You are like snakes! You won't escape when God punishes you!"

⁸ "If you really want God to save you, then you should get yourselves straight today. Do good, just like a good tree that has good fruit, so that people will know you have stopped doing wrong. And don't think, 'We are all right because Abraham is our ancestor,' but listen to what I am telling you today. If God wants to, he can change these stones lying here on the ground. From these very stones he can make children for Abraham.

⁹ "Listen! God will decide about you all, whether you people are good or bad. God is working like a man who chops trees down with an axe. He chops down all the trees that haven't had any good fruit. He cuts them underneath at the roots and throws them into the fire and burns them. God will work like that, and he is ready to work now."

¹⁰ They all said, "Help! Then what can we do?"

¹¹ John answered, "I will tell you. If one of you has two coats to wear, you must give one of them to someone who hasn't any. And if one of you has food to eat, you must share it with someone who has no food."

¹² There were some people who worked for the Roman rulers taking tax money from other people to give to the Romans. They also came to John to be baptized and they said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³ John said, "When you take tax money, take what you have been told, and no more."

¹⁴ Some soldiers asked, "What about us? What should we do?"

John said to them, "You make people afraid, beating them so they will give you their money. And you blame good people, when they have done nothing wrong. That is bad, so stop doing it. And even if you only get a little bit of money for your work, don't grumble about it."

¹⁵ At that time many people were wondering about John. They thought, "Maybe John is the Messiah, the one God promised to send to us. Maybe he is, maybe not."

¹⁶ So John said to them, "I am baptizing you today with water and that is all. But someone is coming later who is much greater than I am. When I think of him, I know that I am not very important. I am not good enough to work for him or even to untie his shoes. And when he comes here he will baptize you with God's Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷ He is ready to decide whether you are good or bad, and to separate you, just like someone who separates the wheat seeds from the bits of grass. He gathers the wheat in his storehouse and he burns the grass in the fire. It will be like that when the man I have been telling you about comes here. But his fire will never go out. It will burn forever."

¹⁸ John spoke many different things to all the people who came to him. He told them the good news about God, and he persuaded them to stop doing wrong and obey God.

¹⁹ He also spoke strong words to Herod. Herod was the ruler of Galilee I have told you about. John blamed him because he had married his younger brother's wife, Herodias, before her husband Philip had died. He had done many other evil things. Because

of that John kept saying to Herod, "You are very wicked." ²⁰ Then Herod did something even worse. He told his soldiers to put John in prison. And they took him and locked him up.

About John baptizing Jesus

²¹ Before John was put in prison, Jesus went to him, and John baptized Jesus after everyone else. After John had baptized him, Jesus prayed. While he was praying God opened the heavens ²² and sent his Holy Spirit to him. The Holy Spirit came down from above like a dove and rested on him.

Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, "You are my Son, the one I love, and I am pleased with you."

About the ancestors of Jesus

²³ When Jesus began his work he was thirty years old. When people talked about him, they said, "Jesus' father is Joseph." But Joseph only brought him up. Joseph's father was called Heli.

²⁴ And Heli's father was Matthat. And Matthat's father was Levi. And Levi's father was Melchi. And Melchi's father was Jannai. And Jannai's father was Joseph.

²⁵ And Joseph's father was Mattathias.

And Mattathias' father was Amos. And Amos' father was Nahum. And Nahum's father was Esli. And Esli's father was Naggai.

²⁶ And Naggai's father was Maath. And Maath's father was Mattathias.

And Mattathias' father was Semein.

And Semein's father was Josech. And Josech's father was Joda.

²⁷ And Joda's father was Joanan. And Joanan's father was Rhesa. And Rhesa's father was Zerubbabel.

And Zerubbabel's father was Shealtiel.

And Shealtiel's father was Neri.

²⁸ And Neri's father was Melchi.

And Melchi's father was Addi.

And Addi's father was Cosam.

And Cosam's father was Elmadam.

And Elmadam's father was Er.

²⁹ And Er's father was Joshua.

And Joshua's father was Eliezer.

And Eliezer's father was Jorim.

And Jorim's father was Matthat.

And Matthat's father was Levi.

³⁰ And Levi's father was Simeon.

And Simeon's father was Judah.

And Judah's father was Joseph.

And Joseph's father was Jonam.

And Jonam's father was Eliakim.

³¹ And Eliakim's father was Melea.

And Melea's father was Menna.

And Menna's father was Mattatha.

And Mattatha's father was Nathan.

And Nathan's father was David.

³² And David's father was Jesse.

And Jesse's father was Obed.

And Obed's father was Boaz.

And Boaz' father was Sala.

And Sala's father was Nahshon.

³³ And Nahshon's father was Amminadab.

And Amminadab's father was Admin.

And Admin's father was Arni.

And Arni's father was Hezron.

And Hezron's father was Perez.

And Perez's father was Judah.

³⁴ And Judah's father was Jacob.

And Jacob's father was Isaac.

And Isaac's father was Abraham.

And Abraham's father was Terah.

And Terah's father was Nahor.

³⁵ And Nahor's father was Serug.

And Serug's father was Reu.

And Reu's father was Peleg.

And Peleg's father was Eber.

And Eber's father was Shelah.

³⁶ And Shelah's father was Cainan.

And Cainan's father was Arphaxad.

And Arphaxad's father was Shem.

And Shem's father was Noah.

And Noah's father was Lamech.

³⁷ And Lamech's father was Methuselah.

And Methuselah's father was Enoch.

And Enoch's father was Jared.

And Jared's father was Mahalaleel.

And Mahalaleel's father was Kenan.

³⁸ And Kenan's father was Enosh.

And Enosh's father was Seth.

And Seth's father was Adam.

And Adam's father was God.

4

About Satan tempting Jesus

¹ Jesus left the Jordan River filled with the Holy Spirit. As he went along, the Spirit controlled him and led him into the desert.

² And Satan came to Jesus and tempted him. For forty days he kept on and on tempting Jesus while he was there by himself. After that Jesus was very hungry because he hadn't eaten any food in the desert.

³ Then Satan said to him, "You are God's Son, aren't you? Then change this stone into damper."

⁴ Jesus answered, "In God's book these words are written, 'Just food won't keep people alive.'"

⁵ Then Satan took Jesus up on to a hill and quickly showed him all the countries where people were living. He showed Jesus everything from the east right over to the west. ⁶ Then he said, "I will give you all the wonderful things in all those countries, and I will make you rule over them all. Everything you can see belongs to me. I am the ruler, so if I want to I can give it to you or to anyone else. ⁷ If you worship me, then everything will be yours."

⁸ Jesus answered, "Long ago Moses told God's people, 'Worship the Lord your God, and work for him and no one else.'"

⁹ Then Satan took Jesus to the temple. The temple area was surrounded by a stone wall, and Satan took Jesus up on to the top. Then they looked down to

the ground, and Satan said to Jesus, "You are God's Son, aren't you? Throw yourself down to the ground. ¹⁰ In God's book it is written,

'God will tell his angels and they will look after you. ¹¹ They will lift you up with their hands so that the stones don't hurt your feet.'"

¹² Jesus answered Satan, "In God's book it is also written, Do not try God out to get him to do what you want him to do."

¹³ Satan kept on tempting Jesus, but at last he stopped, and left him for a while until another time.

About Jesus starting his work

¹⁴ Then Jesus left the desert and went back to the country of Galilee. He went on until he arrived in Galilee. And the Holy Spirit made him strong and controlled him. And all the people of Galilee talked about him. ¹⁵ When he went from place to place Jesus taught the people God's word. He taught in the buildings called synagogues. And all the people praised him.

About the people of Nazareth rejecting Jesus

¹⁶ Then Jesus went to Nazareth, the town where he had grown up. And on the day called the Sabbath he went to the synagogue as he always did. And while everyone was sitting down, Jesus stood up and went to the front to read God's word to the people. ¹⁷ A servant gave Jesus the paper scroll with Isaiah's words written in it. Isaiah was a prophet who lived long ago. Jesus unrolled the paper and looked for the place he wanted. When he found it, he read these words to the people:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord God is with me today.

The Spirit is controlling me,
because God has chosen
me.
He has chosen me to bring his
good news to the poor.

He has sent me to tell people who
are in prison that he will
bring them out,
and to tell the blind that they
will see again.

And he has sent me to set people
free when other people
make trouble for them,

¹⁹ and to tell people that the
Lord God will save his people
today."

²⁰ Jesus finished reading and
rolled up the paper scroll and
gave it back to the servant who
had given it to him and sat down
to speak. All the people were
looking at him. ²¹ Jesus said to
them, "Today the words I have
been reading from God's book
have all come true as you have
been listening to them."

²² All the people who heard Jesus
began talking about him. "He
speaks very well," they said, "but
isn't he Joseph's son?"

²³ Jesus said, "I know what you
will say to me. You will use these
old words, 'You know how to heal
people, so heal yourself.' And
you will also tell me to do the
same things here in my own town
as I did in Capernaum, because
you have heard what I have been
doing there. ²⁴ But I tell you
this, when a prophet speaks God's
words to his own people in his
own town, they will not listen to
him.

²⁵ "Listen to me and think about
Elijah. He lived long ago in Israel.
At that time there was no rain
in his country. For three and
a half years there was no rain.
So there was no food and the
people there were starving. Many
widows lived there. ²⁶ But God
didn't send Elijah to any of the

widows in his own country. He
sent him to another country called
Sidon. So he went there and
helped a widow in a town called
Zarephath.

²⁷ "Now think about another
prophet, Elisha, who also lived
long ago in Israel. At that time
many people in his country had
bad sores all over them. Elisha
didn't heal them, but he healed
Naaman, who was from a different
country called Syria. So just
think about those two prophets."

²⁸ When the people in the syna-
gogue heard this, they were filled
with anger. ²⁹ They got up and
grabbed Jesus and put him out
of the synagogue. They took him
away from the houses to throw
him down from the top of the hill.
³⁰ But Jesus walked through the
middle of the crowd and left them.

About a man with an evil spirit

³¹ Then Jesus went to a town
called Capernaum, in Galilee. On
the Sabbath day he went to the
synagogue and taught the people
God's word. ³² When they heard
Jesus they were all very surprised,
because he spoke strong words,
like the words of rulers.

³³ In Capernaum there lived a
man who had an evil spirit. He
also went to the synagogue, and
he screamed out in a loud voice,
³⁴ "Hey! Leave me alone! Why
have you come to us, Jesus of
Nazareth? You have come here to
kill us, haven't you! I know who
you are. You are the one God has
sent here!"

³⁵ "Be quiet!" said Jesus. "Come
out of the man at once!" And the
spirit threw the man down among
the people without hurting him
and came out of him.

³⁶ All the people in the syna-
gogue were very surprised.
"What kind of words are these?"
they said to each other. "This man
speaks strong words, doesn't he?"

He rules over the spirits like a great ruler, and they come out.”

³⁷ The people went home and talked to each other about Jesus and told other people about him, until many people in the different places near Capernaum had heard what Jesus had done and talked about him too.

About Jesus healing many people

³⁸ Jesus also left the synagogue and went to the home of a man called Simon. He went into the house and found that a woman there was very sick. She was Simon's mother-in-law. She was lying down and she was hot all over. Her family told Jesus about her sickness so that he could heal her. ³⁹ Jesus went over to where she was lying and stood near her and spoke some strong words. “Leave her at once!” he said to the sickness. And she became cool straight away and she got up and cooked food for them.

⁴⁰ Then the sun went down, and many people came to Jesus bringing their sick friends with them. They had all kinds of sicknesses. Jesus stretched out his hand and touched them one by one and healed them all.

⁴¹ Many of the people had evil spirits, but the spirits came out of them and left them, screaming, “You are the Son of God!” And Jesus spoke strong words to the evil spirits and made them be quiet, because they knew that he was the Messiah, the one God had sent into the world.

About Jesus speaking in the synagogue

⁴² At daybreak the next day Jesus left Capernaum and went away by himself. But the people started looking for him, and when they found him they wanted him to stay with them.

⁴³ But Jesus said to them, “I must go to other places to tell people the good news there too. I must tell them about God ruling over people, because God has sent me here to tell people everywhere about him ruling.”

⁴⁴ So Jesus left them and went around from place to place. He went to the synagogues and preached God's word to the people.

5

About Jesus choosing his first disciples

¹ One day Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret. It is a big freshwater lake with two names, Gennesaret and Galilee. The people came there to Jesus to hear God's word, and there were so many people that they were pushing each other.

² Jesus saw two boats pulled up on the beach. The owners of the boats had left them and were washing their nets. ³ Jesus got into the boat that belonged to Simon and said to him, “Push the boat a little way out into the deep.” So Simon pushed the boat and it floated a little way out from the shore.

Then Jesus sat down in the boat and spoke to all the people on the shore and taught them God's word. ⁴ When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Push the boat out further into the deep water so that you and your men can let down the nets and catch some fish.”

⁵ Simon answered, “Master, we tried all night but we didn't catch any. But if you want me to, I will let down the nets.” ⁶ So they let down the nets.

There were so many fish coming into the nets that they were beginning to break. ⁷ Then they

made signs with their hands to the men in the other boat, because the men in the two boats were partners. Simon and the men with him wanted them to help pull in the fish they had caught. So the others rowed over to them and helped them pull in the nets.

Both boats were so full of fish that they nearly tipped over and sank. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw all the fish and that the boats were about to sink, he knelt down in front of Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man," ⁹ because he was very surprised to see so many fish.

The other men in his boat were also surprised at catching so many. ¹⁰ James and John who were in the other boat were very surprised too. They were the sons of Zebedee and they were Simon Peter's partners.

Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid. From now on you will be bringing people to me, just as you are bringing fish to the shore today." ¹¹ Then they pulled the two boats up on the beach and left them there with their other things and followed Jesus.

About Jesus healing a man covered with sores

¹² One day Jesus was in a town where there was a man who was covered with bad sores. He was very sick. When he saw Jesus he threw himself down on the ground because he really wanted Jesus to heal him. He said to Jesus, "Please! Please! Good Lord, if you want to, you know you can make my skin clean!"

¹³ Jesus stretched out his hand and touched the man and said, "I do want to heal you, so your skin will be clean." While Jesus was still speaking, straight away the sores were gone.

¹⁴ Jesus said to him, "Don't tell anyone that you are better, but go

straight to the priest. He will look at you and say, 'You are well now.' Then later you must give him two birds to kill for you, as Moses said long ago. Then everyone will know that you are healed."

¹⁵ But he spread the news about what Jesus had done. The news spread more and more from place to place. Then crowds of people came to Jesus. They came to listen to Jesus and for him to heal all the sick people. ¹⁶ But sometimes Jesus went away by himself to lonely places and prayed to God.

About Jesus healing a cripple

¹⁷ One day Jesus was with a man in his house. While he was there some people came to him, and Jesus taught them about God. Some Jews called Pharisees came to him too and some teachers of Moses' law. They came from different places in Judea and Galilee. Others came from Jerusalem. They sat in the house where Jesus was. And the Spirit of the Lord God was with Jesus making him strong, and he healed sick people there in the house.

¹⁸ Some men came to the house bringing a cripple. They had lifted him on to a bed and carried him, because he couldn't walk and he couldn't move. His whole body was weak all the time. The men looked for a way to get into the house and put the man near Jesus.

They kept trying to find a way, ¹⁹ but they couldn't find a space to get inside because there were so many people there. So they climbed up outside on to the roof carrying the man with them. Then they made a hole up on the roof and let the man down through the hole with some rope and the bed landed on the floor in the middle of all the people. Then the cripple and Jesus were facing one another.

²⁰ The men who took the cripple to Jesus trusted Jesus and knew that he could heal him. Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the cripple, "All your sins are forgiven and God won't think about them any more."

²¹ The teachers of Moses' law and the Pharisees said to themselves, "Who is this man? He wants to be like God, does he? God is the only one who can forgive sins, no one else can do that."

²² Jesus knew what they were thinking and he said to them, "Why do you think such things?"
²³ Maybe you can say to this man, 'Your sins are forgiven.' Of course you can't say that! Or maybe you can say to him, 'Get up and move your feet.' No! You can't say either of those things to this man by yourself. ²⁴ But as for me, the one who was born in this place, God has told me that I can forgive your sins. So I will show you today that God's word to me is true."

Then Jesus spoke to the crippled man and said, "Get up! Pick up your bed and go home!"

²⁵ The man got up straight away and picked up his bed. All the people there saw him stand up. And he went out of the house carrying his bed, and went home praising God.

²⁶ Everyone was very surprised and afraid and they praised God. Then they said to each other, "We have seen wonderful things with our own eyes today!"

About Jesus choosing Levi

²⁷ After Jesus had healed the crippled man and forgiven his sins, he came out of the house. As he went along, Jesus found a man called Levi. This man had two names, Levi and Matthew. He worked for the Roman rulers, so he had a small building beside the road for his work. He collected

tax money from people as they went along the road and passed the building. He took their money to give to the Romans.

As Jesus went along the road, he saw Levi sitting inside his office, and he said to him, "Come and follow me." ²⁸ Levi stood up and came outside and followed Jesus. He left the work he had been doing so that he could follow Jesus all the time, and they went away together.

²⁹ Later Levi, Jesus' new disciple, cooked a lot of food, and when it was ready Jesus and his other disciples and a lot of other people came to his house. A lot of those people did the same kind of work as Levi had done before he came to Jesus, but others did different work. And they all ate together.

³⁰ But some Pharisees and teachers of Moses' law knew that Jesus had gone to Levi's house. And they complained and said to Jesus' disciples, "Why are you eating together in that man's house? You eat with people who collect tax money. You eat with sinners!"

³¹ When Jesus heard them he said to them, "Sick people look for someone to heal them, but strong people don't look for someone like that. ³² I have come here to teach bad people so that they won't do wrong things but they will obey God. If people say, 'I am all right and I never do anything wrong,' then I can't teach them, I can only teach bad people."

About people asking Jesus about going without food

³³ Some people said to Jesus, "You know what John's disciples are always doing. They often go without food so that they can pray to God, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same. But your

disciples don't do that, they eat whenever they want to."

³⁴ Jesus answered, "Listen to this. When a man gets married, lots of people gather together with him and his wife to have a party. You won't say to them, 'Don't eat this food, you should go hungry.' Of course you won't, because those people want to have a party while their friend is still with them. ³⁵ Afterwards maybe some bad men might take that man away. Then his friends would be very sad and want to stop eating and go hungry." When Jesus said this, he was thinking of himself and his disciples.

³⁶ Then Jesus told them this little story. He said, "We don't tear a good piece of material in half so that we can sew a little piece of the good material on to some that is old. We don't spoil the good material. If we do that, the new piece of material and the old piece will both tear."

³⁷ Then Jesus told them this story about grapes that people crushed so they could drink the wine. They poured grape juice into skin bottles and filled the skin with juice and left it so that they could drink the wine later on. The juice stayed in the skin until it swelled. That's why they poured new juice into strong new skins. Then when the juice swelled, the skin swelled too. So Jesus said, "We don't pour new juice into old skins that have already swelled. If we do that, when the juice swells the skin will burst and the juice will spill out on to the ground. ³⁸ So we pour new juice into new skin bottles."

³⁹ Jesus also told them this about the wine. "People always leave that wine I have been talking about until it is old. They don't like drinking it when it is new. So

when people have been drinking old wine, they don't want any new wine. They say, 'The old is better.' " When Jesus spoke about the material and the wine, he was thinking about people. When people follow him, they mustn't go with two minds.

6

About the Pharisees not wanting to work on the Sabbath day

¹ The seventh day of the week was called the Sabbath. Every Sabbath the Jewish people stopped work and went to the synagogue and praised God.

One Sabbath day Jesus and his disciples were walking along through some wheatfields. The wheat was ripe and Jesus' disciples picked some seeds as they went and rubbed them in their hands. They threw away the rubbish and ate the good seeds as they walked.

² Some Pharisees saw them picking seeds and eating them. They asked, "What are you doing? Our law says, 'You must not work on the Sabbath.' But you are working here on the Sabbath. So you have disobeyed the law, haven't you? What you are doing is very wrong."

³ Jesus answered them, "You know what David did long ago before he became king. He and his men were hungry. ⁴ David went into the house of God, and he took some damper and ate it. He gave some to his men and they ate too. It was holy but they ate it. Only the priests were allowed to eat it, but David ate that holy food."

⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "I, the one who was born in this place, am the Lord of the Sabbath."

About the man with a crippled hand

⁶ On another Sabbath day Jesus went into a synagogue and taught people God's word. A man with a crippled hand was sitting there. He couldn't move his right hand. It was weak all the time.

⁷ Some teachers of Moses' law and some Pharisees were also in the synagogue. They were watching Jesus carefully. They were looking to see if Jesus would heal the man's hand, because they wanted to blame Jesus for doing something wrong. If Jesus healed the man's hand on the Sabbath then they would blame him. They would say to him, "You have done something very wrong, because today is the Sabbath."

⁸ But Jesus knew what they were thinking and he said to the man, "Get up and come over here to the front." So the man got up and went to the front and stood near Jesus.

⁹ Then Jesus said to all the people who were sitting inside the synagogue, "Tell me now, what does Moses' law tell us to do? Should we do good on the Sabbath or bad? Should we save people or kill them?"

¹⁰ Jesus said that and then he looked at the people one by one. Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man stretched out his hand. It had been weak, but now it was strong.

¹¹ The teachers of Moses' law and the Pharisees were filled with anger. They began to say to each other, "What can we do with this man?"

About Jesus choosing twelve apostles

¹² At that time Jesus went up a hill by himself to pray to God. He prayed for some time and then it got dark. He went on praying and midnight came, but he still kept on praying until daybreak. ¹³ When

daylight came he called his disciples to him. He chose twelve men and called them apostles, because they were his workers and later he would send them out everywhere to tell people about God.

¹⁴ These were their names: Simon, the one Jesus called Peter, and his younger brother Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and another Simon. This man and some other Jews were very angry because the Romans controlled their country of Judea. So they were called Zealots. ¹⁶ Jesus also chose two men called Judas. One was the son of James and the other Judas was called Iscariot, the one who would later bring some leaders to Jesus so they could take him.

About Jesus teaching and healing people

¹⁷ Then Jesus and the men called apostles and the other disciples came down to a flat place. And they met many people there who were also disciples of Jesus. A big crowd of people were there too from all different places. They had come from all over Judea and from Jerusalem. And some had come from Tyre and Sidon, two places over on the west coast. ¹⁸ They had come from everywhere so that they could hear Jesus and he could heal them. And Jesus stood there on the flat place and spoke to them and healed them. Some of those people were very sick because they had evil spirits, and Jesus made the spirits come out of them. ¹⁹ All the people were wanting to get close to Jesus to touch him, because God was making him strong and he was healing them all.

About happiness and sadness

²⁰ Then Jesus looked at his disciples and spoke to them while others could hear too.

“You people who are poor, good things will happen to you, because God is your ruler.

²¹ You people who are hungry now, good things will happen to you too.

Later you will have all you need.

You people who are crying now, good things will happen to you too.

Later you will laugh.

²² “Even if other people hate you, God will be good to you. They will hate you, and not want you, and speak bad words to you and say to you, ‘You are bad people.’ They will do that because you trust in me, the one who was born in this place. Even if they do all that, God will be good to you. ²³ Long, long ago their ancestors hated the prophets who spoke God’s word. So now when the people of today hate you, you should rejoice. You should be full of joy, because God will give you good things at that time when you go to his good place.

²⁴ “But you people who are rich, bad things will happen to you,

because you already have everything good today. There will be nothing more for you.

²⁵ And you people who are full today, bad things will happen to you too.

Later you will be hungry.

And you people who laugh in a silly way today, bad things will happen to you too.

Later you will be sad and you will cry.

²⁶ “And bad things will happen to you when everyone speaks good words about you. Long, long

ago their ancestors used to say the same kind of things to the lying prophets. Those prophets didn’t tell the people God’s words. They told them their own lying words. But many people long ago used to speak good words about them. So today when everyone speaks good words about you, bad things will happen to you.”

About us loving people who hate us

²⁷ “Listen,” Jesus said to his disciples. “I am telling all of you who are listening carefully to me today, you must love people who hate you. You must do good to those people. ²⁸ If people curse you, you must ask God to bless them. And if cruel people beat you and speak bad words to you, you must ask God to help them.

²⁹ “If anyone hits you on one cheek, don’t stop him, but let him hit you on the other cheek. And if someone takes your coat, don’t stop him, but let him take your shirt too.

³⁰ “If anyone asks you for something, you should give it. And if anyone takes your things, don’t try to get them back. It doesn’t matter if they don’t come back to you. ³¹ You should be kind to other people just as you want them to be kind to you.

³² “Do you love only the people who love you, but you don’t love everyone? Then God won’t say to you, ‘I am pleased with you,’ because bad people love each other too. They love the people who love them.

³³ “Do you only do good to people who do good to you, but you don’t do good to everyone? Then God won’t say to you, ‘I am pleased with you.’ No, because bad people do good to people who do good to them.

34 “Maybe you lend your things to other people to look after for a little while. But you don't lend your things to everyone, you only lend them to people who will give you your things back later. Then God won't say to you, ‘I am pleased with you.’ No, because bad people lend to each other so that they will get the same things back later.

35 “You must love people who hate you. You must do good to them. You should lend to them and not think about getting your things back again. If you do that, God will be very good to you and you will be his people. He is the greatest God. So you should be like him, because he is kind to bad people. Even if they only think of themselves and don't think of other people, he is very kind to them. 36 Our Father has pity on us. So you should have pity on everyone.” We shouldn't judge other people.

37 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Don't judge about people, whether they are good or bad, and then God won't judge you. And don't blame people, and then God won't blame you. You should forgive other people, and then God will forgive you.

38 “You should give good things to other people, and then God will give good things to you. God is very generous and he will keep on giving you good things. He will freely give to you and never stop. He is just like a person pouring honey into your tin. That person goes on pouring and doesn't stop until your tin is full of honey. God doesn't stop, and he goes on giving you good things all the time. And if you give good things to other people and give generously, then God will give good things to you.”

39 After saying all that to his disciples, Jesus told them this story about blind people and teachers. He said to them, “Think about blind people. When two blind people want to walk, they can't take each other by the hand and lead each other. They might both fall into a hole.

40 “And two people who don't know anything can't teach each other. But a teacher can teach a younger person, because he knows more. The younger one wants to become wise too, so he learns well. He listens carefully to his teacher. He keeps listening day after day until he knows everything his master knows. Then afterwards they both know the same.”

41 Then Jesus went on to say, “You worry about the little bit of dirt in your brother's eye. Why do you worry about that, but you don't think about the great big stick in your own eye? 42 You shouldn't say to your brother, ‘You poor thing, brother, let me take the bit of dirt out of your eye.’ Don't say that, because you can't see the great big stick in your own eye. You want other people to say you are good, but you are bad. First you must take the big stick out of your own eye, so you can see properly to take the little bit of dirt out of your brother's eye.”

About us being like trees that have fruit

43 Then Jesus said, “Listen to this. I am going to tell you about trees that have fruit. A good fruit tree has fruit that is good to eat. But the same good tree doesn't give us bad fruit that we can't eat. And a bad tree can't have good fruit.

44 “When we look at the fruit on a tree, we know if the tree is a good one or not, because we know

its fruit. If we want figs to eat, we don't go to a thorn bush, we go and get figs from a fig tree. And if we want grapes to eat, we don't go to a crab's eye vine, but we go to a grape vine.

⁴⁵ "It is true that a good tree only has good fruit, and a bad tree only has bad fruit. A good person who does good all the time will be like the good tree, because he always thinks about good things and doesn't think about bad things. But a bad person always does bad things, because he always thinks about bad things. Our words that come out of our mouths when we speak are first of all in our minds and our hearts."

About two men building houses

⁴⁶ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "You are always saying to me, 'Lord, Lord.' Why do you call me Lord, and yet you don't obey me?" ⁴⁷ If any of you come to me and listen to my words and obey them, what kind of person are you? Let me tell you.

⁴⁸ "You are like a man who built a house for himself. First he dug a deep hole. He kept digging until he found hard rock. Then he built his house on the rock so that it would be strong. Then there was a big flood. The water hit the house, but it didn't push it over. The house still stood firm because the man had worked well and built it very strong.

⁴⁹ "But if one of you hears my words and doesn't obey them, what are you like? Let me tell you. You are like a man who just built his house on the ground. He didn't dig a hole first and he didn't build his house on hard rock. Then there was a big flood. The water hit the house and pushed it over straight away, and that was the end of the house."

7

About Jesus healing a Roman officer's servant

¹ Jesus finished speaking to the people and then he went to Capernaum. ² In Capernaum there was a Roman officer who was in charge of a lot of soldiers who were also Romans. The officer was very worried because his servant was very sick and he loved him and he was dying.

³ Then the officer heard some people talking about Jesus. So he said to some Jewish elders, "Go to Jesus and take this message to him. Ask him to come quickly to my house and heal my servant."

⁴ The elders went to Jesus and said, "A Roman officer wants you to come and heal his servant. ⁵ He is a very good boss and he loves our Jewish people. He has built a synagogue for us. He is a really good man, so let's go straight away." ⁶ Then the elders and many other people set out and Jesus went with them.

They went a long way. Then, when they were near the Roman officer's house, some of his friends came to them bringing a message for Jesus. "Stop, Master," they said. "You needn't come now. The officer told us to come to you. He said, 'Go and tell Jesus not to come to my house because he is an important man and I am very unimportant. ⁷ And because of that I also can't go to him. But if he could just say the word then my servant would get better.' That was the Roman officer's message, ⁸ and he told us this too. 'I am an officer,' he said, 'but I also obey my boss. And the soldiers I am in charge of obey me too. If I say to one of my men, Go over there, he goes quickly. And if I say to one of them, Come here to me, he comes quickly. And if I say to my

servant, Do this! then he does as I say.’ ”

⁹ Jesus was surprised when he heard this, and he turned round and spoke to the crowd of people who were following him. “I haven’t found anyone who really trusts me, not even one person in Israel. But that Roman man really trusts me.”

¹⁰ Then the men went back to the Roman officer. When they arrived at his house they saw that the servant who had been sick was well now.

About Jesus making a widow's son alive again

¹¹ Then Jesus went to a place called Nain with his disciples. A crowd of people also went with him. They walked a long way. ¹² Then they came near the town of Nain. Just as they arrived at the gate some people were coming out of the town, taking a dead man out to bury him. His mother was a widow, and now she had no children because he was her only son. She came out of Nain with a crowd of people.

¹³ When the Lord Jesus saw the widow he had pity on her and said to her, “Don’t cry.” ¹⁴ Then he went over to the dead man and put his hand on the box. The men who were carrying the body stood still. Then Jesus spoke to the dead man. “Get up!” he said. ¹⁵ The man who had been dead sat up and talked. Then Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶ The people were all frightened and they praised God. They all said to each other, “This man is a great prophet. God has come to save his people.”

¹⁷ All through Judea people talked about what Jesus had done. And in all the places around Judea they were talking about it too.

About John the Baptist sending two of his disciples to Jesus

¹⁸ John’s disciples also heard about everything that had happened and they told John. Then John called two of them, ¹⁹ and said to them, “Go to the Lord Jesus and take this message from me. Ask him who he is and say, ‘John has told us about an important person who is to come here. Are you the one or must we wait until some other person comes? Who are you?’ ” ²⁰ Then the two men left.

They walked until they found Jesus. They said, “We have come from John the Baptist. He has told us about an important person who is to come here. Maybe you are the one. If you are not, then maybe we will have to wait for someone else. John wants to know about you, so please tell us. Who are you?”

²¹ At that very time Jesus was healing many sick people. Some were very sick, some had evil spirits and others were blind. Jesus healed every kind of sickness and the people became better.

²² Then Jesus said to John’s two disciples, “Go back to John. Tell him everything you have seen with your own eyes. And tell him everything you have heard today. Blind people can see. People who were lame can walk now. People with terrible skin diseases are made clean. Deaf people can hear and people who have died are alive now. And tell him this too. Poor people are hearing the good news about God. ²³ Truly God is good to everyone who doesn’t doubt me.”

²⁴ Then the men left Jesus and went back to John. But Jesus talked about John to all the people. He said, “When you went into the desert, what sort of person

were you looking for? Were you looking for a man who keeps changing his mind? Were you looking for a man who is like grass that blows around in the wind? ²⁵ Maybe you were looking for a man who always wears beautiful clothes and always eats good food and sleeps on a soft bed. Was that the sort of person you were looking for? Of course not. That kind of person doesn't live in the desert. He lives in a good house, in a king's palace.

²⁶ "Tell me," Jesus said to them. "You were looking for a prophet who tells people God's words, weren't you! Yes, that's it. You were looking for a prophet and you found him. But that prophet is also God's messenger. ²⁷ Let me tell you these words that are written in God's book, and listen carefully. They tell us about John. God said long ago,

'I will send my messenger so that he can make the way ready for you. He will go ahead and you will come later.'

And John is that very person. He is the one who came first.

²⁸ "Truly," Jesus said, "John is very important. From long ago until today no one else has been so important. But even the least important of you people, if you know about God becoming ruler, you are more important than John. If you know about God ruling, God will say about you, 'This man is important, even more important than John.'"

²⁹ All the people heard Jesus. And some men who worked for the Romans and collected tax money heard too, and they praised God. Those people had all heard John before this. They had obeyed God and John had baptized them, and now they heard Jesus. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the

teachers of Moses' law didn't obey God, and so John didn't baptize them, because they refused.

³¹ Jesus said, "So what are you people of this day like? ³² You are like children who sit where many people are going here and there passing each other. Some children call out to others and say, 'We have sung lovely songs for you to make you happy, but you didn't dance.

Then we sang funeral songs and pretended to cry,

but you wouldn't cry with us.' So you people of today are like children, because first of all you didn't want John and now you reject me too.

³³ "That is true," Jesus said. "A little while ago John the Baptist came here and you saw him all the time. Sometimes he didn't eat. He went without food and worshipped God, and he didn't drink wine. But you saw him and said, 'This man has an evil spirit.' ³⁴ Then I, the one who was born in this place, arrived afterwards. You see me eating food and drinking wine, and you say, 'This man is greedy. He is always eating and drinking strong wine. And he goes around with sinners and people who collect tax money.' That is the kind of thing you are always saying about me. First of all you didn't want John and now today you don't want me either.

³⁵ "Those people who obey God's words show others that everything God has said is true."

About a woman who was a sinner and washed Jesus' feet

³⁶ One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to go and eat with him. He was called Simon. Jesus went to his house and he went inside and sat down and ate with him. ³⁷ In the same town there was a woman

who was a sinner. She had been a sinner for a long time. But she knew that Jesus was eating in Simon's house. So she got a jar of expensive perfume. It was a beautiful smelling oil in a white stone jar. She took it to Simon's house and when she arrived she went inside too.

³⁸ Jesus was sitting leaning on his elbow. The woman went up to him and stood behind him near his feet. She stood there crying, and her tears wet his feet as they fell. Then she bent down and dried his feet with her hair and kissed them. Then she poured the beautiful oil that she had brought with her on Jesus' feet. It smelled very good. The woman was doing that because she loved Jesus and she wanted him to know that she loved him.

³⁹ The Pharisee who was the owner of the house saw what she was doing, and he said to himself, "What sort of man is this? If he is really a prophet he would know about this woman. He would know that this woman who is touching him is a very bad woman."

⁴⁰ Jesus said to him, "Simon, let me tell you a little story."

Simon answered, "Yes, tell me, teacher." So Jesus told him this story.

⁴¹ There was a rich man who used to lend money to poor people, and later on they had to pay it back. One day he lent a man a lot of money, 500 silver coins, and he lent another man 50.

Then the time came for the men to give the money back to him.

⁴² But they didn't have any money, so they couldn't pay him back. After he had waited a very long time, the man said to them, "It is all right. You needn't pay me back, because you haven't got any money. I will forget about that money." "So tell me, Simon," Jesus said to him. "Which of those men

only loved him a little and which one loved him very much?"

⁴³ Simon said, "I think the man who was supposed to pay back a lot of money would love him more, because he forgave him a lot more." "That is right," said Jesus. ⁴⁴ Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman. When I came into your house you didn't give me any water for my feet. You didn't wash my feet for me, but this woman has washed my feet with her tears, and she has dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵ When I came into your house, you didn't kiss me. But this woman has kissed my feet again and again, because she loves me. ⁴⁶ You didn't pour any olive oil on my head so that people would know you are happy that I have come to your house. But this woman bought some expensive sweet-smelling perfume, and she has poured it over my feet. ⁴⁷ She knows she is a sinner, because she has done many bad things. But God has forgiven all her sins, and so she loves me very much. But if God forgives someone only a few sins, then that person only loves me a little."

⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to the woman, "All your sins are forgiven."

⁴⁹ The people who were eating together in Simon's house said to themselves, "Who is this man who forgives people their sins? God is the only one who can speak words like that, not this man."

⁵⁰ Then Jesus said to the woman, "Because you trusted me I have saved you. Now go in peace." Then she went away in peace.

8

About some women who helped Jesus

¹ Some time later Jesus travelled around to different places. He

went to towns and to small villages and told people the good news that God would become ruler over all his people. The twelve disciples also went with him.

² Some time before this, Jesus had made evil spirits come out of some women and he had healed others. One day he made seven evil spirits come out of one woman called Mary. They called her Mary Magdalene because she came from Magdala. And those women also went with Jesus. ³ Another woman called Joanna went too. Her husband was called Chuza, and he was an important man who worked for King Herod. Another woman was called Susanna. Many women went with Jesus and his disciples. They took their own food and money, so that they could look after the men and give them food.

About a man who planted some seeds

⁴ At that time many people kept coming to Jesus from all different places. And when a big crowd of people gathered he told them this story.

⁵ Once a man decided to grow some seeds for food. He put the little seeds in a bag and went off. As he went along he threw them on the ground, scattering them freely around everywhere for the plants to grow.

As he went along scattering them, some of the seeds fell on the path. In a little while when people came along they trod on them, and the birds came and picked them up and ate them.

⁶ Some of the seeds fell on rocky ground. Then when the seeds began to grow they dried up because the ground was dry.

⁷ Some of the seeds fell in the middle of some thorns. Then the thorny plants and the good plants

both began to grow and so they grew up together. But the thorny plants grew more quickly and took up all the room. Then the good plants couldn't grow properly and didn't produce any food.

⁸ But some seeds fell on good ground and began to grow, and then they grew up and produced lots of food.

Jesus told the people this story, and then at the end he told them these strong words. "You must think carefully about that story I have told you," he said. "Don't let it go in one ear and out the other, but keep thinking carefully about it."

⁹ Jesus' disciples said to him, "What does the story mean?"

¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "That word of God's about him becoming King was hidden at first. And now God has shown it to you. But other people hear about it in stories. Even if they look they can't see, and even if they hear they can't understand."

¹¹ Then Jesus explained the story to his disciples. He said, "Those seeds are like God's words. ¹² Some people hear them, but Satan comes along and takes those words away from their minds. So those people are like the seeds that fell on the path. And Satan is like the birds that take the seeds. Satan takes God's message away from people so that they won't know it and they won't believe in God, and so that God can't save them.

¹³ "Some people hear God's message and they feel happy and accept it. But the message doesn't stay with them for long. They believe in God for a little while, but when Satan tests them they don't believe in him any longer. So those people are like the seeds that fell on the rocky ground.

14 "Some people hear God's words, but they are worried about fighting and always thinking about money and things and having fun. Things like that are more important to them, and they push God's words right out of their minds. Those people are like the seeds that fell among the thorns and grew up and produced fruit, but it didn't ripen.

15 "Some people hear God's words and always hold on to them. They obey God all the time and always do the right thing. They are like the seeds that fell on the good ground and grew up and produced good fruit." We shouldn't be like people who hide a lamp.

16 Then Jesus went on speaking to his disciples and some other people. He told them about lamps and about words. He said, "When you and I light a lamp inside the house we put it up high so that people can have a good, strong light. When we light it we don't hide it, we don't put a tin on top of it and we don't hide it under a bed. We put it up high so that it lights up the whole room. Then when people come inside the house they see the light."

17 Then Jesus went on to say, "Anything that is hidden now will be made clear later." 18 So you should listen very carefully to me today and you should always obey me.

"Any of you who listen carefully to me and never disobey me will keep my words in your mind all the time. And I will help you so that you can know more. If any of you think, 'I know all those words,' but you don't listen to them properly and don't obey them, then I won't help you. And then you will forget them all. So

that is why you must listen very carefully to me today."

About Jesus and his brothers

19 Then Jesus' mother and his younger brothers came to the house where Jesus was staying, but they couldn't get near him because there were so many people there inside. 20 Someone said to Jesus, "Your mother and your brothers are here. They are standing outside and they want you."

21 Jesus said to all the people, "My mother and my brothers are here, are they? I call all people who hear God's word and obey it my mother and my brothers."

About Jesus calming the water and the wind

22 One day Jesus and his disciples went to a big freshwater lake and they got into a boat. "Let's go across the lake to the other side," said Jesus. And they put up the sail and started out.

23 As they were sailing along, Jesus went to sleep. But suddenly a big wind hit them. It was very strong and the waves came up high and the water began coming into the boat. The boat began to fill with water and they were about to drown.

24 The disciples went to Jesus and woke him up. They said, "Master! Master! We are going to drown! Get up!"

Jesus got up and he spoke strong words to the wind and to the water. "Be still!" he said. Then the wind died down and the water became calm too.

25 Jesus said to his disciples, "Why can't you trust me?"

But they were amazed and frightened. "Who is this man?" they said to each other. "He speaks to the wind and the waves and they obey him!"

About Jesus healing a man with evil spirits

²⁶ Jesus and his disciples sailed on across the lake to go to a place called Gerasa which is on the other side of the lake from Galilee.

When they arrived, ²⁷⁻²⁹ Jesus jumped from the boat on to the shore and a man came towards him. He belonged to Gerasa but he had many evil spirits in him. They had been in him for a very long time and had grabbed hold of him many times. His people had tied his hands and feet with chains but he kept breaking them. The spirits used to drive him away into the desert and he used to go around without any clothes on. He wouldn't stay at home and he kept away from houses and people. He used to sleep in the caves where they put dead bodies.

When the man came close to him, Jesus spoke to the evil spirits and said, "Come out!" But the man screamed and bowed down in front of Jesus.

He shouted, "Jesus, Son of God, what are you going to do to me? Don't punish me! Leave me alone!"

³⁰ Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is 'Mob,'" he answered, because many evil spirits had gone into him.

³¹ The evil spirits said, "Please, don't send us away, don't shut us up in a bad place!"

³² There were many pigs nearby. They were eating together up on a hill. So the evil spirits said to Jesus, "Please let us go into those pigs over there." And Jesus let them go.

³³ The spirits came out of the man and went over to the pigs. They went into the pigs and the pigs rushed off and ran down the

side of the cliff and dove into the water and drowned.

³⁴ The men who had been looking after the pigs saw them running down to the water and diving in and drowning. So they ran off and told the people who lived in the town, and others who were living away from the town.

³⁵ Then many people went to the place where the pigs had drowned. When they arrived where Jesus was, they found the man sitting down with him. He was the same man who had been healed, but now he was wearing clothes and listening to Jesus, because his mind was all right now. Everyone was very frightened. ³⁶ Then the men who had looked after the pigs and seen them drown told the people that the man was healed. They told them that Jesus had made him better.

³⁷ Then all the people of Gerasa said to Jesus, "Leave our country and go away." They said this because they were all very frightened. So Jesus got into the boat to go away, ³⁸ but the man who had been healed came to him and stopped him. "Please let me go with you," he said.

But Jesus sent him home and said, ³⁹ "Go home and tell people that God has healed you."

Then the man went and told the people of Gerasa that Jesus had healed him. He went all over the town until all the people of Gerasa knew about it. But Jesus and his disciples left that place and went away.

About Jesus making a dead girl alive again and about him healing a sick woman

⁴⁰ Then Jesus and his disciples crossed over the water again and went back from Gerasa to Galilee. The people of Galilee had been waiting and waiting for him. So

when Jesus arrived they were very pleased to see him.

⁴¹ Then a man called Jairus came along. He was a ruler of the synagogue. He bowed down at Jesus' feet. And he said to him, "Please come to my house, ⁴² because my only daughter is very sick. She is twelve years old and she is dying."

So Jesus went with Jairus to his house. Many other people also went there, walking close to Jesus, crowding around him as they went.

⁴³ There was a woman with them who had been sick for a long time. She had been bleeding badly for twelve years. Many people had tried to help her but they couldn't make her better.

⁴⁴ As she was going with everyone along the road, she came up close to Jesus from behind and touched the edge of his coat that was hanging down. Her bleeding stopped at once.

⁴⁵ Jesus said to all the people, "Who touched me?"

Everyone said that they hadn't touched him. And Peter said, "Master, people are all around you touching you."

⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone touched me. I know because power went from me to that person."

⁴⁷ Then the woman knew that she couldn't hide herself. She was shaking all over but she came to the front and bowed down with her face to the ground where Jesus was standing. And she spoke to him so that other people could also hear her words. She told Jesus that she had touched him because she was sick, and that she was healed straight away while she was still touching him.

⁴⁸ Jesus said to her, "Dear woman, don't be upset. Because

you trusted in me you have become better. So go in peace."

⁴⁹ While Jesus was speaking to her, a man came from Jairus' house. He said to Jairus, "Your daughter has just died. Don't worry the Teacher. He doesn't need to come to your house now."

⁵⁰ But Jesus heard him and said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid. Only believe that she will get better."

⁵¹ Jesus and many other people kept on going to Jairus' house. When they arrived, Jesus took Peter, James and John inside and also Jairus and his wife, but he wouldn't let anyone else go in. He said to all the people, "The rest of you don't come in, but stay out here."

⁵² Everyone there was crying and wailing for the little girl. So Jesus said to them, "Don't cry because she is not really dead, but only sleeping for a little while."

⁵³ They all laughed at Jesus, because they knew that she was really dead. ⁵⁴ But Jesus went inside and took her hand and called out to her, "Get up!" ⁵⁵ And her spirit came back and she came alive again, and got up straight away. And Jesus said to her family, "Now give her some food to eat."

⁵⁶ Her father and mother were amazed that the little girl was alive. But Jesus said to them, "Don't tell anyone that I have made this girl alive again."

9

About Jesus sending out his twelve disciples

¹ Then Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them his power so that they would be strong. He said to them, "I will make you strong so that you can make evil spirits come out of people, and so that you can

heal the sick. ² So go now," he said, "and tell many people about God becoming ruler, and also heal any sick people. ³ But don't take anything with you. Don't take a walking stick or a bag or any food or money. And just take one coat and no more.

⁴ "When you arrive in a town and people welcome you and take you into their houses, stay and sleep there. Stay in the same house until you leave that place. ⁵ But when you arrive in a town and the people there don't want you, you should leave them. When you go away, shake the dust off your feet. Shake it off so that the people will know you are leaving them forever. That will show them that they are rejecting you and they are also rejecting God."

⁶ Then the disciples left and went from place to place to tell people the good news about God and to heal the sick.

About Herod wanting to see Jesus

⁷ After some time Herod, the ruler in Galilee, heard people talking about Jesus. They were telling each other everything Jesus had done and the words he had been speaking to people. But Herod couldn't understand what they were saying, because some of them said, "John the Baptist has come alive again." ⁸ But other people were saying, "Elijah has arrived." And others were saying, "A prophet who died long ago has come alive again."

⁹ Herod couldn't understand what they were saying. He said to himself, "What do they mean? I told one of my soldiers and he cut John's head off! So who is this man they are talking about?" Then he wanted very much to try and see Jesus with his own eyes.

About Jesus feeding 5,000 men

¹⁰ Then Jesus' apostles came back to him and told him everything they had done. And Jesus took them away to a place called Bethsaida. He just took them and no one else.

¹¹ Some people heard that Jesus had gone away to Bethsaida and they followed him and found him halfway. But Jesus didn't send them away. He told them about God becoming ruler and he healed those who were sick.

¹² Afternoon came and then the sun began to set. Jesus' twelve disciples went to him and said, "There are no houses here. So send the people away now. Let them go to the places around here to eat and sleep."

¹³ Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat yourselves."

They said, "We have five dampers and two fish but that's all. We can't feed all these people, there are too many. Do you want us to go and buy food for them all?" ¹⁴ There was a huge crowd of people there, 5,000 men and also women and children.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Make them sit down on the ground, a group of 50 here, 50 over there and 50 around here." ¹⁵ Then the disciples told the people what Jesus had said, and they all sat down.

¹⁶ Jesus took the five dampers and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and thanked God for them. Then he broke them into little pieces and gave them to his disciples so that they could give them to the people. ¹⁷ They all ate and had enough.

There were some big baskets there. The people collected all the little pieces of food that they had left, and the disciples put them in

the baskets and they filled twelve baskets.

Peter speaking about Jesus

¹⁸ One day Jesus was by himself praying to God, and his disciples came to him. Jesus said to them, "When people are talking together, who do they say that I am?"

¹⁹ They said, "Some people say, 'He is John the Baptist'. Others say, 'He is Elijah'. But others say, 'A prophet of long ago has come alive again.'"

²⁰ "But what about you?" Jesus said to them. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Lord, the one God spoke about long ago. God said, 'I am going to send someone to save my people.' So you must be that person, the Messiah."

Jesus speaking about his suffering and death

²¹ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "You mustn't tell anyone those words Peter has said about me. ²² I, the one who was born in this place, must suffer very much. Our elders and the chief priests will reject me. The teachers of Moses' law will also reject me. They will kill me, but I will come alive again after three days."

²³ Then Jesus spoke to all his disciples. "Everyone listen to what I am saying. If any of you want to follow me, you must forget about the things that you want and say to yourselves, 'No! I don't want those things.' Every day you must be willing to go where I go. You must be like me, even if you suffer as I will suffer on a cross."

²⁴ You mustn't think about yourselves, because if you think about yourself and take good care of yourself and keep thinking about living a long time you will die. But if you follow me closely and

don't refuse to give yourself, even if people kill you, you will live forever. ²⁵ If you have everything that you want, even if you are the most important ruler of all, but you don't have real life, what good is that to you? It is no good at all!

²⁶ "If any of you are ashamed of me and of my words today, then I will be ashamed of you. I, the one who was born in this place, will be ashamed of you at the time when I come back. When I come back here I will be shining, coming in my own glory. And I will have my Father's glory too. And God's angels will also be shining."

²⁷ "Listen to me, because I am telling you the truth. Some of these people here will not die until they see God becoming ruler over everyone," Jesus said to all those people.

About Jesus becoming different

²⁸ A week went by. Then Jesus took Peter, John and James and they went and climbed a hill so that Jesus could pray there. They went up and Jesus prayed to God. ²⁹⁻³² But Peter, John and James were sleepy and they fell fast asleep. And while Jesus was praying his face became different. The clothes he was wearing shone brightly. They were shining white like a heron's feathers.

Then two men suddenly appeared and talked together with Jesus. They were the leader Moses and the prophet Elijah. They had died long ago, but there they were with Jesus. And they too were shining brightly. The three of them were talking about Jesus dying in Jerusalem. He was going to die because God had decided that long ago.

Then Peter, John and James woke up and saw Jesus shining.

And they saw the two men standing near him.

³³ When the men were about to leave, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us three to be here. We will make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." But Peter didn't know what he was saying.

³⁴ While Peter was speaking, a cloud came and covered them all, there on the top of the hill. The three men, Peter, John and James, were afraid because the cloud was covering them, and covering Jesus and Moses and Elijah too.

³⁵ Then they heard a voice speaking from heaven. "This is my Son, the one I have chosen. Listen to him," the voice said.

³⁶ After the voice had spoken, Peter, John and James saw Jesus all alone. They couldn't see anyone else with him. But they didn't tell anyone what they had seen. They just kept quiet.

About a boy Jesus healed

³⁷ The next day Jesus and his three disciples went down from the hill and many people met them there. ³⁸ A man called out to Jesus and said, "Teacher, please look at this only son of mine for me. ³⁹ An evil spirit keeps getting hold of him. It calls out loudly and throws the child's body around until the spit comes out of his mouth. It keeps hurting him and won't leave him alone. ⁴⁰ I kept asking your disciples to make it come out but they couldn't do it."

⁴¹ Jesus said to the people, "You people are very hard, and you don't believe in me yet. I am tired of you all. When can I leave you?" Then he said to the man, "Come here and bring your son."

⁴² The man took his son to Jesus. But while they were coming the evil spirit threw the boy to the ground and threw his body

around. Then Jesus spoke to the spirit. "Come out of the child!" he said, and as he spoke the boy got better. Jesus said to his father, "Your son is better now."

⁴³ All the people there were amazed because God was so powerful.

Jesus speaks again about dying

While the people kept on talking about all the wonderful things Jesus was doing, Jesus spoke to his disciples. ⁴⁴ "Listen carefully to what I am telling you," he said. "Don't let my words go in one ear and out the other, but keep on thinking about them. I am the one who was born in this place, but some men will get me and take me to the leaders."

⁴⁵ But the disciples didn't know what he meant. His words were hidden from them so that they couldn't understand. They didn't ask him, "What do you mean?" because they were too frightened.

We shouldn't be proud

⁴⁶ Then Jesus' disciples began arguing with each other. They said, "Which one of us is the most important? Which one will rule over the others?"

⁴⁷ Jesus knew what they were thinking, and he called a little child to come to him. He made him stand beside him, ⁴⁸ and he said to his disciples, "If any of you obey me and love this child, you will love me too. And if any of you love me you will also love God, the one who sent me here to you. If you are not proud and you work for others, God will say, 'You are important.'"

About people using Jesus' name

⁴⁹ Then John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw a man making evil spirits come out of people. But he was using your name. So we

stopped him because he doesn't belong to our group."

⁵⁰ But Jesus spoke to John and his other disciples. "No," he said, "don't stop him, because any man who isn't against you is helping you."

About some Samaritans refusing to welcome Jesus

⁵¹ Some time later, Jesus decided to go straight to Jerusalem and not wait any longer. The time was coming near for him to go back to heaven. ⁵² So he sent some men to a village in Samaria. It was on the road to Jerusalem. He sent them ahead so that they could find a place where he could stay for a while on the way. They went on ahead and Jesus and his disciples followed them.

When the men arrived at the village, they asked the people about a house for Jesus and his disciples, so that they could stay there for a while. ⁵³ But the Samaritan people didn't want Jesus to stay in their village, because they hated the Jewish people. And they knew that Jesus was going to Jerusalem for the Passover ceremony.

⁵⁴ When those men found Jesus and his disciples again, they told Jesus about the Samaritan people not wanting him. Then James and John said to Jesus, "Lord, do you want us to ask God to send fire down from heaven to burn up these Samaritans?"

⁵⁵ Jesus said to them, "You mustn't say that kind of thing."

⁵⁶ So Jesus and his disciples didn't stop in that village. They went on further to another village.

About following Jesus

⁵⁷ While Jesus and his disciples were going along, they met a man who said to Jesus, "I will go with you too. I will follow you wherever you go."

⁵⁸ Jesus said to him, "Look, dingoes have holes and birds have nests. But I have no home. I am the one who was born in this place, but I have nowhere to sleep safely like the dingoes and the birds."

⁵⁹ Later on Jesus and his disciples met another man going along the road. Jesus said to him, "Come and follow me."

The man said to Jesus, "Not yet, Master. First let me go home because my father has died. Let me bury his body and then afterwards I will follow you."

⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, "Let those who aren't God's people bury their dead, because they themselves are like dead people. As for you, go and tell everyone, 'God is ready to rule all people.'"

⁶¹ Another man said to Jesus, "Master, I will follow you, but first let me go home to tell my family that I am going to follow you."

⁶² Jesus said to him, "If you follow me you mustn't look back. If you look back you will be like a man ploughing the ground. If he looks behind him he won't go straight, he will go all over the place. You will be like that man if you obey me for a little while and then leave me. God doesn't rule over people like that."

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About Jesus sending out 70 people

¹ Some time later the Lord Jesus chose some more people. He had decided to go to many towns, but first he chose 70 to go ahead to those towns two by two and then Jesus and his twelve disciples would go later.

² So Jesus spoke to them before they went away. "Listen," he said. "Soon God will become ruler. Many people are ready

to listen to God's word now. So when they hear they won't reject his word and they will obey him. But you who do God's work today are very few. So ask the Lord God to send many workers to tell everyone his word.

³ "Listen," Jesus added. "When a dingo finds a lamb, the little lamb can't fight because the dingo is much too good at fighting. But I am sending you all out today, and you will be like that little lamb. You will meet people who want to make trouble for you."

⁴ Then Jesus said, "Don't take any money or a bag for food or any shoes with you, but go as you are. If you see people on the road, don't stop and talk to them on the way but go straight on."

⁵ "When two of you arrive in a town and go inside a house, first of all say these words to the people who live there. Say, 'Peace be with you.' ⁶ And if there is someone in the house who wants God to give him peace, then God will surely do that. But if the people in the house don't want God to give them peace, then he won't, and those words of yours will stay with you. ⁷ Both of you stay in that house and eat their food and drink what they give you. Do that all the time because it is good when people give you food when you work for them. Don't move around from one house to another, but just stay where you are."

⁸ Then Jesus said, "When you go to a town, if the people there welcome you, eat the food they give you, ⁹ and heal their diseases and say to them, 'Today you will know that God will soon become ruler.'"

¹⁰ Then Jesus said, "When you go to a town, if the people there don't want you, walk through

their streets saying this as you go. ¹¹ Say to them, 'We will wipe off the dust of your town that sticks to our feet, so that you will know that we are blaming you, because you have rejected God's word today. But you people in this place listen to this. Today you will know that God will soon become ruler!'

¹² "I tell you," Jesus said, "God will blame those people on the last day. At that time he will decide whether people are good or bad. He will blame the wicked people of Sodom, and they will suffer very much, but he will blame the people who reject your word today much more, and they will suffer much more!"

About people who reject God's word

¹³ Then Jesus said, "You people of Chorazin and Bethsaida, what will happen to you? God will make bad things happen to you. You have seen all the powerful things God has done in your towns today, but you haven't stopped doing wrong and you haven't obeyed God."

"Long ago the people of Tyre and Sidon were wicked people. They were very bad. But they didn't see the powerful things that God has been doing today. If they had seen God's great and powerful works, they would have stopped doing wrong and they would have obeyed God. They would have quickly put on rough clothes made of goats' hair and sat down on the ground in ashes so that God would know they had stopped doing wrong and were obeying him."

¹⁴ Then Jesus said, "On the last day God will surely blame those people of Tyre and Sidon because they were wicked. But he will blame you people of Chorazin and

Bethsaida much more because you have refused God's word today.

¹⁵ “And you people of Capernaum, you think God will take you to heaven, don't you! But he won't! He will send you to hell for refusing him today!”

¹⁶ Then Jesus said to the 70 people, “If anyone hears your words, it is like hearing my words. And if they reject you, it is like rejecting me too. And if those people reject me, then they are also rejecting the one who sent me here.” Then those people went away and they did the work that Jesus had given them to do.

About the 70 people coming back to Jesus

¹⁷ After a while the 70 people all came back to Jesus. They were very happy, and they said to Jesus, “Lord, evil spirits came out of people. When we used your name they obeyed us.”

¹⁸ Jesus said, “I was watching Satan, the ruler of the evil spirits. I saw him fall down from heaven, and he fell down quickly just like lightning when it flashes and comes down fast to the ground.

¹⁹ “Listen!” Jesus said to them. “I have made you people strong so that you can rule over Satan and over all his evil spirits. If you tread on snakes they won't bite you, and if you tread on scorpions they won't sting you. Satan is very strong but I have made you stronger. So he can't hurt you.

²⁰ “You are rejoicing today because you are ruling over evil spirits. That is good, but you should rejoice all the more because you belong to God. Your names are written down in heaven.”

About Jesus rejoicing

²¹ At that time God's Spirit made Jesus very happy. And he said to God, “Dear Father, you rule in heaven above and also here on earth. I thank you because you have shown these people that you are ruling today. You haven't told those who are wise but only these people. I am praising you because you are kind and that is what you have decided.”

²² Then Jesus spoke to all the people and said, “My Father has given everything to me. Which of you people really knows me, his Son? You don't know. My Father is the only one who knows me. And which of you really knows my Father? You don't know. I am his Son and I know him. But if I want to show some of you, then you too will know my Father.”

²³ Then Jesus turned and went on speaking to his disciples without anyone else hearing him. He said, “God is very good to you, because you have seen with your own eyes the great and powerful things that I have done. ²⁴ Long ago prophets and kings wanted to see the powerful things that you are seeing today, and to hear the words you are hearing today. They wanted to see and hear these things, but they couldn't.”

The story about the good Samaritan

²⁵ Then one day while Jesus and some other people were sitting talking together, a teacher of Moses' law stood up to speak. He wanted to trick Jesus, so he asked him a question. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do so that my spirit won't die but live forever?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “When you read the law of Moses, what does it tell you to do?”

²⁷ The man answered Jesus with Moses' words and said, “Moses said,

'You should really love the Lord your God. When you get up and when you lie down, you should think about him all the time.'

And also he said,

'You should love your neighbour just as you love yourself.' "

²⁸ Then Jesus said to him, "That's right. You have given me the right answer. Always do that, and then your spirit won't die; you will live forever."

²⁹ The man still wanted to trick Jesus, and so he said, "Who is the neighbour I should love?" ³⁰ Then Jesus told him this story.

A Jewish man was going from Jerusalem down to Jericho. As he went along the road some robbers found him. They beat him and grabbed his clothes and money and everything, and they left him lying on the ground nearly dead and went away.

³¹ After a while a priest came along the same road. He saw him but he didn't help him. He just crossed the road and kept on going down the hill.

³² After a while a man who worked in the temple came along. As he got near he looked at him but he left him there. He didn't help the man, he just crossed the road and kept on going.

³³ Later on another man came along the road. He was a Samaritan, and the Jewish and the Samaritan people hated each other. He found the man about to die, and when he saw him he had pity on him. ³⁴ He didn't leave him there but went straight over to him. He poured oil and wine on his wounds to make them feel better and then he bandaged them. Then he put him on his donkey and took him away.

They kept on going until they arrived at an inn, a house where anyone could spend the night.

And the Samaritan looked after the dying man there for one night.

³⁵ In the morning he gave the owner of the inn some money so that he could look after the man. He said, "Look after this man for me. I am going, but here is some money. If you need any more, I will give it to you when I come back this way." Then he went away.

³⁶ Jesus told this story to the teacher of Moses' law and then he said to him, "Now, which one of those three helped the man the robbers had beaten the way you should help your neighbour?"

³⁷ "The man who had pity on the dying man," he answered.

Then Jesus said to him, "You go, then, and do the same."

About Mary and Martha

³⁸ Later on Jesus and his disciples arrived at a village called Bethany. A woman called Martha lived there with her family. Jesus and his disciples went to her house and Martha brought them inside to eat some food and have a drink. They sat down to talk, and Martha cooked some food for them.

³⁹ Martha's younger sister was called Mary. She sat down near Jesus and listened to him talking and stayed sitting there. ⁴⁰ But Martha was doing a lot of work all on her own. She was so busy that she didn't stop. She was getting upset about her work and she went to Jesus and said to him, "Lord, I am busy because my sister isn't helping me. It's not good, is it, for me to work by myself? So tell her to help me."

⁴¹ Jesus said to her, "Poor Martha, you really are worried about many things, about food and everything. ⁴² But this one good thing you need: you should listen to me. Your sister has been sitting listening, and that is

good. It is what she wants and she has chosen well, so I won't make her go. Let her stay sitting here listening to me."

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About Jesus teaching his disciples to pray

¹ One day Jesus was praying to God. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray to God too. Teach us just as John taught his disciples."

² Then Jesus said to his disciples, "When you pray, say these words: 'Father, help us to speak about your name in the right way, because your name is holy.

Rule over us all.

³ Give us our food day by day.

⁴ Forgive us the wrong things that we have done, because we forgive the wrong things that other people have done to us.

And make us strong against sin.' "

⁵ Then Jesus told them this story.

A man went to his friend in the middle of the night to ask for some food. He said, "Please give me some food, ⁶ because a friend of mine has just arrived and I haven't got anything to give him. So do give me some."

⁷ Then the owner of the house answered from inside his house. "Go away," he said. "Don't make me get up because my house is locked and the children have gone to sleep. So I can't get up and give you any food." ⁸ And even though his friend was still standing outside, he didn't get up.

His friend kept on calling until at last the owner of the house did get up, because his friend kept on calling out to him. He got up and gave him the food he needed.

⁹ Jesus told his disciples the story, and then he said to them, "Think about that man and ask God to give you what you need

and he will give it to you. Look carefully and you will find what you are looking for. Knock on the door and God will open it for you.

¹⁰ When any of you ask him, God will give you what you need. And when any of you are looking for what you need, you will find it. And when any of you knock on the door, God will open it for you.

¹¹ "But listen to this, you fathers of little children," Jesus said. "If your son says to you, 'Father, please give me a fish,' will you give him a snake that he can't eat? Of course not! ¹² And if your son says to you, 'Father, please give me an egg,' will you give him a scorpion? Of course you won't!

¹³ "You fathers know how to give your children everything good. You know even if you are bad parents. And of course God our Father knows, and he will give his Holy Spirit to those who ask him."

Jesus speaking about the devil who is called Beelzebul

¹⁴ Some time later Jesus saw a man who was dumb. He couldn't speak because he had an evil spirit. Jesus made the spirit go out of him and then the man began to speak. Many people who were there were amazed when they heard him speaking.

¹⁵ But some people were saying to each other, "Satan, that one called Beelzebul, the boss of all the evil spirits - he is the one making Jesus strong. Really Satan is giving him power and so he is making the evil spirits come out of people."

¹⁶ But other people were wanting to test Jesus. They said to him, "Do something powerful that people can't do, so that we will know that you have come from God."

¹⁷ But Jesus knew their thoughts and he said to them, "Now listen. Satan can't help people to do anything good. If you make evil spirits come out of someone, Satan isn't making you strong. When a group of you begin to fight each other, some here and some on the other side, what happens? You are no longer one group; you are divided. ¹⁸ And when a group of evil spirits begin to fight each other, what happens? They are no longer one group; they are divided.

"You people have said about me, 'Satan is making him strong so he can drive out evil spirits.' But that is not right. ¹⁹ If I make evil spirits come out of people because Beelzebul is making me strong, then tell me, what do your disciples do? How do they make evil spirits come out of people? They know that Beelzebul doesn't make them strong. So they know that those words you are saying about me are all lies.

²⁰ "No. God makes me strong, and I make evil spirits come out of people only by his Spirit. So when I drive out evil spirits with God's Spirit, you know that God is truly ruling here already."

²¹ Then Jesus said to them, "Listen to this. When a strong man guards his house, his weapons are near him all the time. Then people can't steal his food and clothes and things. They are quite safe. ²² But when someone comes to his house who is stronger than he is, they will fight each other. The stronger man will fight better, and he will grab all the food and things from the owner of the house, and he will grab the weapons that had made him confident. And he will share them all with other people."

²³ And Jesus went on to say, "Any of you who don't work for

me are making trouble for me. And any of you who don't bring people to me are chasing those people away."

About evil spirits coming back to a man

²⁴ Then Jesus said, "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through dry places looking for a place to rest. If it can't find a good place, it says to itself, 'I will go back now to where I was before.'

²⁵ "So it goes back and sees the place all nice and clean. ²⁶ Then it goes looking for some more spirits and brings seven of them back with it. But they are very bad spirits, even worse than the first one. They go in and live together in that man all the time. Then the man becomes much worse after the first spirit has gone back, because it has taken other spirits with it. At first he was in a bad way, but now he is much worse."

About real happiness

²⁷ After Jesus had said that, a woman who was in the crowd called out to him and said, "The woman who gave birth to you and nursed you must be very happy!"

²⁸ Jesus said, "That is right, but people who hear God's word and obey him are much happier!"

Jesus speaking about Jonah

²⁹⁻³⁰ The number of people listening to Jesus grew bigger, and they were crowding around him. He said to them, "You people are so wicked! You want to see all kinds of powerful things that people can't do, but you won't see any. I, the one who was born in this place, am like Jonah. Jonah was in that fish for three days but he came out alive. Then those people of Nineveh knew that God had sent Jonah to them. In the same way God will show you people

that he has sent me to you, and nothing else.”

³¹ Then Jesus said to them, “On the last day God will judge people to see if they are good or bad. At that time the Queen of Sheba will stand up and blame you people living here today. Long ago she travelled from a country far away to hear King Solomon. Solomon spoke powerful words because he was a wise man and she listened to him. So she will accuse you all, because an even greater person is here with you today, but you won’t listen to him.

³² “On the last day the people of Nineveh will also stand up to blame you all, because they changed their minds when they heard Jonah’s words. Those people changed their minds, stopped doing wrong and obeyed God. Jonah spoke powerful words, but these words you are hearing today are even more powerful. But you won’t listen!”

About only looking at what is good

³³ Then Jesus talked to the people about lamps. He said, “When we light a lamp inside the house we don’t hide it. We don’t put it under a tin, but we put it up high so that people can have a good light when they come inside. ³⁴ If there is no light inside the house at night, you and I can’t see. And if we haven’t got any eyes we can’t see. And if our eyes aren’t good, then we are still in the dark. But if we have good eyes we can see a long way. ³⁵ So you should watch yourselves so that you only look at good and not at evil. ³⁶ Then when you look at what is good all the time, and not at what is evil, everything will go well for you all the time, just as if you are in a house filled with light.”

About Jesus blaming the Pharisees and the teachers of Moses’ law

³⁷ After Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee said to him, “Let us go to my house and eat.” So they went to the Pharisee’s house and some other men went with them.

Jesus sat down to eat, but he didn’t pour water over his hands first. ³⁸ The Pharisee noticed that Jesus didn’t wash his hands, but sat down to eat straight away, and he was surprised.

³⁹ The Lord Jesus said to him, “You Pharisees wash your hands according to your law, but you don’t clean your minds and hearts. You are greedy, and you take everything away from other people because your minds and hearts are evil. You are just like a stupid man who carefully washes his dishes on the outside and doesn’t wash them inside.”

⁴⁰ Then Jesus went on to say, “You foolish people. God made everything that we can see today, everything outside and inside too.

⁴¹ So this is what you should do to have good, clean minds. You should give things to poor people. You should be kind to them.

⁴² “Terrible things will happen to you Pharisees! You don’t think about doing good to other people. And you don’t think about God and you don’t love him. But those little plants that you use to make your food tasty, you count them one by one so that you can give one of them to God and keep nine for yourselves. That is all right, but don’t forget to do good to others and to love God.

⁴³ “Terrible things will happen to you Pharisees! You are very proud. When you go to the synagogue you take the best places to sit in. And when you go among

a crowd you really love it when they speak nice words to you.

⁴⁴ “Yes indeed,” said Jesus. “Terrible things will happen to you! What kind of people are you? Let me tell you. You are like a place where they bury dead people. But that place is hidden, so when people go there they tread on it. They don't know that there are rotting bodies underneath. You really are just like that place, because other people don't know your evil minds that you keep hidden.”

⁴⁵ Then a teacher of Moses' law spoke to Jesus and said, “Teacher, so you are saying to us, ‘You are bad people too.’”

⁴⁶ Jesus answered, “Terrible things will happen to all of you too, because you tell people what they have to do, but you don't help them. You are like masters who give their workers heavy things to carry on their backs but they won't help them.

⁴⁷ “Yes indeed,” Jesus said. “Terrible things will happen to you! Long ago your ancestors killed God's prophets. They killed them because they didn't want God's word. And now today you people have built beautiful little buildings on top of the places where the prophets are buried. ⁴⁸ You built those beautiful buildings so that other people would think you love the prophets' words. But you don't. You are pleased that your ancestors killed God's prophets, because you too reject God's word. ⁴⁹ That is why God, who knows everything, said, ‘I will send prophets and messengers to my people. But they will kill some of them and make trouble for others.’

⁵⁰ “So God will blame you people of today. He will blame you and punish you because long ago your ancestors killed all his

prophets. ⁵¹ First of all, long ago Cain killed his brother Abel. Then people kept on murdering God's prophets. They kept on and on until Zechariah's time. Zechariah was working in the temple in Jerusalem and they killed him right there near the altar and the holy place. I am telling you the truth. God will blame you and he will punish you, because your ancestors killed all his prophets.”

⁵² Then Jesus went on to say to them, “You teachers of Moses' law, terrible things will happen to you! Terrible things will happen, because people are wanting to know God's word today and you hide it from them. You don't want it and you won't tell other people. That is why terrible things will happen to you.”

⁵³ Then Jesus left the Pharisee's house. And from that time on the teachers of Moses' law and the Pharisees spoke bad words about Jesus. And they kept on speaking bad words to him, asking him all kinds of questions. They kept on and on, ⁵⁴ because they wanted to trick Jesus so that he would say something wrong. They wanted to blame him, but he didn't say anything wrong.

12

About Jesus warning his disciples about the Pharisees

¹ At that time a great number of people gathered around Jesus. There were so many that they were crowding close and treading on each other. And Jesus spoke to his disciples and said, “The Pharisees want other people to say, ‘Those Pharisees are good people.’ But they are wicked and they hide their thoughts from other people. So don't you be like those men, ² because anything that is hidden today will be made clear later.

³ All the words you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the daytime. And all the words you have spoken secretly inside a house will be heard clearly, just as though you had called out loud.

⁴ "I tell you, my friends," Jesus said, "don't be afraid of people who make trouble for you. Maybe they will kill you. But when they kill your body and you die, there is nothing else they can do to hurt you. ⁵ But I will show you the person who should make you really afraid. You should be afraid of God, because he is very powerful. If he wants to he can kill you and your body will die, and he can also throw your spirit into hell. If he does that, you will stay there forever. Yes, I am warning you. He is the one you should be afraid of, because he is so powerful."

About God looking after us

⁶ Then Jesus went on to say, "God is powerful and he will look after you. Maybe one of you will buy five little birds for only a few cents. But God looks after every one of the birds. He doesn't forget any; he doesn't miss seeing even one, and he keeps on looking after them. ⁷ God looks after the little birds, and he will look after you too, and he won't forget you. He even knows about your hair. He has already counted it all and he knows! So don't be afraid, because God takes care of the little birds, and he takes care of you even more. He looks after you because you belong to him."

We shouldn't be ashamed of Jesus

⁸ Then Jesus said, "If one of you says to other people, 'I belong to Jesus Christ,' then I, who was born in this place, will say, 'This man

belongs to me.' I will speak so that God's angels can hear in heaven.

⁹ "But if one of you says to others, 'I don't know Jesus Christ,' when you deny me like that I will say, 'I don't know that man, he doesn't belong to me.' I will say it so that God's angels can hear in heaven.

¹⁰ "If any of you speak bad words about me, the one who was born in this place, God will forgive you. But if you speak bad words about God's Holy Spirit, then God won't forgive you."

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "If bad people get hold of you and take you to the synagogue, to the rulers of the synagogue, and to other rulers too, don't worry about what to say. And don't say to yourself, 'Oh dear, what shall I say? What can I answer the rulers so that they won't beat me and put me in prison?' Don't think like that and worry about what to say, ¹² because at that very time God's Holy Spirit will show you the right words to speak." We shouldn't be greedy, always wanting things belonging to other people.

¹³ Then a man who was there in the crowd spoke to Jesus and said, "Teacher, my brother doesn't want to give me any money. Our father has died, so we should share his money, his land and all his things, half for my brother and half for me. Please tell my brother to give me my share."

¹⁴ But Jesus said, "Don't ask me. No one has given me that kind of work to do. I can't decide about that, so I can't tell your brother."

¹⁵ Then Jesus spoke to the whole crowd. He said, "Listen! Don't be greedy, always wanting things that belong to other people. You mustn't be like that. Even if you are very rich, those things can't

give you real life. So watch yourselves.”¹⁶ Then Jesus told them this story.

There was a man who had plenty of money and food and everything. He worked hard every day growing a lot of plants for food. He worked very hard and a big crop grew on his land because it was good soil.

¹⁷ He started thinking about these things and said to himself, “I have so much food I haven’t enough room for it all. So what shall I do?”¹⁸ Ah! I know, I will get rid of these little storehouses and build some big ones. Then I will store all my food and other things in big, new buildings.¹⁹ Then I will say to myself, ‘I have plenty of good things here now, so I will stop work. I will never have to work again. I will eat plenty of food and I will always have lots to drink. I will be very happy!’ ”

That’s what he said to himself,²⁰ but God spoke to him and he said, “You fool! This very night you will die. You have stored lots of food and other things for yourself, but who will get it all, your food and money and everything, when you die? You can’t take all those things with you; other people will get them.”

²¹ After Jesus had told this story, he said to all the people, “It is like that for people who store up a lot of things for themselves, but they have nothing good to show to God.”

About trusting in God

²² Then Jesus spoke to his disciples and said, “I have already told you about you having lots of things. I said that having lots of things won’t give you what is really good. So don’t be worried thinking about the food that you need to keep alive in this world.

And don’t think about the clothes you need to wear.²³ You always look after your bodies. You always eat food to make you strong, and you always wear warm clothes to keep warm. It’s your spirits you should be thinking about and looking after.

²⁴ “Think of the crows,” Jesus continued. “They don’t plant seeds and gather them. They don’t have storehouses, but God feeds them. So he will certainly give you your food, because God takes care of the birds and he will take much more care of you people.

²⁵ “Tell me this,” said Jesus. “If you worry about staying alive longer in this world, can worrying about it keep you alive a few more days? Of course not.²⁶ So if you can’t make your days longer in this world so that you can stay alive longer, then don’t worry about food and clothes.

²⁷ “Think about the wattle tree that grows in the bush,” said Jesus. “The wattle doesn’t work and make clothes for itself. Long ago King Solomon was very rich and he always wore beautiful clothes. His clothes were very beautiful, but the wattle flowers are much more beautiful than that.²⁸ God made the lovely wattle, but the flowers don’t last long. One day they are bright and beautiful, but the next day they dry up quickly and die. Maybe they get burnt in a fire. You don’t trust God but God will surely give you people clothes to wear.”

²⁹ Then Jesus continued, “Don’t be always busy worrying about food and drink.³⁰ People who don’t know God are always busy with these things. Your Father God knows that you need food and drink to stay alive.³¹ So don’t be always busy worrying about that kind of thing, but be busy obeying God, because he is your

Lord. Then God will give you your food and drink.

³² “So, my friends, there are only a few of you, but don’t be afraid, because your Father wants to be your Lord. I have already told you that he is looking after you. ³³ So you should sell your things to other people and give the money to the poor.

“If you do that, you will have treasure later in heaven and that treasure in heaven will never finish. In this world you collect many things, but they get old and spoiled. Some might get lost, thieves might steal some, and white ants might eat some of them. But that doesn’t happen in heaven. Thieves don’t steal and white ants don’t eat anything there. All your treasure will last there forever.

³⁴ “If God is your Lord you will always think about him. But if you are always thinking about things you need, then he is not your Lord.”

About waiting patiently until Jesus comes back

³⁵⁻³⁶ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “You must wait for me and keep watching for me until I come back.” Then he told them this story about some servants who were waiting for their master.

There was once a man who went to celebrate with a friend who was getting married. He and some other people celebrated with his friend and had a feast.

His servants waited at home for their master to come back. They sat up waiting and didn’t lie down or take off their coats to sleep. And they didn’t put out their lamps.

They waited and waited. Then at last their master arrived and they heard him knocking on the door. They got up quickly, opened the door and brought him inside.

³⁷⁻³⁸ It may have been in the middle of the night or before dawn when their master came back, but they were still waiting. He was pleased because his servants hadn’t gone to sleep and were waiting for him. He took off his coat and brought some food and made them sit down. He gave them their food even though he was their master. He was happy and he made his servants happy too. That master made his servants very happy because they had waited for him.

³⁹ After Jesus had told his disciples this story he said to them, “You too must wait patiently until I come back here. You must wait like those servants. But don’t be like one man who owned a house. He didn’t know that a thief was coming. If he had known, would he have let the thief come inside? Of course not. The owner of the house would have been watching.

⁴⁰ “And you disciples of mine must wait for me, because I, the one who was born in this place, will come back again when you aren’t expecting me. I will come back while you aren’t watching.”

About God’s workers working well

⁴¹ Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, that story you told us, is that just for us or for everyone?”

⁴² The Lord Jesus said to Peter and the other disciples, “Tell me. What is a faithful and wise servant like? His master has made him the boss over the other servants. So he gives work to those men and women and he gives them food from his master every day. But how will he work while his master isn’t there? He should work well all the time while his master is away.

⁴³ “Then when his master comes home and sees his servant working well, he will be very pleased. And his servant will be happy too.

⁴⁴ Then his master will make his servant the boss over everything he has."

⁴⁵ Then Jesus said, "But maybe that same servant will say to himself, 'My master is taking a long time to come back.' Then he will beat the men and women when he gives them their work. He won't work well any longer and he will do careless, bad work. He will eat a lot of food while his master isn't there and he will drink strong drink and get drunk.

⁴⁶ "After a while his master will come back again. He will arrive suddenly, while his servant isn't thinking about him coming back. Then what will the master do to his servant? He will give him a hard beating, just like people beat those who are bad.

⁴⁷ "And this is another thing," Jesus said. "One servant knows everything that his master wants him to do, but he doesn't work well for him. So his master will give this bad servant a hard beating. ⁴⁸ But another servant doesn't know what his master wants him to do, and he doesn't work well for him. So his master will give this bad servant a little beating, because he doesn't know."

Then Jesus said, "When God gives you important work, you must obey him and do good, honest work for him. And if God gives you more important work to do, you must obey him and work even harder."

About Jesus coming into the world to judge everyone

⁴⁹ Then Jesus spoke to all his disciples and said, "I came into the world to judge everyone, to see if you are good or bad. It will be just as though I am lighting a fire to burn rubbish. If only the fire were already burning now! ⁵⁰ But it isn't burning yet, because I must suffer first.

"When I suffer, it will be like going right down under suffering. Before, when John baptized a man, that man went right down under the water. When I suffer it will be like that, just like going right down under suffering. I am very sad about it, and I won't stop being sad until it is finished."

⁵¹ Then Jesus said, "What do all of you think about me? Do you think I have come here to stop people fighting? No. I came here so that people would argue about me and make trouble for each other because of me.

⁵² "Maybe there are five people living in the same house. From today three of them will hate the other two. ⁵³ Maybe a father and his son will hate each other. Maybe a mother and her daughter will hate each other. Maybe a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law will hate each other."

⁵⁴ Then Jesus said to the people, "When you see a cloud getting dark and coming from the west, when it starts to get bigger you talk about it. Straight away you say, 'Rain is coming.' And soon it does rain. ⁵⁵ And also, when you hear the south wind blowing hard, you say, 'It will be hot now.' And it does get hot.

⁵⁶ "You know about the rain when you look at the clouds. So why don't you understand what God is doing in the world today? You wicked people, you want others to say that you are good, but you are not."

About deciding what is right

⁵⁷ Then Jesus said to the people, "Why can't you decide for yourselves the right thing to do? ⁵⁸ Maybe someone blames you about something. You should talk about it carefully together. Maybe he will take you to the judge because of something wrong you

have done. While he is taking you, the two of you should talk about it as you go, before you get to the court. Don't wait, but try and make that person happy so that he will forgive you.

"If you don't make him happy, then he will take you straight to the judge. The judge decides about people, whether they are good or bad. He will give you to a soldier who will put you in jail. Then you will stay there for a long time. You will stay there for a very long time. ⁵⁹ The judge won't let you out of jail until you pay him all the money he wants. You will have to give him the whole lot."

13

About getting rid of sin

¹ At that time some people told Jesus what Pilate had done. They said, "Pilate told his soldiers to kill some Galilean people. They had gone from Galilee to the temple in Jerusalem to sacrifice animals for God. The soldiers killed them because Pilate told them to do it, and their blood was mixed with the blood of the animals."

² Jesus said to them, "What sort of people were they? They died because they were wicked, did they? They were more wicked than any of the other Galileans, were they? ³ Of course not! You must all stop doing wrong today and obey God. If you don't, you too will die. You will be like the Galileans and that will be the end of you. ⁴ Just think about those other people at Siloam in Jerusalem. Eighteen people died when a tall building fell and killed them. So what were they like? They were more wicked than all the other people in Jerusalem, were they? ⁵ Of course not! You must get rid of your sins today and obey God. If you don't, then you

too will die. You will be like those people in Jerusalem and that will be the end of you."

About a sand fig tree without fruit

⁶ Then Jesus told the people this story about a tree.

A man grew a sand fig in the same place where he grew grapes. One day he went looking for figs but he couldn't find any.

⁷ So he said to his worker, "Look, I came looking for figs last hot season. For three years I have been looking for fruit on this tree, but there hasn't been any. It is taking up the ground, so cut it down for me."

⁸ His servant said, "Leave it for one more year. First let me dig the ground, and then I will put in some bullock's manure to make it better. Let it stay here until next hot season. ⁹ Then if it has any fruit, that will be good. But if it doesn't have any, then I will chop your tree down for you."

About Jesus healing a crippled woman on the Sabbath

¹⁰⁻¹¹ There was a woman who had an evil spirit that had made her sick. She had been sick for a long time and couldn't walk upright. She was bent over all the time. She had been bending over like that for 18 years.

Then one Sabbath day she went to the synagogue. Jesus was teaching the people there in the synagogue. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her to come to him. "You poor woman," he said, "I am setting you free from your sickness." ¹³ Then Jesus put his hands on the woman and she straightened up at once and praised God.

¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue was angry, because Jesus had healed the woman on the Sabbath. So he spoke to the people. "We can work for six days," he

said, "but we mustn't do any work today because it is the Sabbath. If you want people to heal you, then don't look for anyone to heal you on the Sabbath but come here during those other days."

¹⁵ The Lord Jesus said to him, "You bad leaders, you want people to say, 'These leaders are good,' but you are tricking yourselves. Any one of you will untie your bullock or your donkey on the Sabbath day and take it to water.

¹⁶ This woman is a descendant of Abraham, but Satan has had her tied up for a long time. She hasn't stood up straight for eighteen years until today. That was a good thing for me to set her free on the Sabbath, wasn't it?"

¹⁷ When Jesus said that, the men who hated him were ashamed of themselves, because Jesus had spoken strongly to them. But many people rejoiced over all the wonderful things that he did.

About God becoming ruler

¹⁸ Then Jesus went on talking to the people who were in the synagogue. "What will it be like when God becomes ruler?" he said. "What can I tell you so that you will understand about God ruling? Look, first of all he will rule over a few people. Then later on he will become ruler over many people.

¹⁹⁻²¹ "I will tell you two stories, one about a tree and one about a damper."

A man took a tiny seed and planted it. It grew until it became a big tree and then the birds came and sat in its branches and made their nests there.

And a woman took some rising and flour and water for a damper. She just took a tiny bit of rising. But that little bit of rising worked in the flour until her whole damper rose.

"Now I will tell you about God becoming ruler. It will be like the tiny seed when it grew in the ground until it became a big tree. And it will be like the little bit of rising that made the whole damper rise. First of all God will rule over a few people and then later on he will rule over many people."

About getting into God's kingdom through a little door

²² Jesus and his disciples were following the road that went to Jerusalem. They went on and on, and as they went they stopped in many places, in both towns and villages. Jesus taught the people and his disciples.

²³ Someone said to Jesus, "Master, will God save just a few of us?"

Jesus answered him, speaking also to the rest of the people, and said, ²⁴ "You must try and go into God's kingdom as though you are going into a house through a tiny door. You must search hard today, because many other people will also be looking for a way to get inside, but they won't be able to get in. So try very hard today."

²⁵ Jesus also said, "The master of the house will get up and close the door. You will be standing outside calling to him. 'Master,' you will say, 'let us in!' But the owner of the house will say to you, 'I don't know you. Where do you come from?'

²⁶ "You will answer him, 'We ate and drank with you. And you taught us in our town.'

²⁷ "But he will still say, 'I don't know you, you are strangers. Go away! Get away from me, you wicked people!'

²⁸ "And you will all be outside crying, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all God's prophets in his kingdom. But you

won't be able to go in and you will be left outside. You will cry loudly because the people who are already inside won't let you in. ²⁹ But other people will go in from the east and the west. They will come from all different places and go into God's kingdom. And those people will sit down and eat together, but not you!"

³⁰ Then Jesus said, "Some people are last today, but at that time they will be first. And some people are first today, but then they will be last."

About Jesus loving Jerusalem

³¹ At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus. They said, "Don't stay here in this place any longer. Go away from here, because King Herod wants to kill you."

³² Jesus said to them, "Go to Herod and tell that troublemaker that I am busy today, and I will still be busy tomorrow. I will be working, making evil spirits come out of people and healing people who are sick today and tomorrow. And on the third day I will finish my work. ³³ But I am going to Jerusalem. I will follow the road to Jerusalem today, and tomorrow and the next day. I am going there because all God's prophets must die in Jerusalem and nowhere else."

³⁴ "Oh, you people of Jerusalem! When God sent his prophets to you, you stoned them. You threw stones at their bodies until they died. And you are still doing the same today."

"Oh dear!" said Jesus. "I wanted to gather you all to me, just as a mother hen gathers her chickens so that they will be safe under her wings. But you wouldn't let me."

³⁵ "So God will leave the temple. He won't look after it any longer. And I will leave you too. None of

you will see me until you say, 'May God bless the man he has sent to save his people!'"

14

About Jesus healing a sick man

¹ Once Jesus went to the house of a man who was a leader of the Pharisees, to eat with him on the Sabbath day. But the Pharisee and other people were all watching Jesus carefully.

² While they were watching Jesus a man came up to him. His arms and legs were swollen.

³ Jesus spoke to some teachers of Moses' law and some Pharisees and said, "You know God's commandments. What do they tell us? If we heal sick people on the Sabbath, is that good or bad?"

⁴ But they wouldn't say anything. Jesus touched the man and healed him and sent him home.

⁵ Then Jesus said to the people, "If your son falls down a hole on the Sabbath, what do you do? And if your bullock falls down a hole on the Sabbath, what do you do? Even if it is the Sabbath, you would quickly pull your son out of the hole and you would pull your bullock out too."

⁶ And they had nothing to say, they couldn't answer a word. They just kept quiet.

We must not be proud

⁷ Jesus noticed that some people had chosen the best places to sit in, because they thought they were important. So when Jesus saw them he said, ⁸ "If a man asks you to his house to eat with him, don't choose the best place to sit in. Maybe the owner of the house has invited an important man to eat with him, a more important man than you are. ⁹ Don't choose the best place, so that the owner of the house won't have to say to you, 'Move away and let this man sit

here.' If he says that to you, then you will be ashamed and you will have to leave the place you have taken.

¹⁰ "So don't choose a good place but go and sit somewhere else, even if it isn't comfortable. Then the owner of the house will come up to you and say, 'This place is no good for you. Go and make yourself comfortable over there.' If he says that to you, then all the people there will think that you must be very important. ¹¹ If you aren't proud, God will say, 'You are very important.' But if you are proud, then he will make you ashamed."

¹² Then Jesus spoke to the owner of the house. "When you gather people together to eat in your house, don't ask your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich people. Maybe later on they will invite you to their houses to eat with them."

¹³ "You should invite the poor, the crippled and the blind. ¹⁴ It doesn't matter if they can't invite you. If you invite people like that, then you will be blessed. God will bless you on the last day when good people who have died come alive again."

About the feast when God becomes ruler

¹⁵ When one of the men heard Jesus' words, he said, "Anyone who eats at the feast when God becomes ruler will be very happy."

¹⁶ So Jesus told him this story.

There was once a man who wanted many of his friends to come to his house to eat with him. So he sent a message first to ask them to come. And his servants cooked all kinds of good food. They cooked a lot of meat and other nice things.

¹⁷ Then when the food was ready, the master sent one of his servants to his friends to get them

to come to his house. So the servant went and said to all the people, "The food is cooked now, so please come!" ¹⁸ But they were all the same, they all refused.

The first man said to him, "Give your master this message. I have bought some land to grow food for myself. I want to go and look at it straight away, and so I can't come today."

¹⁹ Then the servant went to another man and said to him, "The food is cooked now, so please come!"

But he said to him, "Give your master this message. I have bought ten bullocks to work for me. I want to go straight away and look at them to see if they are good ones. So I can't come to your master today."

²⁰ Then the servant went to another man and said to him, "The food is cooked now, so please come!"

But he answered, "I have just got married, so I can't come to your master today."

The servant went around asking all the people to come and eat with his master. But they wouldn't come. ²¹ So he went back and told his master.

Then his master was very angry when he heard that. He said to the servant, "Go out on to the roads. Don't wait. Go quickly to other people living in this town. Go along the roads and the footpaths. Look for any people, the poor and the crippled and the blind. Bring people like that here to my house to eat this food." ²² And the servant went off.

He looked for people like that and he found some and brought them to his master. And he said to him, "I have brought these people here, but there is still plenty of room."

²³ The master said to him, "Go out to all the roads where there

aren't any houses. Look for people there. When you find them bring them here so that my house can be full of people. If they don't want to come, say to them, 'You must come straight away, because my master has told me that any of you can come and eat.'

²⁴ "None of those people who were supposed to come to my home will eat any of this food."

About following Jesus closely

²⁵ Jesus and his disciples were still following the road to Jerusalem. Crowds of people were going along the road with him too.

As they went along, Jesus stopped and turned around and spoke to them all. ²⁶ He said, "If any of you come to me, but you love your father and mother, your wife and your children, and your brothers and sisters more than you love me, then you aren't really following me. You should love me more than you love yourself. ²⁷ And if you love yourself and you refuse to die for me, then you can't be my disciple."

²⁸ Then Jesus said to them, "If you want to follow me, you must really think about it carefully. Listen. Let me tell you about a building and about a fight."

If a man wants to build a very high building, first of all before he starts work he has to think about it very carefully. He must count his money to see if he has enough to finish it. ²⁹ If he doesn't count his money first, maybe he will only put down the cement and nothing more. Then he can't go on with the building.

Then other people will tease him. ³⁰ "Look," they will say, "this man began to build but he can't finish his work! It is only half done."

³¹ And if one king wants to fight another king, he too must think about it carefully. He will have to count his soldiers before he goes to fight. Maybe he has 10,000 soldiers, but the other king has many more, he has 20,000. ³² He won't wait; he will quickly send some men to the other king while he is still a long way off. They will go and say to him, "What do you want? What can we do so there won't be any fighting?"

³³ Then Jesus told the people, "You must be like those two men. If any of you wants to follow me, you will have to think about it very carefully. You mustn't refuse to leave behind everything that you have."

About being like salt that is salty

³⁴ Then Jesus said to the people, "You know about salt. It is really good. But when salt becomes tasteless, what can we do to make it good again? We can't do anything. We can't make it good because it is not salty. ³⁵ We will have to throw it away. We can't put it on the ground to make the soil good. And we can't mix it with bullock's manure to make the plants grow well. We can't do anything because the salt is quite useless.

"So listen carefully to everything I have told you. Don't let it go in one ear and out the other, but keep on thinking carefully about it."

15

About the lost sheep

¹ And now many people wanted to listen to Jesus. Some of them worked for the Roman rulers, taking tax money from other Jewish people to give to the Romans. They came up to Jesus with some other bad people.

² But the Pharisees and the teachers of Moses' law grumbled. They said, "Jesus doesn't send bad people away. He calls them to him and even eats with them."

³ Because of their grumbling Jesus told the people three stories.

⁴ A man had 100 sheep. If one of them got lost, what would he do? I will tell you. He will leave those other sheep eating grass and go looking for the one sheep that is lost.

He will go on and on searching for it until he finds it. ⁵ When he has found it, he will pick it up and put it on his shoulders. He will be very happy. ⁶ He will go home carrying it on his shoulders and he will get all his friends together and say to them, "Come on, let us celebrate because now I have found my sheep that was lost."

⁷ Then Jesus went on to say, "God's angels are happy when one person stops doing wrong. Look, the angels are happy when 99 people do what is right, but they are much happier when just one bad person stops doing wrong and obeys God."

About the lost coin

⁸ "Now listen to another story," said Jesus.

A woman had ten precious coins. But if one got lost, what would the woman do? She will look everywhere for the little coin she has lost. She will light a lamp and sweep her house carefully.

She will keep on searching until she finds it. ⁹ Then when she has found it she will get her friends together and say to them, "Come on, let us celebrate today, because now I have found my coin that was lost."

¹⁰ Then Jesus said, "Just as that woman is happy, the angels in heaven are happy when even one

person stops doing wrong and obeys God."

About the lost man

¹¹ Then Jesus told them one more story.

A man and his two sons lived together. ¹² One day the younger son said to his father, "Father, count up all your things and divide your land and everything today, so that I can take my share." So his father counted everything, he divided it all between the two men, half for the older brother and half for the younger one.

¹³ A little while later the younger son sold his share of the land. And then he went away to a different country. He took all his money and everything and left home and went a long way away.

He went on and on until he reached a town and stayed there. But he didn't look after his money, he didn't think about later on and he quickly wasted it. He used it all up. ¹⁴ He didn't have a thing left; it was all gone. He became very poor.

Then there was very little food in that country and he was very hungry and wanted some food to eat. ¹⁵ So he went to a man's place and asked him for work, and then he began to work for him. The man sent him to look after his pigs. ¹⁶ He wanted to fill himself with the pigs' food, because no one gave him anything to eat. The pigs used to eat the skins that people threw away after they peeled the skins from the seeds.

¹⁷ Then he remembered and said to himself, "Those men who work for my father eat plenty of food, but here I am starving. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹ So I will go back to my father and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned. People can't call me your son any longer, because I haven't obeyed God or you. I want you to treat me like you treat the

people who work for you. I will work like them and I won't be your son any more.'"²⁰ So he got up and went home to his father.

He went on and on. Then while he was still a long way away, his father saw him coming in the distance, and he had pity on him and ran to meet him and threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ Then his son said to him, "Father, I have sinned. I haven't obeyed God or you. I am not your son any longer because I am so bad."

²² But his father called his servants and said to them, "Be quick, everyone! Bring the best coat and put it on him. And put a ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet. ²³ And go and get the fat calf and kill it and roast it. Then we will have a feast and eat plenty of meat and other food and celebrate, ²⁴ because my son was dead but now he is alive. He was lost and I have found him again." And so they began to eat.

²⁵ At that time the older son was working outside. When he was on the way home and came near the house, he heard them playing music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of his father's servants and asked, "What are they doing?"

²⁷ The servant answered, "Your brother has come back. Your father told us to kill the fat calf because he came back again alive and well."

²⁸ The older son was very angry and he wouldn't go inside the house. So his father came outside and said, "Please come inside, don't stay out here."

²⁹ But he said to his father, "Look, I have worked for you. I have worked for many years right up until today, just like these people work for you. I have never disobeyed you, but you have never given me even one goat for me to eat with my friends. ³⁰ But this

son of yours has wasted all your money on bad women. And now he has come home and you have told the servants to kill the fat calf for him."

³¹ "My son," his father answered, "you are always here with me and everything I have is yours. ³² But we must eat and be happy because my son was dead but now he is alive. He was lost but now I have found him."

16

About a servant with a sharp mind

¹ Jesus told his disciples this story about a servant.

There was a servant whose master was very rich and had lots of houses and money and other things. The servant looked after everything that belonged to his master.

Some people came to the rich man and said, "That servant of yours who looks after all your things is very bad. He is wasting everything. Soon you will have nothing left."

² So the master called his servant and he came to him. The master said, "What is this that people have said about you? I want you to count all my money today and write everything down for me and give me the paper, because you can't work for me any longer."

³ Then the servant said to himself, "Oh dear! What shall I do? My master doesn't want me and so I can't work for him any more. I am not strong enough to dig holes. And I can't ask people for money and food, because I would be ashamed. ⁴ Ah! Now I know what I will do so that other people won't reject me. Then when I leave my master's house, later on they will welcome me in their homes."

⁵ So he called all the people who owed his master food and money. He made them come to him one by one. Then he said to the first man, "How much food do you have to give my master?"

⁶ "I should give him a hundred bottles of olive oil," he answered.

Then the servant said to him, "No. Take this paper of yours. Now sit down and change this number. Write fifty here, not a hundred. Then you will only have to give him fifty bottles."

⁷ Then another man came to the servant. "And you, how much food do you have to give my master?" the servant asked.

"I should give him 1,000 bags of wheat," he answered.

The servant said, "No. Take your paper. Don't write 1,000 but 800."

⁸ Then the master of that dishonest servant heard what he had done. He said, "My servant knows what he is doing. He has got a sharp mind."

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "The master said that, because people who only love things have very sharp minds. They know how to do well in this world. They know what to do with other people who are also busy with things and nothing else. But people who love God's light are busy with the things in this world and also with everything that belongs to God. So they don't have very sharp minds about the things in this world. They don't know what to do with people who are busy with things and nothing more.

⁹ "So I am telling you this: help other people. Give them food and things and money. Later when you die you won't need any of those things, and God will take you to his home in heaven."

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "If one of you carefully looks after

a little bit of money for another person and you don't waste it, later that person will trust you to look after a lot of money for him. But if you are dishonest, if you don't look after that small amount properly but you waste it, then that person won't trust you to look after a lot of money for him. ¹¹ And if you don't look after money and things carefully in this world, what are you going to look after for God? God won't give you anything of his to look after for him. ¹² These things don't belong to you. God has given you his money and things for a little while. So if you don't look after the things you have for a little while in this world, what will you do later? Will God give you his good things to keep in his home forever? No, he won't."

¹³ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "No servant can work for two masters. Maybe he will love one of them and trust him, and hate the other one and not look after him properly. I have said that because, when money rules you, God can't rule you."

About three other words of Jesus

¹⁴ Some Pharisees also heard what Jesus had said, and they laughed at him, because they loved money very much.

¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "You are the ones who want people to say, 'You Pharisees are good people, you think straight.' That is what you want, but God knows your hearts and minds. He knows you people very well. He doesn't think about things like some of you people do. If you say, 'That is good,' maybe God will say, 'That is bad.'"

¹⁶ Then Jesus went on to say to them, "Long ago teachers taught people Moses' law. They also

taught them the words about God that the prophets told his people. Teachers kept on teaching people those same words all the time.

"And so the people of today were still hearing those very same words. Then John the Baptist came. Then after John the Baptist came, I started teaching people the good news about God becoming ruler. So today many people are really wanting God to be their ruler. ¹⁷ You say, 'Heaven and earth won't finish.' And Moses' law won't finish too. But I am telling you that heaven and earth may finish, but Moses' law will never finish, not even one word.

¹⁸ "Long ago, when God gave his laws to Moses, he said,

'When a man leaves his wife and takes another woman, they are doing wrong. And also if a man leaves his wife and another man marries her, then that man and the woman are both doing wrong.'

About the rich man and Lazarus

¹⁹ Then Jesus told the Pharisees this story.

There was once a very important person who was very rich. He had plenty of belongings, money and food, and he always wore expensive clothes. Every day he ate the best food.

²⁰ A man called Lazarus also lived in the same place. He was very, very poor and he had sores all over his body. His friends used to take him to the rich man's house and leave him sitting near the door. ²¹ Then, when the rich man was eating, little bits of food used to fall to the floor, and Lazarus wanted to eat the food that fell. And the dogs came and licked his sores.

²² Then the poor man died, and the angels lifted him up, and carried him to where Abraham was

in heaven, so he could sit there beside him.

Then the rich man died too, and they buried him in the ground.

²³ He went to the place for the dead. But he was in great pain there and suffered very much. And he looked up and saw Abraham and Lazarus, but they were a long way away from him.

²⁴ So he called out to Abraham. "Father!" he said. "Have pity on me and send Lazarus to me, so that he can put his finger in some water and cool my tongue. Please! I am in great pain in this fire!"

²⁵ But Abraham answered, "Listen, son. While you were alive you had plenty of everything. But Lazarus had nothing and he was always poor. And now he is happy here, while you are suffering all the time in pain. ²⁶ And also there is a very deep pit between us, so that people who want to go from here over to you can't do it. And no one can cross over to us from where you are."

²⁷ The man said, "Please, father Abraham, send Lazarus then to my father's house. ²⁸ I have five brothers there. Let him go and warn them, so that they won't come to this place of pain, as I have come here."

²⁹ Abraham answered, "Your brothers have the words of Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to what they say. They have warned them, so let them obey them."

³⁰ The man said, "No, father, if someone dies and then comes alive again and goes to them, they are sure to listen. Then they will stop doing wrong and do good."

³¹ But Abraham said, "If they won't obey Moses and the prophets, they won't obey anyone else. Look! If someone dies and comes alive again and goes to

them from here and warns them, they won't listen."

17

About tempting people to sin and forgiving other people

¹ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "People will tempt you to do wrong, and you can't stop them. Then if you sin it will be very bad for you later. ² But if you tempt other people to sin and then they sin, then it will be worse for you later. ³ So watch yourselves carefully so that you don't tempt others to sin."

Jesus went on to say, "If your brother does something wrong to you, tell him about it. If he takes notice of you and changes his mind, forgive him. ⁴ And if he keeps on and on doing something wrong to you, keep on forgiving him. Maybe he will keep saying to you, 'Please forgive me.' Maybe he will say that to you seven times on the same day. Then you must forgive him every time, even if it is seven times."

About us trusting in Jesus and working for him

⁵ Jesus' apostles said to him, "Lord, we want to trust you more. Help us not to doubt you, but trust in you all the time."

⁶ The Lord Jesus answered, "You don't trust in me yet, do you! If you trusted in me even a little bit, you could say to this tree, 'Pull yourself up and go over to the sea. Put your roots down there so that you are standing in the sea.' And the tree would obey you."

⁷ Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you send your servant to work outside. Maybe he will dig the ground or look after the sheep. Then in the afternoon he will come back. You won't say to your servant, 'Come on quickly,

sit down while I get you your food.' ⁸ Of course not! You are his master. So you will say, 'Cook me my food. Then put on good clothes and bring the food you have cooked here to me, so I can eat and drink. Then afterwards you can have something to eat.'

⁹ "You don't thank your servant for working for you and obeying you. No! You are his master. ¹⁰ So you should think to yourselves, 'We aren't important, we are just servants and that is all.' And when you have finished everything God has told you to do, then you should say to yourselves, 'That is nothing, we have only done our work and nothing more.'"

About Jesus healing ten men

¹¹ Jesus and his disciples kept on going along the road to Jerusalem. As they went along, Galilee was on the left and Samaria was on the right. They kept on and on, ¹² until they arrived at a village. Just before they went into the village, ten men met Jesus. They stood a little way away, because they were all covered in sores. ¹³ They called out, "Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!"

¹⁴ Jesus looked at them and called out, "Go to the synagogue so that the priests can see you! Let them see your skin!" Then the ten men started going to the synagogue. And while they walked along the road their skin became clean.

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ One of the men saw that he was better and came straight back to Jesus. He was a Samaritan. He praised God in a loud voice, saying, "The Lord God is good!" He bowed down with his face to the ground at Jesus' feet and said, "Thank you for making my skin clean."

¹⁷ Jesus said, "I made ten men clean. Where are the other nine?" ¹⁸ Why is this stranger the only

one who came back and thanked God?"

¹⁹ And Jesus said to the man, "Get up and go! You didn't doubt me, you knew that I can make people's skin clean, and that is why you have been healed."

About God becoming ruler

²⁰ Some Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will God rule over us?"

Jesus answered, "When God rules, you won't see him with your eyes. ²¹ And you won't say, 'Look! Here he is!' or 'There he is!' I tell you, God will rule when you obey him with all your heart and mind."

²² Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Some other time you will want to see me, the one who was born in this world, when I come back here. You will want to see me even for a little while, just one day, but you won't be able to.

²³ "Some people will say to you, 'Look! He is over there!' and others will say, 'Look! Here he is!' but you mustn't listen to them or follow them. ²⁴ Don't listen to them because when I come back everyone will see me. I will come like the lightning when it flashes and you see it light up the whole sky. Everyone will see me, the one who was born in this world. They will see me with their own eyes. ²⁵ But first I must suffer many things, because the people of this day will reject me."

²⁶⁻²⁷ Jesus went on, "Long ago when Noah was alive, the people only thought of themselves all the time. They kept on eating and drinking, and men and women married. They kept on doing those things all the time.

"Noah finished building the boat called an ark, and he and his family went inside. Then the rain came. And all those people died. Only Noah and his family stayed alive. It will be just like

that, people will be doing the same things, when I, who was born in this world, come back again. They will only be thinking of themselves.

²⁸ "And also long ago, when Lot was alive, the people of Sodom only thought of themselves. Everybody kept on eating and drinking. They kept on buying and selling and growing food and building houses. They kept on doing all those things all the time. ²⁹ On the same day that Lot left Sodom, God sent fire from heaven, and it burnt everything and all those people of Sodom died. They all died except Lot. ³⁰ It will be just like that, people will be doing the same things, when I, the one who was born in this world, come back and appear again. They will only be thinking of themselves.

³¹ "At that time, if a man is on the roof of his house, he mustn't go down into his house to get his belongings. And if a man is working outside, he mustn't turn around and go home. ³² You know what happened to Lot's wife when she looked back. So think about her!

³³ "If a person loves himself and wants everything in this world but he doesn't want God, he will die forever. But if he doesn't refuse to die and he follows me all the way, he will live forever.

³⁴ "I tell you," Jesus continued, "that night, if two people are sleeping in the same bed, the angels will choose one of them and leave the other. ³⁵⁻³⁶ If two women are working and helping each other to crush seeds, the angels will choose one of them and leave the other one behind."

³⁷ The disciples said, "Lord, where will that be?"

Jesus answered, "Wherever dead bodies are lying on the ground, you will see the whistling

kites and other birds like that coming together.”

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About a widow woman and a judge

¹ Then Jesus told his disciples a story so they would know that they should always pray and not get tired and discouraged.

² There was once a ruler. His work was to judge whether people were good or bad, but he didn't take notice of God or anyone else.

³⁻⁴ A woman who lived in the same town came to him for help. She was a widow and she said, “Please help me, because a man has made trouble for me. So decide between us and speak to him for me, because he is a troublemaker.”

But the judge didn't want to and he kept on putting her off and not helping her. She kept on and on coming to him all the time, but the judge still refused to help her.

Then at last he said to himself, “I don't take any notice of God or anyone else, ⁵ but I am tired of this widow. So I will have to help her. If I don't decide something good for her, she will keep on and on coming to me and I will be more tired of her than ever.”

⁶ The Lord Jesus told his disciples this story, and then he said to them, “Think about that judge. At last he helped the widow even though he was bad. ⁷ But God always hears his people and looks after them. So when you call out to God day and night he will hear you, and he will decide what is good for you. He will help the people he has chosen to be his own. He won't wait. ⁸ He will help you quickly. Truly I, the one who was born in this world, will come back here. Maybe people will be waiting for me and still trusting me, but maybe they won't.”

About the Pharisee and the tax collector

⁹ This is another story that Jesus told. He told it to some proud people who were always saying, “We are all good, but you people are bad.”

¹⁰ There were two men living in Jerusalem. One was a Pharisee and the other man worked for the Roman rulers and collected tax money from people. They both went to the temple to pray to God.

¹¹ The Pharisee went inside and stood by himself praying. He said, “God, I thank you because I am not like other people are today. They steal money and things and they are greedy. They are very bad and they keep running off with women. I am not like them. And I am not at all like that bad man over there who works for the Romans. ¹² I go without food twice a week so that I can worship you. And when I get any money I count it, and I always give you one tenth.”

¹³ The other man didn't come near anyone but he stood by himself a long way away. When he prayed, he didn't look up to heaven. He beat his chest because he was ashamed. He said, “God, I am a sinner. Have pity on me.”

¹⁴ After Jesus had told the people this story, he said to them, “God wasn't pleased with the Pharisee but he was pleased with that tax collector. So if you aren't proud, God will say to you, ‘You are important.’ But if any of you are proud, God will make you ashamed.”

About people bringing children to Jesus

¹⁵ Then some people brought their little children to Jesus for him to touch them. But Jesus' disciples saw them coming to him,

and they got cross with them, because they didn't like the children coming.

¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to come to him. Then he said to his disciples, "Don't stop them, leave the children alone and let them come to me. Listen! When any of you come to God like these little children have come to me today, you will know that God is ruling over you now. ¹⁷ But if any of you don't trust in God, you won't know about God ruling over you. You should trust in God too, just like these little children trust in him."

About a rich man who came to Jesus

¹⁸ Later a Jewish leader came to Jesus and said, "Good Teacher, tell me, what must I do to live forever?"

¹⁹ Jesus said, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God. ²⁰ You know the commandments. They tell us not to take other people's wives or husbands, not to murder and not to steal and not to tell lies about people, and to respect our fathers and mothers."

²¹ "Yes," the man answered. "I know them. I have obeyed all those commandments from when I was a child, right up until today."

²² When Jesus heard that, he said to him, "There is still one more thing you should do. You should give money to poor people. First sell everything you have and then give all the money you get to the poor. If you do that, then later God will give you many good things in heaven. First of all do as I have said, and then come and follow me."

²³ When the man heard that, he was very sad, because he was very rich and had a lot of money and things.

²⁴ Jesus saw that he was sad and said, "How can rich people get

into heaven? ²⁵ It is hard for a rich person to trust in God, and it is hard for him to get into heaven. Tell me this. Can a big camel get through a tiny hole? Of course not! It can't get through. And can a rich man easily get into heaven? No, he can't!"

²⁶ Some other people heard what Jesus said, and they were surprised. They said, "Then who can God save?"

²⁷ So Jesus said, "God can do everything. People can't, but God can."

²⁸ Then Peter said, "We have left everything and followed you."

²⁹ Jesus said to Peter and all the people, "Yes, I know. Maybe one of you will leave your house and your father and mother and your brother and your wife and your children too. Maybe you will leave everything so that God can be your ruler. ³⁰ If you leave everything you have, then God will give many things back to you. You will get much more in this world, and when you die you will go to heaven and stay there forever."

Jesus speaking about his death again

³¹ Then Jesus took his twelve disciples aside by themselves. He spoke to them and said, "Listen to me. We are going to Jerusalem now. Long ago the prophets spoke about me, the one who was born in this place. Their words were written down in a book, and now all the things they spoke about will happen there in Jerusalem."

³² "In Jerusalem some men will take me to people who aren't Jews, and they will make fun of me, and tease me and spit on me. ³³ And they will beat me and kill me. But on the third day after I die, I will rise again."

³⁴ But Jesus' disciples didn't understand him. They heard with their ears, but the meaning of the words was lost, because they didn't know what Jesus was talking about.

About Jesus healing a blind man

³⁵ Jesus and the people who were with him kept on following the road that went to Jerusalem. They went on and on until they came near Jericho. There was a blind man there sitting beside the road, and when people went past him he asked them for money.

³⁶ When the blind man heard the crowd going past, he asked someone, "What is happening?"

³⁷ They said, "Jesus of Nazareth is here! And he is coming along the road!"

³⁸ The blind man called out to Jesus. "Jesus! Son of David, have pity on me!"

³⁹ The people who were walking in front got cross with him. "Be quiet!" they said.

But he shouted more loudly, "Son of David! Have pity on me!"

⁴⁰ So Jesus stopped and told some men to bring the blind man over to him. They brought him to Jesus, and Jesus said to him,

⁴¹ "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Master," he said, "I want to see again."

⁴² Then Jesus said to him, "Then see! Because you didn't doubt me, and you knew I could heal you, now you are well."

⁴³ Straight away the man who had been blind could see. And he followed Jesus and praised God. And many people there saw that he could see, and they praised God too.

¹ Jesus and the people with him arrived in Jericho, but they weren't going to stay there. They were going straight past the houses.

² There was a very rich man called Zacchaeus there. He was an important person who worked for the Roman rulers collecting tax money from people to give to the Romans. ³ Zacchaeus knew that Jesus was coming, and he wanted to see his face, because he didn't know him. But he was a short man, and there was a crowd of people on the road. ⁴ So he went ahead and ran and climbed up a tree so that he could see Jesus when he went past.

⁵ Jesus came near the tree where Zacchaeus was, and he looked up at him and said to Zacchaeus, "Come down quickly, because I must come to your house today."

⁶ Zacchaeus came down quickly and took Jesus to his house. He was very happy to be taking him there. ⁷ But some of the people saw Jesus going to Zacchaeus' house and they began to grumble. "Zacchaeus is a bad man but Jesus has gone to his house!" they said.

⁸ Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord Jesus, "Master, I will give a lot of my things to poor people. I will keep half and give half away. The money I have taken from people when I tricked them, I will pay back to them now. I will give back four times as much as I have taken."

⁹ Jesus said, "Today God has saved the people in this house. This man is a descendant of Abraham. ¹⁰ And I, the one who was born in this world, have come here to look for the people who are lost and to save them."

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About Jesus and Zacchaeus

About working well for God

¹¹ When the people in Zacchaeus' house heard Jesus say that, they said to themselves, "God will soon be ruling here." They thought that, because Jesus was near Jerusalem now. ¹² So Jesus told them this story.

There was once a man who was going far away to another country so that the important ruler there could make him the ruler over everyone where he lived. Then he would come back as the king. ¹³ Before he went away he called his ten servants and gave each of them some money. "I am going away," he said. "While I am gone I want you to work for me. I want you to use this money to make more money for me until I come back." Then he went away.

¹⁴ But the people in his country hated this man. So they sent some messengers to the important ruler. The messengers went to him and said, "None of us want that man to be our king." ¹⁵ But he didn't listen to them, and they went home again.

Then at last the man who had given his servants the money came home too. Now he was king over all the people there. He called his servants to him one by one, because he wanted to find out about his money.

¹⁶ The first servant came to him and said, "Master, you gave me one coin before you went away, and now here are ten coins."

¹⁷ The king said to him, "That is very good! You have worked well! So now I will give you a lot of work, because I could trust you with the little bit of work you have done for me. You can be in charge of ten cities now."

¹⁸ Then another servant came to him. "Master," he said, "you gave me one coin, and now here are five."

¹⁹ The king said to him, "You can be in charge of five cities now."

²⁰ Then another servant came to him. "Master," he said, "here is the coin you gave me. I hid it in a piece of cloth. ²¹ I was afraid of you because I know you are a hard man. You always take what belongs to other people and you get the food that others have planted. That is why I have just kept your coin safe."

²² The king said to him, "You are a very bad servant. I will use your own words to blame you. You told me you know I am hard, taking what belongs to other people and getting the food that others have planted. ²³ So why didn't you give my money to men whose job is to work with money? If you had done that, then I would have this coin and more today."

²⁴ Then he said to the other servants, "Take that coin away from him and give it to the man who has ten coins."

²⁵ But they said, "But he already has ten coins!"

²⁶ "That doesn't matter," the king answered. "When I give someone a little work and he does well and finishes it, I will give him more work. And when I give someone a little work and he doesn't finish it, I will tell him to leave that work and I will give that work to another man to do."

²⁷ "Bring those people here to me who hated me and didn't want me to be their king. Kill them here so that I can see them die."

When Jesus had finished telling the story he came out of Zacchaeus' house and left Jericho.

About Jesus going to Jerusalem on a donkey

²⁸ Jesus and his disciples kept on going along the road that went up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ After a while they came near two small towns called Bethphage and Bethany. The two

towns were on a hill where olive trees grew, so the hill was called the Mount of Olives.

³⁰ Jesus said to two of his disciples, "Go to those houses ahead of us. You will find a young male donkey tied up there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here to me." ³¹ If someone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Master needs it.' "

³² The men went and found the donkey as Jesus had said. ³³ While they were untying it, the owners of the donkey said to them, "Why are you untying that donkey of ours?"

³⁴ They answered, "Because the Master needs it." ³⁵ They took the donkey to Jesus and put their coats on its back and helped Jesus get on.

³⁶ Then Jesus rode on the donkey, and as he went his friends put their coats on the ground for the donkey to walk on, so that people would know that Jesus was a very important king. ³⁷ They went on climbing up the hill until they arrived at the top. A big crowd of disciples had joined them now, and as they went down the hill on the other side they all rejoiced. They praised God for all the powerful things they had seen Jesus doing.

They shouted,

³⁸ "Let us praise the king the Lord
God has sent to rule over
us!

God gives us peace!

Let us praise God because he is
good!"

³⁹ Some Pharisees were also in the crowd going to Jerusalem. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell these disciples of yours to be quiet!"

⁴⁰ Jesus answered, "I tell you that if they keep quiet, the stones that are lying on the ground will call out."

About Jesus crying for the people of Jerusalem

⁴¹ Jesus and his disciples came closer to Jerusalem. But when Jesus saw the city he felt very sad and he began to cry, ⁴² saying, "If only you people of Jerusalem knew me today! God sent me here so that you could have peace, but you still don't know me.

⁴³ "Later on terrible things will happen to you. Soldiers who hate you will be all around you. They will shut all your gates and pile up heavy trees and earth so you cannot get out and escape. ⁴⁴ They will crush your houses and destroy them completely. And they will kill you all, you and your children too. They will throw all the stones of your houses down to the ground. They will destroy you, because you have rejected God. He came here to save you, but you did not recognize him."

About Jesus arriving at the temple

⁴⁵ Then Jesus arrived in Jerusalem with his disciples and he went to the temple. He saw men there selling birds to people and he began to throw out the men selling the birds.

⁴⁶ Jesus said to them, "Long ago these words were written in God's book. God said,

'My temple is a place for you to
pray to me.'

But you have spoiled it. Now it is
a place for thieves!"

⁴⁷ Jesus taught in the temple every day. The chief priests and the teachers of Moses' law and the leaders of the people wanted to kill him, ⁴⁸ but they couldn't, because all the people wanted to listen to him. They didn't want to miss a single word.

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Who told Jesus what to say?

¹ One day Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and telling them God's good news so that they could obey God. But the chief priests and the teachers of Moses' law and the elders came to Jesus, ² and said, "Tell us, what are you doing here? Who told you to do everything you have done in this place?"

³ Jesus answered, "Now I am going to ask you a question. You tell me. ⁴ A while ago John was baptizing people in the river. So who told John to baptize them? God or people?"

⁵ They talked about it and said to each other, "What answer can we give him? If we say, 'God told John,' he will say, 'Then why didn't you believe John?' ⁶ But if we say, 'Some people told John,' all the people will kill us with rocks, because they say that John was a prophet."

⁷ So they answered, "How can we tell? We don't know who told John."

⁸ And Jesus said to them, "Then I won't tell you who told me to do these things."

About the men who looked after the grape vines

⁹⁻¹⁰ Then Jesus told the people this story.

There was once a man who planted a lot of grape vines. He gave some men the work of looking after them, and then some of the fruit would be his and some would be for them. Then he left home and went far away to another place.

He stayed there for a long time. Then the grape season came and he wanted some of the fruit. So he sent a servant home to get some.

The servant went and asked the men for some grapes to take back

to his master. But they refused to give him any. They beat him and sent him away, and he went back to his master without any grapes.

¹¹ So the owner of the grape vines sent another servant to get the grapes. But the men were still bad and spoke unkindly to him and laughed at him. Then they beat him and sent him away, and he too went back to his master empty-handed.

¹² Then the owner of the grape vines sent another servant. They beat him too, and sent him away and he went back covered in cuts and bruises.

¹³ The owner said, "What shall I do? I will send my own dear son. Maybe they won't beat him, because he is my son." So he sent his son.

¹⁴ But when the men saw the son coming they said to each other, "This is the master's son. When his father dies, he will be the owner. Let us kill him straight away and then this place and all these grapes will be ours!" ¹⁵ So they grabbed him and threw him out of the place and killed him.

After Jesus had told this story he asked, "So what will the owner of the grape vines do? I will tell you. ¹⁶ He will go home and kill those wicked men. Then he will give his grape vines to some other men, so that they can look after his grapes for him when he goes away."

When they heard Jesus say this, they all said, "Surely he won't do that!"

¹⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, "Long ago these words were written in God's book:

'Some men wanted to build a house, and they collected a lot of stones. They put one stone to the side because they didn't want it. But later on they took the same stone that they hadn't

wanted at first and found that it was the most important stone of all.' ”

Then Jesus said to them, “Think carefully about those words, ¹⁸because if any of you fall on that stone your bones will be broken in little pieces. But if that stone falls on you, it will crush you to dust.”

About Jewish people paying tax money to the Romans

¹⁹ The teachers of Moses' law and the chief priests wanted to take Jesus straight away. They realized that Jesus was speaking about them when he told the story about the wicked men. But they were afraid of all the people who wanted to listen to Jesus. ²⁰ So they kept watching him day and night. Then they told some bad men to go to him. They said, “Try asking Jesus some questions, just like good, honest people ask, but you must trick him. See if he will give you bad answers so that we can blame him. If you do that we will pay you.” They wanted Jesus to say something bad so that they could give him to the Roman ruler.

²¹ The men went to Jesus and said, “Teacher, we know that what you say is always right. You treat important people and unimportant people all the same. And when you teach people, you speak the truth about God. ²² So tell us, when people collect tax money from us to send away to that ruler Caesar in Rome, is that right? Should we pay taxes or not?”

²³ Jesus knew what they were thinking and that their minds were evil. ²⁴ “Give me a coin,” he said. “Show me, whose face do you see on it? And whose name is this?”

They answered, “It is Caesar's.”

²⁵ So Jesus said to them, “That is right. You should give Caesar what belongs to him, and you should give God what belongs to God.”

²⁶ Then the teachers of Moses' law and the chief priests kept quiet because they were so amazed at Jesus' answer. They couldn't do anything, and they couldn't say anything wrong about him, because there were too many people there.

About people coming alive after we die

²⁷ Then some Jewish people called Sadducees came to Jesus. The Sadducees say that we can't come alive again after our bodies die. ²⁸ They said, “Teacher, long ago Moses wrote this law for us:

‘If a man dies and leaves a wife but no children, that man's brother must marry the widow, so that they can have children who will be like the dead man's children.’

²⁹ “One time there were seven brothers. The first one got married but he didn't have any children and then he died.

³⁰ “Later on his younger brother married the widow. ³¹ But he died too, without having any children.

“Then another brother married her. But he also died without having any children.

“One after another all the brothers married the same woman and died without having children.

³² Last of all the woman died.

³³ “So tell us, Teacher. On the day when the dead come alive again, what will happen to that woman? Those seven men had all married her, so who will be her husband?”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “In this world men and women marry each other, ³⁵⁻³⁶ but in heaven God's people don't get married. When those people die, God will

make them alive again, and he will say, 'These people are good,' and he will take them to be with him forever. They won't die again and they won't marry. The angels never die and those people will be like them. They will be God's children because after they have died they will come alive again.

³⁷ "You Sadducees say, 'After we die we don't come alive again,' but that is not right. Moses made it clear that after we die we do come alive again. You know what he wrote about the tree that wasn't destroyed after it burnt. At that time he also wrote these words of God's. God said to Moses, 'I am the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.'

³⁸ God doesn't rule over dead people. He is the Lord of people who are alive, because everyone who trusts in God in this world is alive now."

³⁹ Some teachers of Moses' law said to Jesus, "That's right. Those are good words you have told the Sadducees." ⁴⁰ After that they didn't want to ask Jesus any more questions, because they were ashamed and afraid.

About the Messiah

⁴¹ Then Jesus said to the teachers of Moses' law, "People talk about the Messiah, saying that he is the descendant of David. But is that true? ⁴² We know these words that David wrote. He said, 'The Lord God said to my Lord:

Sit here on my right.

Stay near me

⁴³ until I make you the ruler over all the people who hate you.'

⁴⁴ "When David spoke those words about the Messiah, he called him his Lord. So because of that we know that the Messiah is David's descendant but he is also his Lord, isn't he?"

About Jesus warning people against the teachers

⁴⁵ Then Jesus spoke to his disciples and many other people also heard him. ⁴⁶ He said, "Be careful of the teachers of Moses' law. See that they don't trick you. They love to wear long clothes so that people can see them and say, 'Those men are very important.' And when they go around among people, they love everyone to speak nice words to them. And they love to have the best places to sit in, in the synagogues and when they eat in other people's houses. ⁴⁷ They even steal houses from the widows. And then they pray long prayers where people can see them. So think about the last day, because at that time God will blame wicked people, and he will blame the teachers of Moses' law even more!"

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About a widow giving money to God

¹ While Jesus was in the temple, he looked around and saw rich people coming and putting money in the money box to give to God.

² And he also saw a very poor widow putting in two little coins.

³ Jesus said to his disciples, "Some people have put a lot of money in the box, but this widow has put in only a little. Yet she has really done better than they have.

⁴ Those people over there put in a lot of money, but they still have plenty. But this poor woman has put in all her money and now she has nothing left."

About people destroying the temple

⁵ Some of Jesus' disciples were talking together in the temple. "This is a beautiful building," they said. "These are wonderful stones. And all the things that people have brought here

to make the temple beautiful are very lovely too.”

Jesus said, ⁶ “All these things you can see here today won’t always be here. Later on some wicked people will destroy them. They will destroy everything until all the stones are lying on the ground.”

Jesus warning the people about the last days

⁷ Jesus’ disciples asked, “Teacher, tell us more. When will that be? What will happen so that we can know before this building falls?”

⁸ “Be careful,” Jesus said, “and don’t let people trick you. Many men will say, ‘We are telling you God’s word.’ They will try to trick you and each one will say, ‘Listen to me. I am the Messiah!’ and, ‘Today everything is going to come to an end!’ Don’t listen to their lies and follow them. ⁹ But when you hear about wars in your country or in other countries, it doesn’t matter if people are fighting each other or fighting other people, don’t be afraid. Terrible things like that must happen first, but everything won’t end straight away.

¹⁰ “One country will go and make trouble for another country and they will fight each other. ¹¹ In different places the ground will shake and split open. People will die of hunger and of terrible sicknesses that spread from one person to another. Strange and terrible things will happen in the sky and people will be terrified.

¹² “But before all those terrible things happen, wicked people will get you and make trouble for you. They will take you to the synagogues and the leaders there will blame you and put you in jail. And they will take you to kings and rulers. They will do all that

because they hate me and they will hate you too.

¹³ “That will be the time when you can speak for me. ¹⁴ You must decide beforehand not to worry about what to say. Don’t say to yourself, ‘When they blame me, what can I answer?’ Don’t think about that now, ¹⁵ because when the time comes I will give you the right words to say, so that you can speak for me. I will make you wise and give you strong words. When the people who hate you hear your words, they won’t be able to answer you or say a word.

¹⁶ “Your own people, even your fathers and mothers and brothers, will take you to the rulers and they will kill some of you. ¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because you belong to me. ¹⁸ But don’t be afraid, ¹⁹ because, if you keep going straight ahead on God’s road, he will keep your spirits alive forever.”

About people destroying Jerusalem

²⁰ Jesus went on speaking to his disciples and said, “When you see lots of soldiers all around Jerusalem, then you will know that the city will soon be destroyed.

²¹ “Then everyone who lives in Judea must run away and climb up to the hills to hide there. You people who are inside Jerusalem must leave your houses and run away, and you people who are outside the city must not come inside.

²² “At that time God will punish his people, and all the terrible things that were written long ago will really happen to make those words come true.

²³ “You poor women who are pregnant and you mothers who are nursing babies will be very upset. Everyone will be suffering

when God punishes his people for their sins.

²⁴ “Some of you people here in Jerusalem will be killed by the sword. Others will have to go far away to other countries because strangers will take you to their country and put you in jail. And people from other places will rule in Jerusalem. They will go on ruling until God sets his people free on the day that he himself has planned.”

About Jesus coming back again

²⁵ Then Jesus continued, “When you look up into the sky you will see the sun change. The moon and the stars will become different too. And when you look over to the sea you will see it rising, and you will be afraid of the roar of the sea and the big tides. Everyone all over the world will be worried. ²⁶ Then you will ask each other, ‘What other terrible things are going to happen now?’ You will be terrified. You will tremble all over and faint and fall to the ground, because God will shake everything powerful in the sky.

²⁷ “Then you will see me, the one who was born in this world, coming back again. I will come down from heaven powerful and glorious.

²⁸ “When all these different things begin to happen, you people who belong to me mustn’t be afraid like other people are. You must just keep on bravely going straight ahead on God’s road, because very soon God will set you free.”

²⁹ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Think about the sand fig and other trees. ³⁰ When their new leaves begin to appear, we know it is the season of storm clouds and soon it will be the hot season. ³¹ So when you see all the terrible things I have told you

about today, you will know for yourselves that God will soon rule.

³² “Everything I have told you will happen before all you people now living have died. ³³ Heaven and earth will both come to an end, but all my words will never end. They will last forever.”

About watching ourselves carefully

³⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Be careful! Don’t just think about food and strong drink and nothing more. If you are busy with those things and worried about the things you need to stay alive in this world, then the last day will suddenly come and take you by surprise. ³⁵ Everyone in all the world will see it before they can think about it. It will come suddenly like the sea eagle when it swoops down and grabs a fish.

³⁶ “That is why I am telling you that you must always be watching. Never stop praying that God will make you strong when those terrible things happen. Then you won’t fall but you will still stand firm until you all meet me, the one who was born in this world.”

³⁷ Every day Jesus taught the people in the temple and in the evening he went up the hill called the Mount of Olives and stayed there for the night. ³⁸ Then every day he came back to Jerusalem early in the morning to teach in the temple. And many people went there to listen to him.

22

About the leaders wanting to kill Jesus

¹ Now it was nearly time for the Passover ceremony, when the Jewish people ate damper without any rising in it. Crowds of people came together in Jerusalem for

the ceremony from many different places. ² The chief priests and the teachers of Moses' law wanted very much to kill Jesus. But they had been unable to do anything because they were afraid of the people who wanted to listen to him. So they were waiting until they could take him when he was alone.

About Judas agreeing to give Jesus to the leaders

³⁻⁴ Then Satan entered into one of Jesus' disciples called Judas Iscariot. Judas left Jesus and the other disciples and went to the chief priests. He talked with the chief priests and some officers in charge of the temple guards who told him to give Jesus to them, ⁵⁻⁶ and they would give him some money. Judas agreed and the leaders were pleased. Then he went away and waited until he could give Jesus to them without many people knowing about it.

About Jesus telling his two disciples to prepare food for the Passover meal

⁷ Now it was time for the Jewish people to eat damper without any rising in it. So it was also time for them to kill the Passover lambs. ⁸ So Jesus sent two men, Peter and John, to go ahead into Jerusalem. He said to them, "Go ahead and get the special meat and other food for the Passover ceremony and get it ready for us to eat."

⁹ They asked, "Where will we get it ready?"

¹⁰ Jesus answered, "When you go into the city you will meet a man carrying a big jar filled with water. Follow him, and when he enters a house go inside too."

¹¹ Say to the owner of the house, 'Our Teacher is going to eat the Passover here in your house. So where is the room for us to eat in?'

¹² The man will show you a big

room upstairs. It is a good room, because everything we need is there, so you can get the meat and other food ready for later."

¹³ So Peter and John went off and found everything just as Jesus had told them. And they got the cooked sheep and the food and drink ready so that Jesus and his disciples could eat the Passover meal.

About the Lord Jesus and his apostles eating the Passover meal together

¹⁴ The time for the Passover meal came and Jesus and his apostles arrived in Jerusalem and went to the house where Peter and John had already gone. And Jesus and his twelve apostles sat down together in the room upstairs.

¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "I have wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ Listen! I will eat it now, but I will not eat this Passover food again until God rules over his people. Then people will understand about it and I will eat it again."

¹⁷ Then Jesus took some wine in a cup and thanked God for it. He said to his apostles, "Each of you take this cup and drink from it and give it to one another. ¹⁸ But, I tell you, I will drink it today, and then I won't drink this wine again from now until God rules." Then they drank together.

¹⁹ Then Jesus took some damper and thanked God for it. He broke it and gave it to them and said, "This damper is my body that I am giving for you. Eat it so that you can remember me."

²⁰ They ate the Passover meal together, and after they had eaten Jesus took another cup, as he had done before. He gave it to them saying, "This wine is my blood. It shows you that God will make a

new covenant with you. He will make that promise with my blood which I will pour out for you.”

²¹ Then he said, “One of you here will give me to the leaders so that they can kill me. You have been here with me eating food in this room, but you will give me to the leaders for them to kill me. ²² I, the one who was born in this world, will die, as God decided in the beginning. But it will be terrible for the person who gives me to the leaders so that they can kill me!”

²³ Then the men asked each other, “Which one of us would do that!”

About being like servants

²⁴ The disciples began grumbling to one another. They said, “Which of us is greater than the others? And which of us will become ruler over the other men?”

²⁵ So Jesus said to them, “The kings of those people who don’t know God are very powerful. They really control their people but they tell them to say to them, ‘You should say to us, You are kind and generous rulers.’

²⁶ “But that shouldn’t happen here with you. The most important one of you should be like the youngest one. The leader should work like a servant who works for others.

²⁷ “If a person eats food that other people have cooked for him, tell me, which person would you call the most important? I will tell you. When other people cook food for him, then the person who doesn’t cook and doesn’t work is the most important one. But I am here with you like a servant.”

²⁸ Jesus also said to them, “Before when people hated me and made trouble for me, you stayed with me and looked after me all the time. ²⁹ My Father has made me a ruler, and I will make you

people rule too. ³⁰ I will make you rule when my Father makes me King over everyone. You will rule over the twelve tribes of Israel and then you will eat and drink with me in my kingdom.”

About Jesus telling Peter he would deny him

³¹ Then Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, listen. Satan has wanted to test you all to see if you are good. He has asked God and God won’t stop him. So when Satan tests you, he will separate you, the good people from the bad.

³² “But I have prayed for you, Simon, that you will keep on trusting me. Soon you will leave me. You will deny me, but you will come back to me again. And when you come back, you must help your brothers be strong.”

³³ But Simon Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, I am ready to go where you go. If they shut you up in jail, they can shut me up too. If they kill you, then they can kill me too. I won’t reject you, I won’t leave you!”

³⁴ Jesus said, “That is not so. Tonight, before the rooster calls out, you will say three times that you do not know me.”

About money, things and swords

³⁵ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “When I sent you before to different places, you didn’t take any money or things or shoes with you. I sent you empty-handed. But you were all right; you stayed in other people’s houses and ate their food, didn’t you?”

“Yes, we did,” they answered.

³⁶ Jesus said, “But now you must take money and things and a sword with you when you go. If you haven’t got a sword, you must swap your clothes for someone

else's sword, so that you will have one to take.

³⁷ "Long ago these words were written:

'He died just like wicked men die.'

I am telling you now, this is about me. I will die just like wicked men. And so it will really happen as these words say.'

³⁸ They said, "Look, Lord! Here are two swords for you!"

Jesus answered, "That is enough!"

About Jesus praying on the Mount of Olives

³⁹ Jesus went downstairs and out of the house. He and his disciples went out to the Mount of Olives, where they always used to go.

⁴⁰ When they arrived there, Jesus said to his disciples, "Stay here and pray, so that you will keep standing firm when Satan tests you." ⁴¹ Then Jesus left the men and went a short way away and knelt on the ground and prayed to God. ⁴² He said, "Father, I am about to die, but no! Let me go, please, so that I won't have to suffer. But because you have already decided, even if I don't want to, I am ready to do your will, and so I must suffer."

⁴³ Then while Jesus was praying, an angel came and appeared to him. He came down from heaven and made him strong. ⁴⁴ But Jesus became very upset and he prayed to his Father again. He prayed and prayed. Sweat came out of his body like blood and fell to the ground.

⁴⁵ When he had finished praying, he got up and went back to his disciples, but the men had fallen asleep because they were so upset.

⁴⁶ Jesus said to them, "Why are you asleep? Get up now, so you

can pray and keep standing firm when Satan tests you."

About some men taking Jesus

⁴⁷ But while Jesus was still speaking to his disciples, a crowd of people arrived. The chief priests, officers in charge of the temple guards, and elders were coming to take Jesus. One of Jesus' disciples called Judas was leading them. He came up to Jesus and kissed him.

⁴⁸ Jesus said to Judas, "You kissed me so that the soldiers could take me, didn't you! You kissed me, the one who was born in this world!"

⁴⁹ When Jesus' other disciples saw Judas, they knew what would happen and asked, "Lord, do you want us to fight with our swords?"

⁵⁰ And one of them pulled out his sword and hit one of the men, cutting off his right ear. The man worked for the high priest in the temple.

⁵¹ But Jesus said, "That is enough! Leave him alone!" And he touched the man's ear and healed it.

⁵² Then Jesus spoke to the chief priests and the officers in charge of the temple guards and the elders and said, "You have come to me with swords and sticks, but I am not a thief. ⁵³ I was with you in the temple every day, and you did not try to take me until today. But now you can take me because God won't stop you, and because you are powerful and wicked men."

About Peter denying Jesus

⁵⁴ They took hold of Jesus and took him away to the high priest. And Peter followed them. ⁵⁵ When they arrived at the high priest's house, they took Jesus inside but they themselves stayed outside and sat down beside a fire.

Afterwards Peter also arrived and sat down with them. ⁵⁶ One

of the servant girls noticed Peter sitting by the fire and she looked straight at him and said, "This man was with Jesus too!"

⁵⁷ But Peter denied it and said, "I don't know the man!"

⁵⁸ After a little while a man noticed Peter and said, "You are one of his friends too!"

But Peter answered, "No, I am not!"

⁵⁹ Later on another man said, "I am sure you were with Jesus, because you are both Galileans!"

⁶⁰ But Peter said, "I don't know anything about it!" And while he was still speaking, a rooster called out.

⁶¹ The Lord turned around and looked straight at Peter, and at the same time Peter remembered the words that Jesus had spoken before. He had said, "Before the rooster calls out tonight you will say three times that you do not know me." ⁶² Then Peter went outside. He was very upset and he cried and cried.

About the men laughing at Jesus and beating him

⁶³ Some soldiers were guarding Jesus. They laughed at him and kept on beating him. ⁶⁴ Then they tied up his eyes with cloth and said, "You are a prophet, so guess! Tell us who hit you!" ⁶⁵ And they said many other things like that to him and teased him.

About taking Jesus to the leaders

⁶⁶ They kept on doing that until daylight. Then the Jewish elders met together with the chief priests and the teachers of Moses' law. And Jesus was brought to their big council meeting.

⁶⁷ The leaders said to him, "If you are the Messiah, then tell us now."

Jesus answered, "If I tell you, you won't believe me. ⁶⁸ And if I ask you questions you won't answer me. ⁶⁹ But from today I,

who was born in this world, will sit at the right side of the most powerful God."

⁷⁰ They all said, "Then you are the Son of God, are you?"

Jesus answered, "That is true, but you have said it, not me."

⁷¹ The leaders talked together and said, "That is enough! He himself has now said, 'I am the Son of God.' So we do not need to call any other people here to blame him because we ourselves have heard him say it."

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About taking Jesus to Pilate

¹ Then all the leaders got up and took Jesus to Pilate. Pilate was the Roman ruler who ruled over all the people in Judea. ² Then they began to blame him there at Pilate's place.

They said to Pilate, "We found this man speaking bad words. He has been teaching the people, telling them not to pay their tax money to the ruler Caesar. And he has said, 'I am the Messiah - I am a king.'"

³ Pilate said to Jesus, "You are the king of the Jewish people, are you?"

Jesus answered, "That is what you say."

⁴ Then Pilate spoke to the chief priests and the crowds of people and said, "I cannot find anything wrong with this man."

⁵ But they kept on saying to Pilate, "It is true, he has been teaching the people wrong things. And now he has begun to make trouble with them. He started in Galilee first of all, then everywhere in Judea, and now he has come here and he is still making trouble."

About Jesus being sent to Herod

⁶ When Pilate heard that, he asked, "Is this man a Galilean?"

and they said he was. ⁷ So Pilate quickly sent Jesus to Herod, because Herod was the ruler of the people of Galilee. Herod was also in Jerusalem at that time.

⁸ Some soldiers took Jesus to Herod, and Herod was very pleased to see him. He had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard a lot of stories about him. He was hoping to see Jesus do something powerful. ⁹ So Herod asked Jesus a lot of questions but Jesus didn't answer him.

¹⁰ The chief priests and the teachers of Moses' law were standing there and they said, "He is a bad man. He is very wicked!" And they kept on blaming Jesus with strong words.

¹¹ Then Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus and laughed at him. And Herod told his men to put some beautiful clothes on Jesus and then they took him back to Pilate. ¹² From that time the two rulers, Herod and Pilate, stopped hating each other and became friends.

About Pilate giving Jesus to the chief priests for them to kill him

¹³ Then Pilate called together the chief priests, the Jewish leaders and all the people. ¹⁴ He said to them, "You have brought this man to me because you said, 'This man is very bad and he has been teaching the people bad things.' And you have heard me question him. But I haven't found any of the bad things you were blaming him for. ¹⁵ Also, Herod couldn't find anything wrong and he sent him back here to us. I am sure he has done nothing wrong and so I cannot kill him. ¹⁶ I will tell my soldiers to beat him and let him go free."

¹⁷ (At the time of the Passover ceremony Pilate had to let one

prisoner go free, because the ruler of Judea did that every Passover.)

¹⁸ But all the people called out, "Kill this man for us and let Barabbas go free." ¹⁹ Some time before this, Barabbas and many other Jewish people had fought against the Roman people in Jerusalem. Barabbas had killed a man and he had been put in jail for it, and he was the one the people wanted, and not Jesus.

²⁰ Pilate still wanted to let Jesus go free, so he called out to the crowd again. ²¹ But they shouted back, "Kill him on a cross! Kill him!"

²² Again Pilate said to them, "Tell me, why? What wrong has this man done? I cannot find anything wrong, so I cannot kill him. I will tell my soldiers to beat him and let him go free."

²³⁻²⁴ But they kept on and on saying the same things about Jesus. They kept on shouting until at last Pilate agreed, because they kept asking him and shouting at him. So Pilate said, "This man will die!"

²⁵ Then Pilate set free the man they wanted, the one who was in jail for fighting and murder. And he gave Jesus to his soldiers so that they could do what the Jewish people wanted, and kill Jesus.

About the soldiers killing Jesus on a cross

²⁶ The soldiers took Jesus away to nail him on a cross. And Jesus was carrying the cross himself. As they were going along they met a man called Simon who belonged to a place called Cyrene. He was coming into Jerusalem and the soldiers grabbed him and put the cross on his back and told him to carry it for Jesus. And Jesus went ahead and Simon followed.

²⁷ A big crowd of people came behind them, and some women were crying and wailing.

²⁸ Jesus turned and spoke to them. "Women of Jerusalem," he said. "Don't cry for me, but cry for yourselves and for your children.

²⁹ Soon people will say, 'Women who have never had babies will be happy!'

³⁰ "At that time people will say, 'Let the mountains fall on us and let the hills hide us, so we won't live any longer here.' ³¹ Look, you can see the terrible things the leaders are doing to me today, even though I am a good man. If they do all this now to me, a good person, later on they will do terrible things to those who are really bad."

³² The soldiers were also taking two bad men to kill them with Jesus. ³³ They kept on going until they reached the place called "The Place of the Skull." There they nailed Jesus to his cross and they also nailed the two bad men to their crosses, one on the right and one on the left with Jesus in the middle.

³⁴ Then Jesus prayed. "Father," he said, "forgive them for doing this, because they don't know what they have done."

The soldiers played a game to see who would get Jesus' clothes and then they shared them.

³⁵ The people stood there watching Jesus. The Jewish leaders laughed at him. They said, "He saved other people, so let him come down to the ground by himself. He came from God, didn't he? And God chose him to be his Messiah, didn't he? Then let him come down and not die!"

³⁶ The soldiers also laughed at Jesus. They brought him some sour-tasting wine to drink ³⁷ and said, "You are the king of the Jewish people, are you! Then come down from there straight away so you won't die!"

³⁸ Before this the soldiers had put some writing at the top of the cross. The words said, "This is the king of the Jewish people."

³⁹ One of the men hanging on the cross near Jesus teased him and said, "You are God's Messiah, are you! Get down to the ground and save us too!"

⁴⁰ But the other one said to him, "Be quiet! Why aren't you ashamed that God has heard you? We are going to die because the leaders have blamed all three of us. ⁴¹ They are putting both of us to death because we have done wrong, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, "Jesus, remember me when you become King."

⁴³ Jesus said to him, "I promise you that this very day you and I will meet in God's beautiful place."

About Jesus dying

⁴⁴ The sun had climbed high up in the sky and it was midday, but darkness hid the sun and it stopped shining. It was like night. It stayed dark until the middle of the afternoon. ⁴⁵ Then in Jerusalem, inside the temple building, the curtain that hung down and covered the opening of the holy place was torn down the middle.

⁴⁶ Then Jesus called out in a loud voice and said, "Father, I am giving my spirit to you now." And he died.

⁴⁷ When the officer in charge of the soldiers saw what happened, he praised God, saying, "I know this was a good man!"

⁴⁸ Many people who had gathered there to see Jesus went home after they saw all that had happened. They were beating their chests as they went because they were so upset. ⁴⁹ But Jesus' friends still stood there, away from the cross, watching him. Some of

them were women who had come with Jesus from Galilee. They were all standing away from the cross watching him.

About putting Jesus' body in a cave

⁵⁰⁻⁵¹ There was a man called Joseph who was a good, honest person. He was a leader of the Jewish people and came from a place called Arimathea. He did not want Jesus to die and he was waiting for God to rule. Although other leaders wanted to kill Jesus, he didn't. ⁵² He went to Pilate and asked him if he could take Jesus' body. Pilate agreed and Joseph went back to where Jesus was. ⁵³ He took his body down and wrapped it up in a cloth and took it away to a new cave. It had been dug out of the rock, but it had never been used. ⁵⁴ That day was Friday and it was almost the Sabbath day, because the sun was ready to go down.

⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem went with Joseph to the cave. So they saw the cave and the place where he put Jesus' body inside it. ⁵⁶ They went home and got the sweet-smelling oil and powder ready for putting on Jesus' body later. Then they followed God's law and rested on the Sabbath day.

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About the empty cave

¹ Very early on Sunday morning the women went to the cave carrying the oil and powder. Mary Magdalene, Joanna and another Mary, who was James' mother, and some other women went together. ² When they reached the cave, they saw that someone had moved the big stone that had shut the opening. ³ So they went in,

but they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus inside.

⁴ While they were standing there wondering about it, suddenly two men came and appeared and stood near them. They were wearing shining clothes. ⁵ The women got a big shock and were very frightened and they bowed down to the ground.

The men said to them, "Why are you looking for a living person here in the place for the dead? ⁶ He is not here. God has made him alive again. Remember what he said to you while he was in Galilee. ⁷ He said, 'People will take me, the one who was born in this world, and they will give me to wicked people. Then they will nail me on a cross and kill me and in three days I will come alive again.' "

⁸ Then the women remembered Jesus' words, ⁹⁻¹⁰ and left the cave and went home. They told Jesus' eleven disciples and his other friends everything that had happened.

¹¹ But when the apostles heard what the women said, they thought they were being stupid and they didn't believe them. ¹² But Peter got up and ran to the cave. When he reached it he bent down and looked inside. He saw the cloth and that was all, and he too went back home, wondering and amazed.

About two of Jesus' disciples going to Emmaus

¹³ On the same day that Jesus came alive again, two of his disciples were going from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. It was a good walk but not too far. While they were going along the road, ¹⁴ they were talking together about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking, Jesus came near and walked along

with them. ¹⁶ They saw him but they didn't recognize him; they couldn't understand that it was Jesus.

¹⁷ He said, "What are you two talking about to each other as you walk along?"

They both stood still, feeling miserable, with sad faces. ¹⁸ One of them named Cleopas said to Jesus, "Have you been staying in Jerusalem and you don't know what has happened? You must be the only one who doesn't know the news!"

¹⁹ "What news?" Jesus asked.

"Surely you know they nailed Jesus of Nazareth on a cross and he died the other day," they said. "That man was a prophet. The great things that he did and said showed us that God was pleased with him. All the people were pleased with him too. ²⁰ But our chief priests and our rulers gave him to Pilate for him to be killed, and they nailed him to a cross. ²¹ We had thought, 'Maybe he is the one God will send to set Israel free!' But no! He has been dead for three days now."

²²⁻²³ "Some of our women went to the cave early this morning, but they could not find his body. They came back to us and said, 'We saw two angels. They came and appeared to us and told us that Jesus is alive again now.' And we were amazed to hear that. ²⁴ Some men from our group also went to the cave, and they saw that it was empty, just as the women had said, but they didn't see Jesus."

²⁵ Jesus said to them, "Don't you know God's words that were written long ago? Do you still not know that they are true? You are very silly. ²⁶ You should know that the Messiah, the one God was to send to you, had to suffer before God makes him rule."

²⁷ Then Jesus explained to them everything that was written about him long ago in God's book. He told them what Moses said and also what the prophets said.

²⁸ Then they came near Emmaus. Jesus acted as if he were going straight ahead, ²⁹ but they stopped him and said, "Stay with us. It will soon be night."

So Jesus went inside and stayed there with them. ³⁰ He sat down to eat and took some damper and thanked God for it. Then he broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but Jesus disappeared.

³² They said to each other, "We felt excited when Jesus spoke to us, when we were coming along the road and he was explaining God's word to us."

³³ Straight away they got up and went back to Jerusalem and found the eleven disciples. The disciples had come together with some other friends of Jesus, ³⁴ and they said, "The Lord really has come alive again! He has appeared to Simon!"

³⁵ Then Cleopas and the other disciple told them about meeting Jesus on the road, and what he had said about God, and about them recognizing Jesus when he broke the damper.

About Jesus appearing to his disciples

³⁶ While the two disciples were speaking, the Lord Jesus suddenly came and appeared among them and said, "Peace be with you."

³⁷ But his disciples got a big shock and were very frightened. They thought he was a ghost. ³⁸ Jesus said to them, "Why are you afraid? Why do you still not believe me? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. I am real! Feel me so you will know it is really

me. You can see my flesh and my bones. A ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, so I cannot be a ghost. I am a real person."

⁴⁰ Jesus showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ Then they were very happy, but they were still wondering because they still couldn't believe. Jesus said to them, "Have you anything for me to eat?" ⁴² They gave him some cooked fish, ⁴³ and they watched him eat it.

⁴⁴ Then Jesus said, "Now you have seen that I really am alive again. That is what I told you before, when we were all together. Long ago Moses and the prophets spoke about me and the people who wrote the songs to praise God spoke about me too. Everything they said has come true because God planned it."

⁴⁵ Then Jesus explained God's words to his disciples so that they would understand, ⁴⁶ and he said, "This is what is written:

'The Messiah must suffer and die and come alive again on the third day.'

⁴⁷ God's people must tell others about the Messiah in all different places. First they must tell about him in Jerusalem and then in all the world. They must tell people to stop doing wrong and obey God, so that he can forgive them. ⁴⁸ You disciples of mine know everything that has happened, because you have seen with your own eyes. So you are the ones who must tell other people everything you have seen and heard.

⁴⁹ "My Father has promised that you will receive his Spirit, and I am the one who will send the Spirit to you. But you must stay here in Jerusalem and wait until God's Spirit comes down in power and touches you."

About Jesus going up to heaven to his Father

⁵⁰ When Jesus had finished speaking, he took his disciples out of Jerusalem to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While Jesus was still speaking, he moved away from them and was taken up into heaven.

⁵² The disciples worshipped him and went back to Jerusalem. They were filled with joy. ⁵³ After that they stayed in the temple all the time, praising God.

Paul's letter to the Ephesian people

Paul wrote to God's people in Ephesus and he told them that they should all live in one group together with Jesus Christ. They should always remember that Jesus Christ loves them and that he is very kind and forgives them for the wrong they have done.

¹ I, Paul, am writing this letter to send to all you God's people who live in Ephesus. God chose me as an apostle to work for Jesus Christ. So now I am writing this to you who trust in him.

² I pray that our Father God and Jesus Christ our Lord will be kind to you people in Ephesus, and give you peace.

About the good things God has freely given us

³ Let us praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is very kind, and he has freely given us good things from heaven. He has given us those good things for our spirits, because we have fellowship with Christ.

⁴ Long, long ago, before God made the world, he chose us to be his own people, because we have fellowship with Christ. God wants to keep us separate for himself and to make us perfect. He loved us so much, ⁵ that he decided long ago that he would make us his people, because Jesus Christ would save us. This is what God wanted in the beginning and what pleased him.

⁶ Let us praise God, because he is very kind and he has freely given us Jesus Christ, the Son he loves so much.

⁷ Christ died for us. He poured out his blood for us and set us free. So God has forgiven our sins.

He is very kind to us. ⁸ Yes, he is really kind to us.

God is very wise.

⁹⁻¹⁰ Because of that, long ago in the beginning, he decided to make Christ ruler. He said, "I will make Christ ruler, and he will be the most important ruler of all. He will rule over everything in heaven and on earth." But we didn't know that word before. Then at last God showed himself to us and sent Christ into the world. This is what he wanted and what pleased him. And so he let us know that he will make Christ ruler. When will God do that? We don't know, but God knows. But we do know that God will make Christ ruler over everything.

¹¹⁻¹² Some time ago we Jewish people who believed in God had fellowship with Christ. At that time God chose us to be his, because he had already decided it long before that. He is the one who controls everything as he has planned. So he chose us, who were the first to trust in Christ, so that we could praise him. And we will praise him because he is very wonderful.

¹³ And you too are God's people. You too heard the true message, the good news that Christ can save you, and now you believe in him. First of all God made a promise and said to you, "I will give you my Holy Spirit so that it will be a sign that you belong to me." Then he gave the Spirit to you.

¹⁴ We know that God has already given his Spirit to us his people. Because of that we know that he will give us more good things for our spirits, and he will set us free forever. So let us praise God, because he is very wonderful.

Paul's prayer

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Because of everything I have said to you, I keep thanking

God today that you believe in the Lord Jesus. Before, when you first trusted Jesus, people told me about you. They said, "These Ephesian people love all God's people." I thanked God then and I have kept on thanking him for that. And I keep praying to God for you, ¹⁷ the one who is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Father and he is very great and so I am asking him to make you wise and show himself to you so that you will know him well. ¹⁸ And I am asking God to open your minds so that you will see his light. And I want you to hope in God and know that he will give us everything good for our spirits. He will give freely now and always.

¹⁹ I want you to know that God is very strong. No one else is so powerful. He is powerful and he will make us his people strong. ²⁰ He was powerful when he made Christ come alive again. And he was powerful when he took Christ up into the heavens. He made him sit at his right hand because Christ is very great.

²¹ All rulers are important people. But even if they are very important, Christ is much greater than they are. He rules forever over all the rulers in the heavens and in this world. And his name is greater because he himself is greater. He is very great now and he always will be. ²² God has made Christ Lord over everything. He gave him to us so that he would become ruler over us who belong to God. ²³ But Christ is not alone. We, God's people, are like his body and Christ is in all places and he works in all places.

2

About God saving us

¹ Before you knew God, you were separated from him. You were like dead people, because you had disobeyed God and done wrong. ² At that time you lived like people who don't know God. You were sinners, always doing what is wrong. You obeyed Satan, the one who rules over the evil spirits above. And he still works today in people who do not obey God.

³ But all of us disobeyed God. We did what we wanted to do, whatever came into our minds. And we did what our bodies wanted, and anything other people were doing, we did that too.

Because of that God should have been angry with all of us, ^{4,5} but he had pity on us. While we were still doing wrong things, we were like dead people. But God's pity goes on forever; it never ends. God loves us so much. He is full of pity and love. And so he saved us so that we could have fellowship with Christ. God saved us because he is kind. ⁶ God made Jesus Christ come alive and he took him up to heaven and made him sit down to rule there. And God has taken us to heaven too, and we too are ruling with Jesus Christ because we have fellowship with Jesus Christ. ⁷ God has made us rule so that everyone will know that he is always very kind. And because he is kind he sent Jesus Christ to us to show us that he really loves us.

⁸⁻⁹ You didn't save yourself, even if you were a good person and always did good. The good things you have done didn't save you, but God was kind to you and saved you when you trusted in Jesus Christ. God saved you himself so that you would not be proud about being saved. ¹⁰ God has saved us all. He decided to make us and he said, "I will make my

people so that they will do good, because they will have fellowship with Jesus Christ."

About us having fellowship with Christ

¹¹ Now think about this, you people who aren't Jews. You know what we Jewish people used to say to you. We said, "You aren't God's people because you are not circumcised. You don't belong with us Jews. We are God's people, because we are circumcised." We were proud.

¹² At that time you weren't with Christ, and you were different from us Jews, the ones God had chosen. You didn't know the promises God gave us his people. He didn't make those promises to you but to us Jewish people. At that time you didn't know God. So you didn't believe in him, and you didn't think about being with God tomorrow or next month.

¹³ But now you have fellowship with Jesus Christ. You used to be far away from God, but now God has brought you close to himself, because Christ poured out his blood and died for you.

¹⁴ Christ is the one who has stopped the fighting between us Jewish people and you who aren't Jews. When he died he stopped us all from fighting, so that we could have fellowship together. He was the one who did all that, and no one else. Because of that we have fellowship together today.

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Long, long ago God told Moses his laws and Moses told them to his people. And those laws made us different from you. But Christ died on the cross for us and made peace between us and made us all one group. He brought us all together to bring us all back to God. So today those laws are finished, they don't make us different any more and we are

all the same. It doesn't matter that we are Jews and you are not Jews, we are all one group now.

¹⁷ When Christ came into the world, he spoke to you who were far away from God and to us who were near him. He said, "Don't keep on fighting each other, but come to me so that I can give you peace." ¹⁸ God's Spirit helps us all today to go to our Father, because Christ died for us all. ¹⁹ So now you who are not Jews are no longer different from us but we are all the same. We are all God's people, like brothers and sisters.

²⁰⁻²¹ All of us God's people are like one big building. We are like God's building. But his real building is holy, and we worship God there. That building stands on firm rock. We apostles whom God chose first and also his prophets are like that rock. But Jesus Christ is like the special stone, the most important stone in God's building. He is the one who has brought all of us different people together, so that we can all be in one group today. It is just as though we people are joined together into one holy building. ²² God is bringing us together today so that we can have fellowship with Jesus Christ. So now we Jewish people and you who are not Jews are slowly coming closer together. We are like God's real building, and God's Spirit lives there all the time.

3

About Paul working for the people who are not Jews

¹ I am in jail because I have been telling you people about Jesus Christ. Even though I am in jail, I am praying to God for you, because I know that you who are not Jews are God's people too.

² Maybe you have heard that God has been kind to me. He has

chosen me to tell you about him, because it is good that you should know. ³ God has made clear to me this news that was hidden at first. I have already written something about it. ⁴ If you read it you will understand how I found out the news about Christ that was hidden at first.

⁵ Long ago God didn't tell even one person the news that was hidden. But today God has told us through his Spirit. He has made clear to us his apostles and also to his prophets the news that was hidden. ⁶ God has shown us that he will do good for all of us, us Jews and you people who are not Jews, all of us the same, because Jesus Christ died for us all. We are all one group. So that promise God made to us is for you too, because Jesus Christ died for us all.

⁷ God chose me to work for him and to tell others about Jesus Christ. He was very kind to me, and he helped me by giving me his power so I could do his work. ⁸ Are there any of God's people who are not important? I am much less important. But God gave me this good work to tell you too the good news about Jesus Christ. This good news tells us that Christ is rich in good things. We will never finish finding out about his good things.

⁹ God has also given me the work of making clear to you and to all people what he has decided that he should do. Long, long ago God made everything, but he kept hiding his good news until today. ¹⁰ He kept it hidden so that today all kinds of rulers above will know that he is wise and knows everything. They will know when they see God's people obeying God.

¹¹ Long ago God decided that we would all belong to him, we Jewish people and you people who

are not Jews. And he decided that Jesus Christ our Lord would be the one to make us all God's own people. ¹² So now we shouldn't be afraid but we should come near to God boldly. We can come boldly to him because we have fellowship with Christ and because we trust in him.

¹³ My friends, don't be discouraged about me being in jail. It doesn't matter that I am here because I have told you about Jesus Christ. Good things will happen to you later because I am here today.

About Christ's love

¹⁴ I am praising our Father, because now I know his word that was hidden at first. Now I know that God has saved you people who are not Jews, just as he has saved us Jews. ¹⁵ God is the Father of us and of all people in this world and also in heaven above, and we take our name from him.

¹⁶ God is very strong and full of power. So I am always praying, "Make the Ephesian people strong through your Spirit, so they will be strong to do good. ¹⁷ And may Christ stay with them because they really trust in him. And may they always know his love. When they think about him loving them, may they stand strong. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹ May all your people everywhere know clearly that Christ loves them very much. May they know that he never stops loving us all the time. Christ's love is very great and we can never know it properly. So may they know that Christ loves them, so that they can follow you completely and be like you. Amen."

²⁰ Let us praise God now, because he is very powerful and he works in us today. But we can't even imagine the powerful things that he can do for us. ²¹ So let us praise God, all of us God's people. And when people see Christ let

them too praise God. Let us keep on praising God, now and always.

4

About being in one group, like one body

¹ Listen to what I, who am in jail, am telling you. I am in jail because I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. God has chosen you to be his own people. So you who belong to him should go straight on his road.

² Don't be proud, but go quietly on God's road. Be gentle and patient. And don't get tired of each other but keep loving one another all the time. ³ God has brought us together by his Spirit to make us friends. So you should really want to stay together, to love and help each other in peace.

⁴ We are all one people. We are like one body. And God has given his one Spirit to us all. He has chosen us all in the same way so that we can hope in him in the same way. ⁵ There is one Lord and we trust in him in the same way, and we have been baptized in the same way. ⁶ There is only one God and one Father of us all. He rules over us all and over all the world. He takes us all to do his work and he is among us.

⁷⁻¹⁰ God's word tells us that Christ has gone back to his Father in heaven. It says,

"He went first to heaven,
and took many people with him.
And they followed him afterwards.
Then he gave good things to his people."

You know that first Christ came down from above, and he was born like us and lived like us in the world. Then afterwards the same one who came down went up again, so that he could be everywhere and give us good

things. Christ has freely given good things to each one of us.

¹¹ What kinds of good things has Christ given to us? He has given different kinds of work to us his people and he helps us to do that work. He has chosen some of us to be apostles, and some to be prophets to tell people his word, and some to tell people who don't know him about Jesus Christ so that they may believe in him too. And he has chosen some to look after his people and some to teach them his word.

¹² Yes, that's right, Christ has chosen us workers to make each other strong. We should help each other to be strong to work for him all the time. ¹³ We should help each other until we all have the same faith in God's Son. And we should help each other until we all know him in the same way, until we become really strong. We should let our minds keep growing until we become wise like Christ. Then we will understand God's word. We shouldn't be like children who don't understand yet.

¹⁴ Listen. Some people might tell us lies, first one thing and then another. They might make up different things and then want to teach them to us, but we mustn't listen to things like that. We should be strong and keep on going on God's straight road.

¹⁵ We must speak the truth. We mustn't speak angrily to people but quietly, so that they know that we love them. We must try to be like Christ, the one who rules over us. He is like the head and we are like his body, ¹⁶ with its arms and legs. The head controls the arms and the legs. When your legs are doing good work and getting strong, and when your arms are also doing good work and getting strong, then your body will work well and be strong. In

that way Christ controls us God's people. And we must each keep on working well and loving each other. Then we will make each other strong in one group.

Start living like new people

¹⁷ I am speaking to you for the Lord Jesus Christ, and so I am warning you. Don't go on living like people who don't know God. Their thoughts are no good. So don't be like them.

¹⁸ Those people are hard. They don't want God and they have turned their backs on him. They don't have the real life that God gives us. They walk in the dark. They are blind. ¹⁹ They are no longer ashamed of what they are doing. They have decided to do wrong. They don't think about anything good, only what is bad. They keep on running off with people they shouldn't be with. Those people who don't know God are always doing all kinds of bad things.

²⁰ But those who taught you didn't tell you to do those kinds of things. ²¹ They taught you the truth about Jesus and you heard their words and so you know about him. ²² So don't go on doing what you used to do, because those bad things you wanted were spoiling you. Get rid of sin, just like you get rid of old clothes that are no use now. ²³ Do what is good with a clean mind, just as though you are putting on good, new clothes. ²⁴ Start that good new way like new people, because God has made you new like himself. So walk straight on God's road all the time.

²⁵ So you must not tell lies any more. When God's people are talking together, you must tell the truth, because we are all in one group with Christ like friends. ²⁶ When you get angry, don't do

wrong. And don't stay angry all day. ²⁷ And don't let Satan get into you. ²⁸ You thieves who have been stealing things must stop stealing and work now. You must do good work to get honest money so you can share with poor people.

²⁹ And this is another thing. Don't speak carelessly with unkind words. Only use good words so that you can help other people and encourage them. ³⁰ God has chosen you to be his own people. And he has freely given you his Holy Spirit, so that you will know that you are truly his, and that he will set you free. So don't make God's Spirit sad. ³¹ Get rid of swearing and angry words. Don't keep on shouting. Don't tease other people. And don't keep telling bad things about other people. And don't be always hating each other, ³² but be kind to one another and love each other. And forgive each other's sins as God forgives you your sins. God forgives you because Christ has died for you.

5

About living in the light

¹ You are God's children whom he loves very much. So you must keep trying to be like him. ² You must love each other all the time, just as Christ loved us. He loved us so much that he died on the cross for us, and God was very pleased with him.

³ So don't think about wrong things. Don't take other people's wives or husbands, don't think about running off with women and don't be greedy, always wanting what belongs to someone else. Don't even talk about those things, because you belong to God. ⁴ And never use bad language. You should only speak good words and give thanks to God.

⁵ Don't forget this. If you do wrong and take other people's wives or husbands or run off with other women and if you are greedy, always wanting what belongs to someone else, you can't go to God. Wanting other people's things is like obeying idols instead of obeying God. If you do wrong things like that you can't have fellowship with people who God and Christ rule over.

⁶ So don't take any notice of people who want to trick you with silly words. They want you to do wrong, but God will be angry with you if you don't obey him and you keep on doing wrong all the time. ⁷ So stay away from people like that and don't go with them.

⁸ Before you belonged to God, you were doing bad things, just as though you were in the dark. But now you belong to him, and that is just like being in the light. So stay in the light, ⁹ because when you stay in the light you can be good, righteous and true. ¹⁰ And find out what the Lord Jesus Christ wants.

¹¹ You should refuse everything bad that people do who walk in the dark. But you should say to them, "What you are doing is wrong." ¹² We should be ashamed when we hear the things that bad people do in secret. We are really very ashamed and we shouldn't even talk about those things. ¹³ When those bad people hear you, it will be just as though you are bringing the wrong things they have been doing out of the dark into the light. ¹⁴ That light makes everything clear. Because of that this word has been written. "You people are asleep.

You are like dead people,
but get up now!

Then Christ will be a light for you."

¹⁵ So you should think carefully about what you should do and how you should live. Don't be like people who don't know about doing good, but be sensible like wise people. ¹⁶ Work for God now all the time. Don't be lazy about following him, because many people are doing all kinds of bad things. ¹⁷ So don't be silly, but find out what the Lord wants you to do.

¹⁸ Don't get drunk with beer, because it will spoil you. Don't fill yourselves with it, but be filled with God's Spirit.

¹⁹ When God's people talk together you should tell each other about God. Rejoice and sing songs to him, not carelessly but from your hearts. ²⁰ You should thank God our Father all the time. When you worship him you should use the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

About men and women

²¹ Don't think of yourselves but obey other people because you respect Christ.

²²⁻²³ Wives, let your husbands lead, but you follow them. That is right. Christ leads and God's people follow him, so it is all right for the husband to lead. Christ saves us. He leads and controls us, and that is good. So it is right when a man leads and controls his wife. ²⁴ God's people obey him. So a woman should obey her husband.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives in the same way that Christ loved God's people. Christ loved us and he died for us, ²⁶ so that we would become God's people. And he gave us his word that makes us clean. We make our clothes clean when we wash them with water. That is like Christ making us clean. ²⁷ Christ died so that he could make us perfect and so that he could give us to himself, just as a husband gives himself his

beautiful wife. He died so that all God's people will be without sin.

²⁸ Christ really loves us very much. And you men should love your wives. You love your bodies and look after them all the time. So you should love your wives all the time. When you love them, you are really loving yourselves.

²⁹⁻³⁰ Do you men hate your own bodies? Of course not! You love your bodies and you look after them. Of course you love yourselves. And Christ loves God's people. We are like his arms and his legs, so he loves us and he looks after us all the time.

³¹ Long, long ago, God said, "When a man marries, he leaves his father and mother and goes to his wife. Then when the man and the woman are together, they are like one person." ³² This word of God's tells us about Christ and God's people in this world. At first that word was hidden but now I am making it clear for you.

³³ You men must each love your wife in the same way as you love yourself. And you wives must obey your husbands.

6

About children and their parents

¹ Children, listen carefully to what I tell you. You must obey your fathers and mothers. You must obey them all the time, because God has told you to and it is right. You mustn't disobey them, you must obey them.

²⁻³ You know the laws that God gave our Jewish people long ago. One of those laws tells us,

"You must respect your fathers and mothers so that all may go well with you, and so that you may live in the land until you are old."

That is the first law that tells us that God will do good for us. So you must respect your fathers and mothers.

⁴ Fathers, don't be angry with your children but be kind to them, so that they won't get angry when you speak to them. Bring them up properly. Keep teaching them carefully to obey Jesus Christ so that God's word will keep them going straight.

About bosses and the servants they have bought

⁵ For some of you people, bosses have paid money to others for you so that you could work for those bosses. You must never trick your bosses, you should be honest and straight with them. Even if you are afraid of them you must obey them every day. Work for them as though you are working for Jesus Christ. ⁶ Don't do careless work, but work well for them. You should work well for them when they can see you and when they can't see you. Do everything properly, everything that God wants you to do. ⁷ And don't grumble, just work well, because you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. So when you work for other people, work as though you are working for him.

⁸ If you work well, the Lord Jesus Christ will be good to you. It doesn't matter if you work for bosses who have paid money to other people for you. And it doesn't matter if you work for bosses who pay you, because you don't belong to them. He will do good for all of you.

⁹ You bosses who have bought people to work for you, you must be honest and straight with them too. Don't say to them, "I will beat you if you don't work well!" You bosses and your servants are all the same to God. He is the Lord

of you all, bosses and workers too. He doesn't say, "Maybe this man is a boss, maybe he is a servant." He says, "Maybe this man is good, maybe he is not."

About fighting Satan

¹⁰ Dear friends, I haven't got a lot more to say, just a few words. Stay close to the Lord. He is very powerful, so don't leave him, stay close to him so that he can make you strong.

¹¹ God has given us strong things for fighting Satan and you must take them and wear them so that when Satan tries to trick you and tempt you to do wrong, you can keep standing strong. ¹² We really are in a fight with Satan now. We aren't fighting with other people, but with Satan and with his evil spirits. They rule over this dark world and they are the evil ones in the heavenly world. Satan has many different evil spirits and they are all very bad. ¹³ So take all those strong things God has given you for fighting Satan so that when Satan and his evil spirits come to you, you may be able to stand straight. Take those strong things so that you will be able to keep standing without falling.

¹⁴ So stand up and be like God's soldier. Speak true words that God gives you. That is like tying a strong belt around your waist. Go straight all the time without doing wrong. That is like wearing iron on your chest. ¹⁵ Take God's good news to people. That is like wearing something strong on your feet. You must take God's word to them so that his word will give them peace. ¹⁶ Trust God all the time. That is like carrying a wooden shield all the time so that Satan's burning spears won't hit you. ¹⁷ Believe that Jesus

Christ has saved you. That is like wearing those hard helmets that soldiers wear on their heads. And take God's word. That is like taking a sword. And God's Spirit will help you to drive Satan away with God's word, just like soldiers who drive people away with their swords.

¹⁸ You should also pray to God. His Spirit will teach you the words to say to him. So don't stop praying but keep on asking him every day to help you and all of us who belong to him.

¹⁹ And also I want you all to ask God to help me too. Ask him to give me the right words, so that I won't be afraid but I will speak strongly when I tell other people the good news that was hidden about Jesus Christ. ²⁰ Even though I am in jail, I should keep on working for Jesus Christ and speaking for him. So ask him to make me strong, so that I can keep on speaking boldly for him all the time.

Last words

²¹⁻²² I want you to know about me. So I have sent Tychicus to you, the one I love and who always works well for the Lord Jesus Christ. He will tell you good news about me and about all God's people here. So don't be upset.

²³ I am praying that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ will give you peace, and that you will keep on loving each other and loving God and trusting in him. ²⁴ And I pray that God will be kind to you who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul's first letter to Timothy

When Paul was telling people about Jesus Christ, Timothy helped him. He and Paul were good friends. Paul wrote to Timothy to tell him how to be a good disciple of Jesus Christ and how to help God's people. He also told Timothy about leaders in the church and how they should live.

¹ I, Paul, am writing to you, Timothy. God and Jesus Christ chose me as an apostle of Jesus Christ. They told me to spread Jesus' teaching everywhere. God has saved us, and Jesus Christ is the one who will take us to heaven. ² You are like my son, because I was the first to tell you about Jesus Christ. So now you believe in him.

May God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord be kind to you and have pity on you and give you peace.

About wrong teaching

³ When I was on my way to Macedonia, I saw you at Ephesus, and I said to you, "Stay here at Ephesus." I persuaded you and so you stayed, and I want you to go on staying there, because some of the people have been teaching lies. That is very wrong. So say to them, "Don't teach people wrong things, ⁴ and don't take any notice of stories that aren't true and don't spend all your time thinking about the names of your ancestors. When you keep thinking about those things, you argue. Those kinds of things won't help us to know what God wants. But when we trust him we know what he wants us to do."

⁵ You must tell them that so that they will love each other.

If they have good clean minds and if they do what they know is good and if they trust God, they will have real love. ⁶ But some people aren't doing those kinds of things any more. They keep on arguing with silly words. They are like people who are lost and who have forgotten where they are. ⁷ They want to teach God's laws to others, but they don't know what they are talking about. They speak boldly like wise people but they don't know anything. ⁸ We know that God's laws are good if we follow them properly. ⁹ We know that those laws were only made for people who do wrong and not for good people. They were made for those who don't obey God and don't obey other people either. Those people turn their backs on God. They hate him and they live as they like. They keep on doing wrong. Some murder people, even killing their fathers and mothers. ¹⁰ They take other people's wives or husbands. Those sort of men and women do all kinds of bad things with their bodies. They steal people and take them away. They tell lies and they tell people lies about each other. They are always doing wrong things like that. But God has taught us to do what is good. ¹¹ And he has given me the good news to tell others. God is very great and we must praise him.

About Paul praising God for his kindness

¹² I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, the one who has made me strong to work for him. And I thank him because he has trusted me and chosen me to do his work. ¹³ I used to speak badly about him and I hated him and made trouble for God's people. I was a proud and cruel man. But God had pity on me, because I didn't

know his Son Jesus then, and so I didn't know I was doing wrong. ¹⁴ And our God was very kind to me. He helped me to trust in Jesus Christ and to love other people because all of us have fellowship with Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ Jesus Christ came down from heaven into the world to save us sinners. That is very true and we should believe it. And I am the very worst sinner. ¹⁶ But God had pity on me so that Jesus Christ could show other people that he would keep on waiting for them. Jesus Christ kept on waiting for me, even though I was so bad, until I trusted him. He wanted other people to know he would wait for them too, in the same way he waited for me. He will wait for them until they believe in him and he makes them alive forever.

¹⁷ Let us praise God our King who rules forever. He cannot die, he will live forever. We can't see him, but he is the only God. So let us honour him forever because he is so great. Amen.

¹⁸ You are like my son, and you must do what I tell you, because I am following the words God gave some people when they spoke before about you. When you fight against Satan, think carefully about the words they spoke. ¹⁹ And keep trusting in Jesus Christ and doing what you know is right.

Some people know the right thing to do but they haven't done it, they have done wrong and they don't believe in God any more. ²⁰ Two men, Hymenaeus and Alexander, have kept on doing wrong, and I have given them to Satan, so that he can control them. Because of that they will know that they have done wrong and stop speaking badly about God.

2

About people meeting at church

¹ Timothy, when any of you pray to God, I want you to thank him and ask him to give everyone what they need. ² You should pray for kings and for all other leaders. You should pray for them so that they will look after us, and we can live peacefully in a quiet place and obey God and do what is right.

³ It is good when we pray to God. He will hear us and be pleased with us. He is the one who saves us, ⁴ and he wants to save everyone. He wants us to know the truth, ⁵ because he alone is the one God, and there are no others like him. And there is only one person who can take us to him so that we can be together, and that is the man, Jesus Christ. ⁶ Jesus didn't refuse to give himself but he died for us so that at that time he could set us all free. Because of that we know that God wants to save all of us. ⁷ And because of that God chose me to be an apostle and to tell people about Jesus Christ. That is true. I am not lying, I am speaking the truth. God sent me to the people who are not Jews to tell them the truth, so that they can hear and trust in Jesus Christ.

⁸ Listen! When people go to church, when they meet together, I want the men to pray to God. Those men who lift up their hands to pray must not argue angrily, but they must pray to God quietly because they are his people.

⁹ And I don't want the women to wear the wrong kind of clothes that will make us feel ashamed. They should wear the right kind of clothes. And they shouldn't make themselves beautiful with gold bangles and lovely necklaces and expensive clothes and doing different things to their hair.

¹⁰ But if they keep busy doing good for other people, that's what will make them beautiful. If they say to each other, "We are Christians and we worship God," they should do good work. Then they will be beautiful.

¹¹ When the men teach the women, the women should not be proud but they should listen to them quietly. ¹² I do not want the women to teach the men or lead them. They must listen quietly to the men. ¹³ I am saying this to you because God made Adam first and then Eve. ¹⁴ The snake tricked Eve and not Adam. It was the woman who didn't obey God and listened to the snake. ¹⁵ If a woman doesn't shame other people but loves them and trusts God and has a clean mind, then God will save her when she has children.

3

About church leaders

¹ If any man wants to lead God's people and look after them, then he is wanting a good work. Truly that work is good.

² But what kind of person should lead God's people? He must be good all the time. He must have only one wife. He must only think about what is good. He must speak gently without getting angry. When strangers come, he must ask them into his home and make them comfortable. And he must be good at teaching people God's word. ³ He must not get drunk or be a troublemaker. He must be gentle with people and peaceful. And he must not love money. ⁴ He must look after his own family well and control his children so that they obey him. ⁵ If a man can't look after his own family, how can he look after God's people? He can't do it.

⁶ But a church leader mustn't be someone who has only known

God for a short time, he should be someone who has known God for a long time. If he has only known God for a short time, he might be proud and he might think, "I am an important person." If he thinks that, then God will say, "That person is very bad." Long ago Satan too thought he was important. But God said, "Satan is bad." That kind of person shouldn't be a leader over God's people. ⁷ When people who don't know God see a man leading God's people, they should say, "That man is very good." But if they say, "He is bad," then he shouldn't be a leader over God's people because Satan will control him and those people who don't know God will shame him.

About church helpers

⁸ Church helpers must also be good. When people see them they will say, "Those people are very good." But those helpers mustn't have two minds. They must not drink too much wine or be greedy for money. ⁹ They must keep holding on to the truth that God has made clear to us and always do what they know is right. ¹⁰ If any man wants this work, you should test him to see if he is good. If he is good he can work for God.

¹¹ The wives of the helpers must also be good women. When people see them they will say, "Those women are very good." They must not talk about people to spread things around and make trouble but they must only think about what is good. They must be good and honest all the time.

¹² A church helper must have only one wife. He must look after his children and his family well. ¹³ If he works well, people will see him and say, "He does good work." And he will speak boldly and tell others that he trusts Jesus Christ.

About the important word that was hidden

¹⁴ I want to see you. As I write this letter to you now, I am thinking that I will see you soon. ¹⁵ But maybe I will not see you soon. If I have to wait for a while, when you read this you will know what we who belong to God's family should be doing. We belong to God's family, the God who is alive today and always. And it is we, God's people, who hold on to the truth about God and keep it safe.

¹⁶ God's word is very good. Truly that word is important that was hidden before, the one that tells us about Jesus Christ:

He came into the world, he became a person like us.

God's Spirit has shown us that Jesus has done what God wanted him to do.

God's angels have seen him.

Some of God's people have told others about him all over the world.

And some of the people in the world believe now that Jesus is God's Son.

But God has taken Jesus back again to heaven.

4

About teachers who tell lies

¹ God's Spirit tells us that some people will later reject God after trusting in him at first. They will believe in evil spirits that tell lies and they will follow their teaching. ² Other people who tell lies won't think about the bad things they have done and they won't be ashamed of them any more. So they will spread those lies to those people.

³ People like that say, "Don't marry. It is wrong to get married." And they say, "It is wrong to eat some foods, so don't eat them." But God made all those foods for

us to eat. We people who trust in God and know the truth can thank him for those foods and eat them. ⁴⁻⁵ God made everything when he spoke long ago. Everything God made is good, and we mustn't refuse anything. We should take the food he gives us and thank him for it. When we do that, the food becomes good for us to eat.

About a good servant of Jesus Christ

⁶ If you tell these things to God's people, you will be working well for Jesus Christ. You should always remember the things that God's people believe and you should keep on following the true teaching. ⁷ Some people tell each other silly stories. Don't listen to them and don't tell other people those stories, because they are no good. But keep following God all the time.

⁸ We look after our bodies and that is good. But if we keep busy thinking about God, that is better, because we will be blessed in this life and forever. ⁹ What I am telling you is true. So you should think about it carefully.

¹⁰ We work for God without stopping and we will go on working for him, because we hope in him. He is the living God, and he saves those of us who trust in him and he wants to save all people.

¹¹ You must tell all this to the people where you live. ¹² Some people might laugh at you because you are young, but you must not let them do that. You yourself must keep on doing what is right so that God's people can see that you are good and they will also know what is right for them to do. Say and do only what is right and think about what is good. Trust God and love other people.

¹³ I will come to you later. So keep busy until I come. Read God's word and teach it to the

people there and show them the right way to live.

¹⁴ You know that some men told you before about God's word to you. At the same time the church elders laid their hands on you and God's Spirit made you strong. Don't forget that, ¹⁵ but keep on working for God. You should keep busy and do good so that people can see that you are growing stronger. ¹⁶ Watch yourself and keep on telling people God's word and don't stop doing that. When you keep telling them his word, God will save you and also those who listen to you.

5

About Timothy speaking to people

¹ If an old man does something wrong, don't speak angrily to him but speak quietly. You should speak to him in the same way that you speak to your father. And speak to young men as though you are speaking to your brothers. ² Speak to old women as though you are speaking to your mother, and to young women as though you are speaking to your sisters. Speak kindly with clean thoughts.

About old widows

³ If widows are living alone, be kind to them. ⁴ But some men and women may have a mother or a grandmother who is a widow. They should be looking after her, because she looked after them when they were little. If they look after her now that she is a widow, God will be pleased.

⁵ Is there a widow who has no one to look after her and she is living alone? She has put her hope in God. She always prays to him, asking him day and night to help her. ⁶ But some widows only think about themselves. They want too

much food and drink and beautiful clothes to wear. They don't trust in God. They live like dead people, without thinking.

⁷ Tell God's people from me that they should look after widows so that no one will blame them. ⁸ It is really bad if a person doesn't take care of his family. It is as though he is rejecting God. It is wrong when people who don't know God do that kind of thing, but it is worse if God's people do it.

⁹ I want you to write down the names of the widows, so that God's people can look after them. Which widows should they look after? They shouldn't be looking after all of them but only the old widows who are over 60 years old, ones who have had only one husband, ¹⁰ and who have been good to other people. What kind of good things have they done? They have brought their children up well, and they have looked after strangers, and have helped God's people and people in trouble. And they have been busy doing all kinds of good things. Those are the kind of widows whose names you should write down.

About young widows

¹¹ Write the names of those old widows, but if any widows are not yet 60 years old, don't write their names down, because later on they may want to marry again and then maybe they will turn their backs on Jesus Christ. ¹² If they do that, they will be breaking the promise they made to Jesus Christ before and other people will see them and blame them. Jesus Christ will see them and blame them too. ¹³ Young widows like that become lazy and wander from house to house. Then they talk about other people when they aren't there and make trouble for

them. And they say things they shouldn't say.

¹⁴ I think that those widows should marry again and have children and look after their husbands and their children. Then people who hate us won't say anything bad about us who belong to God. ¹⁵ Some widows have already turned their backs on God and are following Satan now.

¹⁶ If a Christian woman has widows in her family, she should look after them herself. She must not let other Christians look after them. She must look after them herself, so that the other Christians can look after the widows who live alone.

About church elders

¹⁷ The church elders who work for God help people to follow him. So you must pay them. If they do good work and teach people God's word and show them how to behave, you should pay them more. ¹⁸ God's word tells us,

"If a bullock works for you treading on seeds so that the skins come off, you shouldn't tie up its mouth. When you do that it can't eat. So let your bullock eat some of the seeds."

And it also tells us,

"Workers should be paid for their work."

¹⁹ Sometimes people blame the church elders for doing something wrong. If one person speaks to you about it, don't take any notice. Only listen if two or three people see him doing wrong and come and tell you. ²⁰ But if an elder keeps on doing something wrong, blame him in front of the other elders so that when the other elders hear what you say they will be afraid and not do anything wrong themselves.

²¹ I am telling you this in front of God and Jesus Christ and the angels. You must obey everything

I have told you. Don't speak good words to some people and bad words to others. Speak the same way to everyone. ²² Don't choose church leaders and lay hands on them quickly. And this is another thing. If other people do wrong, don't go with them but keep doing the right thing all the time.

²³ Timothy, you only drink water, but you should drink a little wine too to make you better, because you are often sick. Wine is very good medicine for your stomach if you drink a little.

²⁴ When some people do wrong, many others find out about it quickly before a judge can blame them. But when some other people do wrong, others don't find out about it quickly but only later.

²⁵ In the same way, some people do good things and many people find out about it. But sometimes people do good and no one knows about it. But the good things they do cannot stay hidden forever.

6

About servants

¹ For some of God's people, bosses have paid money to others for them so that they can work for those bosses. But you must tell those servants from me not to be angry with their bosses but to work well for them. If the servants don't work well, other people will see that, and they will speak badly about God's name and about our teaching.

² But some bosses are Christians. So tell their servants this message from me, and say, "Don't think, 'My boss is no good,' because they are like your own brothers. Those bosses that you work for are also Christians. So you should love them and because of that you should do even better work for them."

About lying words and true words

So you must tell your people those things. ³ If anyone teaches something different to other people, then he is not holding on to the truth that Jesus Christ our Lord taught them, the teaching about doing God's will. ⁴⁻⁵ If they teach lies, they are saying to each other, "I know God," but they don't know him. They don't know anything. They say to each other, "I am an important person," and they want to argue about things that aren't true. It is wrong, because they become jealous of one another and say bad words to each other. They think bad things about each other. They don't listen to God's true teaching any more, because they can't think properly. They think, "If I follow God, I will get a lot of money."

⁶ It is true that if you follow God's road you should be happy. You should be happy just as though you are rich. But you mustn't keep wanting other things. You must say, "I have enough." Only then will you be really happy. ⁷ When we were born in this world, what did we bring with us? Nothing! We were born empty-handed. And when we die, what will we take with us? Nothing at all. ⁸ But if we have food and clothes in this world, that is enough.

⁹ Those people who want to get rich are following the wrong road. It is the bad things in their minds that tempt them to do wrong. And in the end they will lose everything and bad things will happen to them. ¹⁰ I have told you that because, when people want a lot of money very much, then all kinds of bad things happen to them. Some people have stopped following God, because

they wanted money so much. And now they are very sad. It is as though they are cutting their own hearts with a sharp knife.

Paul's last words to Timothy

¹¹ But you are a man of God. So don't do any of those wrong things I have told you about but keep on doing what is good. And don't stop following God. You must keep going straight with faith and love and be gentle with people.

¹² It is as though we who belong to God are running a race. When we run a race we don't stop or look back, we keep on running fast. We haven't reached heaven yet. So keep following God until you get there, and then you will live there forever. God called you to himself to be with him forever, and at that time when he called you to himself, you told many people that you believed in him.

¹³ God has heard everything I have told you. He is the one who gives life to all things. And Jesus Christ has heard me too. He himself boldly spoke the truth about God to Pontius Pilate. So I am telling you now ¹⁴ not to disobey God but to keep on obeying him until the Lord Jesus Christ comes back again. ¹⁵ He will come back here, because God has already decided to send him. But we don't know when he will come. Only God knows. God is the only real King. He rules over all the kings in all the world. There are no kings as powerful as he is. ¹⁶ He alone cannot die, he lives forever, in light that always shines. And no one can go near him. No one has ever seen him in the past and we can't see him today. So now let us all honour him, and may he rule over us now and forever. Amen.

¹⁷ Tell rich people not to be proud, always thinking about things that become spoilt in this

world. They should trust in God and nothing else. He is generous and he freely gives us everything good to make us happy. ¹⁸ Tell them to be good to others and to keep busy doing all kinds of good things. Tell them to be generous and to share their things with other people. ¹⁹ If they do that, then they will store up many good things that God will give them for later in heaven. Because of that then God will give them real life.

²⁰⁻²¹ You must keep safe all the true things God's people believe. You must look after them so that other people won't change them. Some people say, "Only the things that we know are true." Don't listen to those people arguing or to the silly, wrong things they say. They are going the wrong way and have lost the true things that God's people believe.

I pray that God will be kind to you and to all the people who live there with you.

The letter from James

James wrote these words to God's people so that they would know how to live in this world. He told them that they should trust in God and do good all the time.

¹ I am James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing this letter to you, God's people, and I will send it to all the different places where you are living. I am still thinking of you and I won't forget you.

About trusting in God and knowing what to do

² My dear brothers and sisters, all kinds of troubles will come to you, but don't worry. You should be very happy, ³ because when you have any kind of trouble, you can keep on trusting God even more. When you trust in him, you will become strong so that you won't do anything wrong. ⁴ You must keep on being strong so that you will be perfect and you won't need anything more to be good people.

⁵ Maybe you will say to yourself, "What shall I do? What is the right thing for me to do?" Then you should say to God, "Father, what is right, and what is wrong? I don't know, so please help me to know," because you don't know by yourself. God won't refuse, he will listen when you pray to him. He will listen to you and he will help you. He won't blame you for not knowing what to do.

⁶⁻⁸ When you pray to God, you must believe that he will really listen to you and help you. If you say to God, "Please help me," then don't think to yourself, "God won't

help me." Don't have two minds like that.

Some people can't make up their minds. First they trust in God and then later they don't trust in him any longer. Those people are like the waves in the sea. The wind blows the sea this way and that way, and those people are like the sea. God doesn't help people like that to know what is right and what is wrong.

About poor people and rich people

⁹ Maybe one of you who belongs to God is poor. But God says, "You are important, you are special." So you should be happy and remember that you belong to God.

¹⁰ Maybe another one of you who belongs to God has a lot of money. But God says, "You are rich but you are not important, you aren't special." You should be happy too. You should not be proud, because you will die, just like the wild flowers die. ¹¹ The hot sun dries the flowers and they aren't pretty any more. They die and fall. And you rich people are like that. You are busy with money because you have forgotten God. Like those flowers you too will die.

God does not tempt us to do wrong

¹² You people who keep standing strong when troubles come to you, you should be happy. God will be pleased with you, and you will stay alive forever, because God has promised those who love him that they will stay alive forever.

¹³ When troubles come to you and you want to do wrong, don't say, "God is tempting me to do wrong." God never tempts us to do wrong. So where does that wrong come from? It doesn't

come from God, ¹⁴ but it is already there in your mind. That's what tempts you and nothing else. If you keep on and on thinking about it, then you will decide to do it. ¹⁵ And if you keep on wanting to do wrong and you are still thinking about it all the time, then you will do it. And if you keep on doing more wrong, you will die and God won't save you.

¹⁶ My dear brothers and sisters, don't be tricked but listen to these true words. ¹⁷ God our Father gives us everything that is good and perfect. He doesn't send us anything bad, and he doesn't send us some good and some bad things. He is the one who freely gives us everything perfect and he doesn't change. He made the sun and the moon and the stars and put them all in the sky. During the day our shadows fall on the ground. When the sun moves our shadows move. But God never changes. ¹⁸ God decided that we should be his children when we obey his true words. He wants us to be his children so that we will be very important. We will be more important than anything he has made.

About us obeying God

¹⁹ My dear brothers and sisters, don't forget this. You mustn't be always telling people God's word, you should listen to his word. And you mustn't get angry quickly. ²⁰ When you get angry quickly you can't do the good things God wants you to do.

²¹ So get rid of all the bad things you are doing once and for all. Don't think about them any more. Don't be proud, but take in God's word that he puts in your mind and heart. That word will save you.

²² When you listen to God's word, you must do everything he

has told you to do. If you listen to it and then you quickly forget it and don't do what God wants, you are tricking yourselves. You should listen to God's word and obey it.

²³ If you listen to God's word but don't obey it, you are like someone who looks carefully at himself in a mirror. ²⁴ Then he leaves the mirror and goes away. He quickly forgets what he has seen. And you are like that man if you hear God's word and don't obey it.

²⁵ So you shouldn't do that. You should listen to God's word every day. His law is perfect and there is no other law perfect like his, because it sets us free. You should never forget it. You should keep listening to it and obeying it and doing what is right all the time. If you do that, God will make you happy.

²⁶ One of you might say, "I obey God and I worship him." But if you speak bad words, speaking carelessly all the time, you will not really be obeying and worshipping God. You will just be tricking yourself.

²⁷ But if any of you are obeying God properly and worshipping him, you will help other people all the time. You are the ones our Father God will see as perfect. When children are sad because their fathers and mothers have died, you will help them. When a widow is sad after her husband has died, you will help her too. You will keep working busily all the time. And if bad people tempt you to do wrong you will take no notice but keep on being good.

2

About loving each other in the same way

¹ Brothers and sisters, listen to this. You believe in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ our Lord is the greatest one of all. He loves all of us different people in the same way, not only some of us but all of us. So you should love all different people in the same way yourselves.

² When you meet together, suppose a rich man comes and joins you, wearing good clothes and gold rings. And suppose a poor man comes, wearing old, dirty clothes. ³ Maybe when you see the rich man you will say to him, "Come inside and sit down here." But when you see the poor man you will say to him, "Stay outside and sit over there." ⁴ That is wrong. If you say that, you are not loving all different people in the same way. You are not thinking straight, your minds are crooked.

⁵ My dear brothers and sisters, listen to this. God has chosen the poor people in this world to trust in him. He has chosen them to be his children and to go to heaven. Long ago God said, "Any of you who love me will go to heaven."

⁶ But you have made those poor people ashamed. Poor people are helpless, but rich people are powerful. Rich people are the ones who make trouble for you. Some of them take you to the judge so he will put you in jail.

⁷ They are the people who make fun of Jesus Christ. They speak bad words and they use his name in a bad way. But his name is the one people used when they baptized you. ⁸ God's law tells us, "You should love your neighbour as you love yourself." If you obey that law, you will be doing the right thing. ⁹ But if you only love some people and not everyone, you will be breaking God's laws and doing wrong.

¹⁰ If you break just one of God's laws, even if you don't break the

others, God will say, "You have broken all my laws." ¹¹ God said, "Don't take another man's wife." And the same God said, "Don't murder anyone." So, if you don't take another man's wife, but you murder someone, you are breaking all God's laws. ¹² God has given us his laws that set us free. So you should speak and do what those laws say.

¹³ Because of that, you must forgive people when they make trouble for you. If you don't have pity and forgive other people their sins, God won't have pity and forgive you your sins. So remember that God has pity on us. If you forgive other people who have made trouble for you, then you will go with a clean heart because God will also forgive you your sins.

About trusting God and doing good

¹⁴ Brothers and sisters, if one of you says, "I trust in God all the time," but you don't obey God, you think God will save you just because of what you said, don't you! No, he won't! God won't save you just because you speak like that.

¹⁵ Listen! Suppose some men and women who belong to God are poor. They have no money, and wear old clothes, and are always hungry. ¹⁶ If you don't give them clothes and food, then don't say, "You poor things, may God be with you! Don't worry! Go home and put on some warm clothes to keep yourself warm and have something to eat." If you don't help those people and don't do anything for them, that's a terrible thing to say to them. You should help those poor people.

¹⁷ When any of you believe in God but don't obey him, that is

very wrong. You should believe in God and also obey him. That is good.

¹⁸ Maybe one of you will say to me, "Look! That man believes in God but he doesn't obey him. And this man doesn't believe in God but he is always doing good." Then I will answer you, "If a person doesn't obey God, how can he believe in him? I obey God and you can see everything I do. When you see me doing good, you will know that I really believe in him."

¹⁹ You will say to me, "We know there is only one God." That is very true, but the evil spirits also say, "We know that there is only one God." But they are afraid of God and shake with fear. And they don't obey him.

²⁰ If you say, "I believe in God," but you don't obey him and you don't love other people, you are tricking yourself. You aren't talking sense.

²¹ Remember Abraham. You know that our ancestor Abraham lived long ago. And God said, "Abraham is right with me." Why did God say that about him? And how did Abraham become right with God? He became right with God when he obeyed him. God said to him, "Give me your son Isaac. Put him up on the stone altar you have made and kill him." And Abraham didn't refuse, he put Isaac on the altar. ²² Then God said, "Don't kill him!" Abraham really believed in God and obeyed him. And when he obeyed God he was showing him that he really believed in him. ²³ Listen to this word from God's book.

"Abraham believed God, and so God said, 'This man is right with me.'"

That word became true, and God and Abraham became friends.

²⁴ If any of you believe in God and obey him, God will say, "You are right with me." But if you don't obey God, even if you really believe in him, God won't say that about you.

²⁵ Listen to another story about long ago, when a woman who didn't belong to Israel lived in Jericho. She was called Rahab. She was a bad woman because she slept with many men. Even though she didn't belong to Israel, she helped two men who were from Israel. They visited Jericho to see if it was a strong city. Rahab hid the men and they got away by a different road and went back to Israel safely. Because she helped them, God was pleased with her.

²⁶ Look! If you say, "I believe in God," but you speak carelessly, just speaking words with your lips and nothing more than that, then you are just like a dead person. A dead person can't move, he can't do anything good, he can't obey God. And if you don't obey God, you will be the same as a dead person.

3

About our tongues

¹⁻² Brothers and sisters, only a few of you should become teachers, not many. I say that because God wants us all to be good, but he wants those of us who teach other people to be especially good.

Sometimes all of us say bad words that God doesn't like. But when we teachers do that, it is much worse. You think you never say anything wrong but you speak only good words, do you? If you never said anything wrong, then you would be perfect! You would be able to control your own mind, you would be able to control yourself all the time.

3-5 Our tongues are very small but they have big words. A tongue is like something that people put in a horse's mouth so they can control the horse. When the horse feels the thing in its mouth pulling it to the right, then the horse turns to the right. When it pulls the horse to the left, the horse turns to the left. So the horse always obeys people.

Now let us think about big ships. A ship has a little rudder. Even if a strong wind blows the ship away, a man can control the ship with a little rudder. And a little tongue is like that, it is like the little thing in the horse's mouth and the ship's rudder. It is small but it can speak big words about all kinds of things. Look! Even though a fire starts off small, it gets big and spreads and then it can burn big trees and burn off a big area.

6 The tongue is like a fire. Our tongues keep on talking carelessly. They speak all kinds of bad words. And those words that come out of our mouths spoil us. They spoil our bodies, our heads and our hearts, just like a fire that spoils the country. Those bad words have spoilt us from when we were born and they will go on spoiling us until we die. Bad words like that come from Satan.

7 Some people can make wild animals and birds and snakes and fish tame so they are quiet. 8 But we can't tame our tongues. Our tongues are like the bite of a death adder that is poisonous and will make us die.

9 You and I praise our Lord and Father with our tongues. But we speak bad words with them too, and we curse other people. God made those people, he made them like himself. 10 Out of the same mouth come good words to God and bad words to other people.

Brothers and sisters, that is very bad. 11 Look! A freshwater spring on dry land can't make salty water come out of it. Of course not! Only fresh water can flow from it. 12 And also, sand fig trees never have wild plums on them and a grape vine never has figs. That is impossible! And a freshwater spring on dry land can't make salty water come out of it. But out of our mouths come both good and bad words, and that is very bad.

About the knowledge that God gives us

13 If you are wise, you will do what is good and nothing else. If you are really wise, other people will see that you are good all the time. Don't be proud, go carefully and then other people will see that you are good.

14 If you are always thinking about yourself, if you are jealous of other people and always arguing with them, don't be proud, saying, "We are wise," because that is bad. Maybe you are not wise, maybe you are tricking yourselves.

15 God didn't teach you bad things like that. Satan taught you that. People who don't know God are the ones who have that kind of knowledge. 16 If any of you are jealous and always thinking about yourselves, you will make trouble for yourselves and for other people and you will do all kinds of bad things.

17 But God taught you to be wise like him. If you follow God's way, then you will go straight, you will go peacefully and you will be gentle and willing to listen. You will have pity on other people and look after them. You will know about doing only what is right and nothing wrong, and so you will

keep on doing what is right. You won't tell lies or think bad things about other people. When you do anything wrong, you won't say, "Look, I have done right." You will be honest. ¹⁸ You people who are quiet and peaceful will stop other people from fighting. When others see you always doing good, they will want to do what is right too.

4

About fighting each other

¹ Why are you always fighting each other? And why are you always arguing with each other? You are doing those things because you keep wanting all kinds of things. You become upset and you don't have any peace. ² You keep on wanting different things. If you can't have them, you are jealous and angry and kill people. You keep on wanting everything. And when you don't get them, you fight and argue with each other. You do not get what you want because you do not ask God for it. ³ And when you ask God, you do not get what you want, because you don't want what God wants but you want everything for yourself.

⁴ You bad people, you have run away from God. You go around with people who are always doing wrong as if you hate God and get angry with him.

⁵ Let us think about this word from God's book. "God has given us his Spirit, and the Spirit wants us for himself." That was not written carelessly, it is true. ⁶ But God makes us strong. That is why this word was also written long ago. "God will make you strong if you are not proud but you trust in him."

About obeying God

⁷ So obey God and fight against Satan. When you fight him he will run away. ⁸ And come close to God. When you come close to him, he will come close to you. You bad people, don't sin any more. You want to follow God's way and you want to follow Satan's way too, but you can't go both ways. So make sure you follow God's way today with one mind.

⁹ Look! Don't be happy and laugh, but cry and wail in sadness. ¹⁰ And when you pray to God, don't be proud but bow down to him and he will lift you up.

About not blaming each other

¹¹ Brothers and sisters, don't blame each other saying, "You did something wrong today." Stop that kind of talk. When God's people blame each other, it is like saying, "God's law is no good." If you say that, you are not obeying God's law. And that is like deciding if God's law is good or bad.

¹² God is the only one who has given us the law. Only God can decide if we are good or bad. He is the only one who can save us or make us die. So who do you think you are, you who keep deciding about each other if you are good or bad?

About not being proud

¹³ Now listen to me, you proud people. Some of you say, "Maybe today, maybe tomorrow, I will go away somewhere else. I will stay there for one year and work and get a lot of money." ¹⁴ But you don't know about tomorrow. You know what mist is like. At dawn it rises and covers everything. Then when the sun gets higher, the mist quickly disappears. It doesn't last long, it just covers everything for a little while. And you will live here in the world for a short time like the mist.

¹⁵ You know nothing about tomorrow. So you should say, "If God wants me to stay here and keep busy, then I will stay and do that."

¹⁶ But you people are proud and you talk a lot. But that's not good, because you don't know about tomorrow. ¹⁷ If any of you know about doing good but you don't do it, you are very bad.

5

You rich people, watch yourselves!

¹ Listen to me, you people who are so rich. You had better start to cry now, because big trouble is coming to you soon.

² Your things are spoilt now. Your clothes are worn out, ³ and your gold and silver are spoilt. And because they are spoilt I know that you are bad people. Just as your silver and gold have spoiled, your flesh will go bad. You have been busy all the time collecting money for later.

⁴ Look! You haven't paid the men who work for you. They have gathered your food crops and taken them to you, and you haven't given them any money. It is as though that money is speaking bad words about you to God. He is the most powerful Lord and he has heard them.

⁵ You have done whatever you liked here in this world. You have thought about yourselves all the time. You have done just as you wanted day and night, eating and growing fat. Listen! When bullocks grow fat, what do people do? They kill them, so now you are like that fat bullock! ⁶ You have judged good people and said, "Those people are bad." They couldn't do anything and so you murdered them.

About being patient and praying to God

⁷ Brothers and sisters, keep going carefully along God's road until Jesus comes back again.

Think about yams. When it rains they get fat for you to eat. You wait patiently until they get fat and when the time comes you dig them. ⁸ In the same way we must keep waiting patiently until the Lord Jesus comes back. So don't be upset, because Jesus really will come back here soon.

⁹ Don't grumble to each other, brothers and sisters, so that Jesus will not blame you. He is the one who will decide whether you are good or bad. He has already got up to come here.

¹⁰ Listen, brothers and sisters. Long ago the prophets used to tell God's word to his people. When they suffered and were upset they didn't grumble. ¹¹ We know that God was pleased with them because they didn't grumble.

Think about Job who lived long ago. He suffered but he kept waiting and waiting and at last God helped him, because God is kind and full of pity.

¹² Brothers and sisters, listen to me carefully. You are using God's name to make your word strong. Don't use God's name, or talk about heaven or any other place in that way. When you want to say something, just say, "Yes" or "No," and that is enough. Then God won't blame you.

¹³ Has something bad happened to one of you and you are upset about it? If you are upset, tell God about it. Don't grumble but pray to God.

Are you happy today? If you are rejoicing, praise God with songs.

¹⁴ Are you sick today? If you are sick, send for the church elders, and they will pray for you.

And they will put olive oil on your head, and use Jesus' name.
¹⁵ Those people trust in the Lord Jesus, so when they ask him to heal one of you who is sick, the Lord Jesus will heal you, and he will forgive the wrong things that you have done.

¹⁶ Don't hide your sins, but tell one of God's people about them. Then he will pray to God for you. And you should pray to God for him too, so that God can heal you both. When good people pray to God their words are powerful.

¹⁷ Think of Elijah who lived long ago and was just like us. He

prayed that there would be no rain, and no rain fell for three and a half years. There was no rain in all that time. ¹⁸ Then later he prayed to God that there would be rain again. And rain fell and plants grew again for food.

Last words

¹⁹ Brothers and sisters, maybe one of you will leave God's good road and do something wrong. Then maybe another one of you will bring him back to that road. ²⁰ Remember, if you bring a bad person back to God's road you will help him, so that God will forgive him and so that he won't die.