

# *The Character of Jesus Christ*

Matthew 5-7

Romans 12:1-21

Ephesians 4:20-6:20

Colossians 3:1-17

I John 4:7-21

John 15:1-17

I Corinthians 13:1-13

Philippians 2:3-16

I Peter 2:1-3:16

Romans 5:1-5

Galatians 5:22-6:10

Philippians 4:4-9

II Peter 1:2-11

(13) Texts; (10) Bible books; (42) Major Sections; 351 verses

## **Matthew 5-7**

### **5:1-48**

**1** Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, **2** and he began to teach them.

### **The Beatitudes**

He said:

**3** "Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**4** Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

**5** Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

**6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

**7** Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

**8** Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

**9** Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.

**10** Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**11** "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. **12** Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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## **Salt and Light**

**13** "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

**14** "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

**15** Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

## **The Fulfillment of the Law**

**17** "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. **18** For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. **19** Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **20** For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

## **Murder**

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

**23** "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, **24** leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. **25** Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. **26** Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny."

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## **Adultery**

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

## **Divorce**

**31** "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' **32** But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

## **Oaths**

**33** "Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.' **34** But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; **35** or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. **36** And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. **37** All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

## **Eye for Eye**

**38** "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' **39** But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. **40** And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. **41** If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. **42** Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

## **Love for Enemies**

**43** "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' **44** But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who

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persecute you, **45** that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **46** If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? **47** And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? **48** Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

## **6:1-34**

### **Giving to the Needy**

**1** "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

**2** "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **3** But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, **4** so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

### **Prayer**

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

**9** "This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

**10** your kingdom come,  
your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

**11** Give us today our daily bread.

**12** And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

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**13** And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

**14** For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

## **Fasting**

**16** "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **17** But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, **18** so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

## **Treasures in Heaven**

**19** "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. **20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**22** "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. **23** But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

**24** "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

## **Do Not Worry**

**25** "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? **26** Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? **27** Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

**28** "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. **29** Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in

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all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **30** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? **31** So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **34** Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

## **7:1-29**

### **Judging Others**

**1** "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. **2** For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

**3** "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? **4** How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

**6** "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

### **Ask, Seek, Knock**

**7** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

**9** "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? **11** If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! **12** So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

### **The Narrow and Wide Gates**

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**13** "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. **14** But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

## **True and False Prophets**

**15** "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. **16** By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **18** A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

## **True and False Disciples**

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

## **The Wise and Foolish Builders**

**24** "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. **26** But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. **27** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

**28** When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, **29** because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

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~ **John 15:1-17** ~

## **The Vine and the Branches**

**1** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. **2** He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. **3** You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. **4** Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

**5** "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. **7** If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8** This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

**9** "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. **10** If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. **11** I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. **12** My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. **14** You are my friends if you do what I command. **15** I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. **16** You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. **17** This is my command: Love each other.

~ **Romans 5:1-5** ~

**1** Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope. **5** And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.



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~ Romans 12:1-21 ~

## **A Living Sacrifice**

**1** Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

## **Humble Service in the Body of Christ**

**3** For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. **4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

## **Love in Action**

**9** Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. **11** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. **12** Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. **13** Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

**14** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

**17** Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19** Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. **20** On the contrary:

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"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."  
**21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

~ **I Corinthians 13:1-13** ~

## **Love Is the Greatest**

**1** If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. **2** If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. **3** If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

**4** Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud **5** or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. **6** It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. **7** Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

**8** Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever! **9** Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! **10** But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless.

**11** When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. **12** Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.

**13** Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

~ **Galatians 5:22-6:10** ~

**22** But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

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**24** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. **25** Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. **26** Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

## **We Harvest What We Plant - Galatians 6:1-10**

**1** Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. **2** Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. **3** If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

**4** Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. **5** For we are each responsible for our own conduct.

**6** Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them.

**7** Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. **8** Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. **9** So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. **10** Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.

## **~ Ephesians 4:20-6:20 ~**

**20** That, however, is not the way of life you learned **21** when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. **22** You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; **23** to be made new in the attitude of your minds; **24** and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

**25** Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. **26** "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** and do not give the devil a foothold. **28** Anyone who has been stealing must steal no

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longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

**4:29** Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

## **Ephesians 5:1-33**

**1** Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children **2** and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

**3** But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. **4** Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. **5** For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **6** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. **7** Therefore do not be partners with them.

**8** For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light **9** (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) **10** and find out what pleases the Lord. **11** Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. **12** It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. **13** But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. **14** This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,  
rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

**15** Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, **16** making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. **17** Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. **18** Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, **19** speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, **20** always giving

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thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Instructions for Christian Households**

**5:21** Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

**22** Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.

**23** For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. **24** Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

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

## **6:1-20**

**1** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— **3** “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

**4** Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

**5** Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. **6** Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. **7** Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, **8** because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

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**9** And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

## **The Armor of God**

**6:10** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. **14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

**18** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. **19** Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, **20** for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

## **~ Philippians 2:3-16 ~**

**3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

**5** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

**6** Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

**7** rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

**8** And being found in appearance as a man,

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he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!

**9** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
**2:10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
**11** and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

## **Do Everything Without Grumbling**

**12** Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, **13** for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

**14** Do everything without grumbling or arguing, **15** so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky **16** as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.

## ~ **Philippians 4:4-9** ~

**4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. **9** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

## ~ **Colossians 3:1-17** ~

## **Living as Those Made Alive in Christ**

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**1** Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2** Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. **3** For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

**Colossians 3:5** Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. **6** Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. **7** You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. **8** But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. **9** Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices **10** and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. **11** Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

**12** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

**15** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. **16** Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. **17** And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

~ **1 Peter 2:1-3:16** ~

**1** Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. **2** Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, **3** now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

## **The Living Stone and a Chosen People**

**4** As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— **5** you also, like living stones, are being built into



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a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6** For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

**I Peter 2:7** Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”

**8** and,

“A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

**9** But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

## **Living Godly Lives in a Pagan Society**

**11** Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. **12** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

**13** Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, **14** or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. **15** For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. **16** Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves. **17** Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

**18** Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. **19** For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. **20** But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. **21** **To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.**

**22** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

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**2:23** When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. **24** "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." **25** For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

## **I Peter 3:1-16**

**1** Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, **2** when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. **3** Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. **4** Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. **5** For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, **6** like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

**7** Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

## **Suffering for Doing Good**

**8** Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. **9** Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. **10** For,

"Whoever would love life  
and see good days  
must keep their tongue from evil  
and their lips from deceitful speech.

**11** They must turn from evil and do good;  
they must seek peace and pursue it.

**12** For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous  
and his ears are attentive to their prayer,  
but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

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**13** Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? **14** But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." **15** But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, **16** keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

~ **II Peter 1:2-11** ~

**2** Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

**3** His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. **4** Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

**5** For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; **6** and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; **7** and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. **8** For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

**10** Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, **11** and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

~ **I John 4:7-21** ~

## **God's Love and Ours**

**7** Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live

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through him. **10** This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

**13** This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. **14** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. **15** If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. **16** And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. **17** This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. **18** There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

**19** We love because he first loved us. **20** Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. **21** And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.