

# HISTORY

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Vol. 6 - Letters & Prophecy  
{Romans-Revelation}

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The Reader's Bible

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**Vol. 6 – Letters  
& Prophecy**

**{Romans-Revelation}**

# **HIStory: The Reader's Bible Vol. 6 – Letters & Prophecy**

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## **Published in the United States of America by:**

Graham Family Ministries

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## **Note from the Editor**

I am pleased to be able to bring you this special edition of the American Standard Version Bible. This edition has been updated to contain the modern English spelling and grammar, and is known as the World English Bible.

However, because I have made changes to the format (not the text itself) I can no longer call this a World English Bible. But I did want to make you aware that the text is strictly from this version and has not been changed in any way.

I call this edition HIStory (because it is God's story!), and have subtitled it, The Reader's Bible (because it is in a format that is easy to read, just like a good book).

This 6-volume set will contain the complete Bible, with each volume including a section of Scripture. Chapter divisions, verse numbers, and all footnotes have been removed, giving the reader a wonderful reading experience without all the distractions. I have also used a larger font (14 pt.) and line spacing, making it easier to read for those who find themselves frustrated with smaller print.

My prayer is that this Bible will meet a need among believers in Christ. While this edition of the Bible is not intended for deep study, that would require being able to cross-reference and look up specific verses, I pray that it will be used to draw you into His Story, as you read through the Bible.

The Bible is the most important book of all, and I am excited to get it into this “easy to read” format for you to enjoy!

In Christ,

***Sheri Graham***

**Formatting Note on This Volume:** Since I could not make the words of Jesus red, all words of Jesus will be in bold in this volume.

## **Paul's Letter to the Romans**

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the Good News of God, which he promised before through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of the offspring of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we received grace and apostleship, for obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake; among whom you are also called to belong to Jesus Christ; to all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the Good News of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers, requesting, if by any means now at last I may be prospered by the will of God to come to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to the end that you may be established; that is, that I with you may be encouraged in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

Now I don't desire to have you unaware, brothers, that I often planned to come to you, and was hindered so far, that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. I am debtor both to Greeks and to foreigners, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much

as is in me, I am eager to preach the Good News to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the Good News of Christ, because it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes; for the Jew first, and also for the Greek. For in it is revealed God's righteousness from faith to faith. As it is written, "But the righteous shall live by faith." For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known of God is revealed in them, for God revealed it to them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse. Because, knowing God, they didn't glorify him as God, neither gave thanks, but became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless heart was darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and traded the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves; who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason, God gave them up to vile passions. For their women changed the natural function into that which is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural function of the woman, burned in their lust toward one another, men doing what is inappropriate with men, and

receiving in themselves the due penalty of their error. Even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil habits, secret slanderers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also approve of those who practice them.

Therefore you are without excuse, O man, whoever you are who judge. For in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself. For you who judge practice the same things. We know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. Do you think this, O man who judges those who practice such things, and do the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of his goodness, forbearance, and patience, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But according to your hardness and unrepentant heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath, revelation, and of the righteous judgment of God; who “will pay back to everyone according to their works:” to those who by perseverance in well-doing seek for glory, honor, and incorruptibility, eternal life; but to those who are self-seeking, and don’t obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, will be wrath and indignation, oppression

and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

But glory, honor, and peace go to every man who does good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. For as many as have sinned without the law will also perish without the law. As many as have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it isn't the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be justified (for when Gentiles who don't have the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience testifying with them, and their thoughts among themselves accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men, according to my Good News, by Jesus Christ.

Indeed you bear the name of a Jew, and rest on the law, and glory in God, and know his will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide of the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babies, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth. You therefore who teach another, don't you teach yourself? You who preach that a man shouldn't steal, do you steal? You who say a man shouldn't commit adultery. Do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who glory in the law, do you dishonor God by disobeying the law? For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," just as it is written. For circumcision indeed profits, if you are a doer

of the law, but if you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. If therefore the uncircumcised keep the ordinances of the law, won't his uncircumcision be accounted as circumcision? Won't the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfills the law, judge you, who with the letter and circumcision are a transgressor of the law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not from men, but from God.

Then what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Because first of all, they were entrusted with the revelations of God. For what if some were without faith? Will their lack of faith nullify the faithfulness of God? May it never be! Yes, let God be found true, but every man a liar. As it is written,

“That you might be justified in your words, and might prevail when you come into judgment.”

But if our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous who inflicts wrath? I speak like men do. May it never be! For then how will God judge the world? For if the truth of God through my lie abounded to his glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? Why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), “Let us do evil, that good may come?” Those who say so are justly condemned.

What then? Are we better than they? No, in no way. For we previously warned both Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin. As it is written,

“There is no one righteous; no, not one.  
There is no one who understands.  
There is no one who seeks after God.  
They have all turned away.  
They have together become unprofitable.  
There is no one who does good,  
no, not so much as one.”

“Their throat is an open tomb.  
With their tongues they have used deceit.”

“The poison of vipers is under their lips”;  
“whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.”

“Their feet are swift to shed blood.  
Destruction and misery are in their ways.  
The way of peace, they haven't known.”

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

Now we know that whatever things the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God. Because by the works of the law, no flesh will be justified in his sight. For through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

But now apart from the law, a righteousness of God has been revealed, being testified by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in

Jesus Christ to all and on all those who believe. For there is no distinction, for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God sent to be an atoning sacrifice, through faith in his blood, for a demonstration of his righteousness through the passing over of prior sins, in God's forbearance; to demonstrate his righteousness at this present time; that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him who has faith in Jesus.

Where then is the boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. We maintain therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Isn't he the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith, and the uncircumcised through faith.

Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! No, we establish the law.

What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather, has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not toward God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now to him who works, the reward is not counted as grace, but as something owed. But to him who doesn't work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. Even as David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works,

“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whom the Lord will by no means charge with sin.”

Is this blessing then pronounced on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it counted? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they might be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might also be accounted to them. He is the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had in uncircumcision. For the promise to Abraham and to his offspring that he should be heir of the world wasn't through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of no effect. For the law produces wrath, for where there is no law, neither is there disobedience. For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace, to the end that the promise may be sure to all the offspring, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. As it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations.” This is in the presence of him whom he believed: God, who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not, as though they were.

Besides hope, Abraham in hope believed, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, “So will your offspring be.” Without being weakened in faith, he didn’t consider his own body, already having been worn out, (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. Yet, looking to the promise of God, he didn’t waver through unbelief, but grew strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was also able to perform. Therefore it also was “credited to him for righteousness.” Now it was not written that it was accounted to him for his sake alone, but for our sake also, to whom it will be accounted, who believe in him who raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead, who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only this, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope: and hope doesn’t disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For while we were yet weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man. Yet perhaps for a righteous person someone would even dare to die. But God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we will be saved from God's wrath through him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we will be saved by his life.

Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Therefore as sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin; and so death passed to all men, because all sinned. For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not charged when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those whose sins weren't like Adam's disobedience, who is a foreshadowing of him who was to come. But the free gift isn't like the trespass. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. The gift is not as through one who sinned: for the judgment came by one to condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses to justification. For if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; so much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ. So then as through one trespass, all men were condemned; even so through one act of righteousness, all men were justified to life. For as through the one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one, many will be made righteous. The law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace abounded more exceedingly; that as sin

reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? May it never be! We who died to sin, how could we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also be part of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be in bondage to sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him; knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no more has dominion over him! For the death that he died, he died to sin one time; but the life that he lives, he lives to God. Thus consider yourselves also to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Therefore don't let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. Also, do not present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin will not have dominion over you. For you are not under law, but under grace.

What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be! Don't you know that when you present yourselves as servants and obey someone, you are the servants of whomever you obey; whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas you were bondservants of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were delivered. Being made free from sin, you became bondservants of righteousness.

I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh, for as you presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to wickedness upon wickedness, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness for sanctification. For when you were servants of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit then did you have at that time in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin, and having become servants of God, you have your fruit of sanctification, and the result of eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Or don't you know, brothers (for I speak to men who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man for as long as he lives? For the woman that has a husband is bound by law to the husband while he lives, but if the husband dies, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband lives, she is joined to another man, she would be called an adulteress. But if the husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brothers, you also

were made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you would be joined to another, to him who was raised from the dead, that we might produce fruit to God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were through the law, worked in our members to bring out fruit to death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? May it never be! However, I wouldn't have known sin, except through the law. For I wouldn't have known coveting, unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." But sin, finding occasion through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of coveting. For apart from the law, sin is dead. I was alive apart from the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. The commandment, which was for life, this I found to be for death; for sin, finding occasion through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me. Therefore the law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good.

Did then that which is good become death to me? May it never be! But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, was producing death in me through that which is good; that through the commandment sin might become exceedingly sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, sold under sin. For I don't know what I am doing. For I don't practice what I desire to do; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I don't desire, that I do, I consent to the law that it is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my

flesh, dwells no good thing. For desire is present with me, but I don't find it doing that which is good. For the good which I desire, I don't do; but the evil which I don't desire, that I practice. But if what I don't desire, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the law, that, to me, while I desire to do good, evil is present. For I delight in God's law after the inward man, but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord! So then with the mind, I myself serve God's law, but with the flesh, the sin's law.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who don't walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law couldn't do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh; that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace; because the mind of the flesh is hostile towards God; for it is not subject to God's law, neither indeed can it be. Those who are in the flesh can't please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if it is so that the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if

any man doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his. If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are children of God. For you didn't receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if indeed we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed toward us. For the creation waits with eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of decay into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. Not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for adoption, the redemption of our

body. For we were saved in hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for that which he sees? But if we hope for that which we don't see, we wait for it with patience.

In the same way, the Spirit also helps our weaknesses, for we don't know how to pray as we ought. But the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which can't be uttered. He who searches the hearts knows what is on the Spirit's mind, because he makes intercession for the saints according to God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Whom he predestined, those he also called. Whom he called, those he also justified. Whom he justified, those he also glorified.

What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who didn't spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how would he not also with him freely give us all things? Who could bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written,

“For your sake we are killed all day long.  
We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from God’s love, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I tell the truth in Christ. I am not lying, my conscience testifying with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brothers’ sake, my relatives according to the flesh, who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service, and the promises; of whom are the fathers, and from whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God, blessed forever. Amen.

But it is not as though the word of God has come to nothing. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel. Neither, because they are Abraham’s offspring, are they all children. But, “your offspring will be accounted as from Isaac.” That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as heirs. For this is a word of promise, “At the appointed time I will come, and Sarah will have a son.” Not only so, but Rebekah also conceived by one, by our father Isaac. For being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him who calls, it was said

to her, "The elder will serve the younger." Even as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? May it never be! For he said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I caused you to be raised up, that I might show in you my power, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." So then, he has mercy on whom he desires, and he hardens whom he desires.

You will say then to me, "Why does he still find fault? For who withstands his will?" But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed ask him who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" Or hasn't the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory, us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? As he says also in Hosea,

"I will call them 'my people,' which were not my people; and her 'beloved,' who was not beloved."

"It will be that in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,'

There they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

Isaiah cries concerning Israel,

“If the number of the children of Israel are as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant who will be saved; for He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth.”

As Isaiah has said before,

“Unless the Lord of Armies had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and would have been made like Gomorrah.”

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who didn’t follow after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith; but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, didn’t arrive at the law of righteousness. Why? Because they didn’t seek it by faith, but as it were by works of the law. They stumbled over the stumbling stone; even as it is written,

“Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense; and no one who believes in him will be disappointed.”

Brothers, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God is for Israel, that they may be saved. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they didn’t subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the fulfillment of the law for righteousness to everyone who

believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness of the law, "The one who does them will live by them." But the righteousness which is of faith says this, "Don't say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down); or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)" But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth, and in your heart"; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich to all who call on him. For, "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in him whom they have not heard? How will they hear without a preacher? And how will they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Good News of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

But they didn't all listen to the glad news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, didn't they hear? Yes, most certainly,

“Their sound went out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

But I ask, didn't Israel know? First Moses says,

“I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, with a nation void of understanding I will make you angry.”

Isaiah is very bold, and says,

“I was found by those who didn't seek me. I was revealed to those who didn't ask for me.”

But as to Israel he says, “All day long I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

I ask then, did God reject his people? May it never be! For I also am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God didn't reject his people, which he foreknew. Or don't you know what the Scripture says about Elijah? How he pleads with God against Israel: “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have broken down your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.” But how does God answer him? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

What then? That which Israel seeks for, that he didn't obtain, but the chosen ones obtained it, and the rest were

hardened. According as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, to this very day." David says,

"Let their table be made a snare, and a trap,  
a stumbling block, and a retribution to them.  
Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see.  
Bow down their back always."

I ask then, did they stumble that they might fall? May it never be! But by their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? For I speak to you who are Gentiles. Since then as I am an apostle to Gentiles, I glorify my ministry; if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh, and may save some of them. For if the rejection of them is the reconciling of the world, what would their acceptance be, but life from the dead? If the first fruit is holy, so is the lump. If the root is holy, so are the branches. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them, and became partaker with them of the root and of the richness of the olive tree; don't boast over the branches. But if you boast, it is not you who support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in." True; by their unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by your faith. Don't be conceited, but fear; for if God didn't spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. See then the goodness and severity of God. Toward those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in his goodness; otherwise you

also will be cut off. They also, if they don't continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more will these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

For I don't desire you to be ignorant, brothers, of this mystery, so that you won't be wise in your own conceits, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and so all Israel will be saved. Even as it is written,

“There will come out of Zion the Deliverer,  
and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.  
This is my covenant with them,  
when I will take away their sins.”

Concerning the Good News, they are enemies for your sake. But concerning the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For as you in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they may also obtain mercy. For God has shut up all to disobedience, that he might have mercy on all.

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counselor?”

“Or who has first given to him,  
and it will be repaid to him again?”

For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.  
To him be the glory for ever! Amen.

Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think reasonably, as God has apportioned to each person a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members don't have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, if prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or service, let us give ourselves to service; or he who teaches, to his teaching; or he who exhorts, to his exhorting; he who gives, let him do it with generosity; he who rules, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil. Cling to that which is good. In love of the brothers be

tenderly affectionate to one another; in honor preferring one another; not lagging in diligence; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; enduring in troubles; continuing steadfastly in prayer; contributing to the needs of the saints; given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and don't curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Don't set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Don't be wise in your own conceits. Repay no one evil for evil. Respect what is honorable in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men. Don't seek revenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord." Therefore

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him.  
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;  
for in doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head.”

Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Let every soul be in subjection to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God. Therefore he who resists the authority, withstands the ordinance of God; and those who withstand will receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Do that which is good, and you will have praise from the same, for he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid, for he doesn't bear the sword in vain; for he is

a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to him who does evil. Therefore you need to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For this reason you also pay taxes, for they are servants of God's service, attending continually on this very thing. Therefore give everyone what you owe: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if customs, then customs; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other commandments there are, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love doesn't harm a neighbor. Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

Do this, knowing the time, that it is already time for you to awaken out of sleep, for salvation is now nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far gone, and the day is near. Let's therefore throw off the deeds of darkness, and let's put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day; not in reveling and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and lustful acts, and not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, for its lusts.

Now accept one who is weak in faith, but not for disputes over opinions. One man has faith to eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Don't let him who eats despise him who doesn't eat. Don't let him who doesn't

eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you who judge another's servant? To his own lord he stands or falls. Yes, he will be made to stand, for God has power to make him stand.

One man esteems one day as more important. Another esteems every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks. He who doesn't eat, to the Lord he doesn't eat, and gives God thanks. For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord. Or if we die, we die to the Lord. If therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died, rose, and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written,

“‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘to me every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess to God.’”

So then each one of us will give account of himself to God.

Therefore let's not judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way, or an occasion for falling. I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself; except that to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. Yet if because of food your brother is

grieved, you walk no longer in love. Don't destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. Then don't let your good be slandered, for God's Kingdom is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then, let us follow after things which make for peace, and things by which we may build one another up. Don't overthrow God's work for food's sake. All things indeed are clean, however it is evil for that man who creates a stumbling block by eating. It is good to not eat meat, drink wine, nor do anything by which your brother stumbles, is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who doesn't judge himself in that which he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because it isn't of faith; and whatever is not of faith is sin.

Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret through long ages, but now is revealed, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known for obedience of faith to all the nations; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, to be building him up. For even Christ didn't please himself. But, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell

on me.” For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that through perseverance and through encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now the God of perseverance and of encouragement grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore accept one another, even as Christ also accepted you, to the glory of God. Now I say that Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore will I give praise to you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.”

Again he says,

“Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”

Again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles!  
Let all the peoples praise him.”

Again, Isaiah says,

“There will be the root of Jesse,  
he who arises to rule over the Gentiles;  
in him the Gentiles will hope.”

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

I myself am also persuaded about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish others. But I write the more boldly to you in part, as reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, that I should be a servant of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, serving as a priest of the Good News of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. I have therefore my boasting in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. For I will not dare to speak of any things except those which Christ worked through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of God's Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and around as far as to Illyricum, I have fully preached the Good News of Christ; yes, making it my aim to preach the Good News, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build on another's foundation. But, as it is written,

“They will see, to whom no news of him came.  
They who haven't heard will understand.”

Therefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you, but now, no longer having any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come to you, whenever I travel to Spain, I will come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a

while. But now, I say, I am going to Jerusalem, serving the saints. For it has been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are at Jerusalem. Yes, it has been their good pleasure, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to serve them in fleshly things. When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by way of you to Spain. I know that, when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of the Good News of Christ.

Now I beg you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; that I may come to you in joy through the will of God, and together with you, find rest. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is a servant of the assembly that is at Cenchreae, that you receive her in the Lord, in a way worthy of the saints, and that you assist her in whatever matter she may need from you, for she herself also has been a helper of many, and of my own self.

Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life, laid down their own necks; to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the assemblies of the Gentiles. Greet the assembly that is in their house. Greet

Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first fruits of Achaia to Christ. Greet Mary, who labored much for us. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and my fellow prisoners, who are notable among the apostles, who were also in Christ before me. Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved. Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus. Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet them of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord. Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Greet Persis, the beloved, who labored much in the Lord. Greet Rufus, the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The assemblies of Christ greet you.

Now I beg you, brothers, look out for those who are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and turn away from them. For those who are such don't serve our Lord, Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and flattering speech, they deceive the hearts of the innocent. For your obedience has become known to all. I rejoice therefore over you. But I desire to have you wise in that which is good, but innocent in that which is evil. And the God of peace will quickly crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, as do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives. I, Tertius, who write the letter, greet you in the Lord. Gaius, my host and host of the whole assembly, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, as does Quartus, the brother. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen.

## HIStory: The Reader's Bible

## **Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians**

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, to the assembly of God which is at Corinth; those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both theirs and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I always thank my God concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus; that in everything you were enriched in him, in all speech and all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that you come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will also confirm you until the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Now I beg you, brothers, through the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been reported to me concerning you, my brothers, by those who are from Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I mean this, that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," "I follow Apollos," "I follow Cephas," and, "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one should say that I had

baptized you into my own name. (I also baptized the household of Stephanas; besides them, I don't know whether I baptized any other.) For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Good News—not in wisdom of words, so that the cross of Christ wouldn't be made void. For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are dying, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
I will bring the discernment of the discerning to nothing.”

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the lawyer of this world? Hasn't God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom didn't know God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save those who believe. For Jews ask for signs, Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified; a stumbling block to Jews, and foolishness to Greeks, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For you see your calling, brothers, that not many are wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, and not many noble; but God chose the foolish things of the world that he might put to shame those who are wise. God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and God chose the lowly things of the world, and the things that are despised, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nothing the things that are: that no

flesh should boast before God. Because of him, you are in Christ Jesus, who was made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, “He who boasts, let him boast in the Lord.”

When I came to you, brothers, I didn't come with excellence of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. My speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith wouldn't stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

We speak wisdom, however, among those who are full grown; yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing. But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the wisdom that has been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds for our glory, which none of the rulers of this world has known. For had they known it, they wouldn't have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written,

“Things which an eye didn't see, and an ear didn't hear, which didn't enter into the heart of man, these God has prepared for those who love him.”

But to us, God revealed them through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For who among men knows the things of a man, except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so, no one knows the

things of God, except God's Spirit. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that were freely given to us by God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things. Now the natural man doesn't receive the things of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, and he can't know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual discerns all things, and he himself is judged by no one. "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him?" But we have Christ's mind.

Brothers, I couldn't speak to you as to spiritual, but as to fleshly, as to babies in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for you weren't yet ready. Indeed, not even now are you ready, for you are still fleshly. For insofar as there is jealousy, strife, and factions among you, aren't you fleshly, and don't you walk in the ways of men? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," aren't you fleshly? Who then is Apollos, and who is Paul, but servants through whom you believed; and each as the Lord gave to him? I planted. Apollos watered. But God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are the same, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's farming, God's building.

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another

builds on it. But let each man be careful how he builds on it. For no one can lay any other foundation than that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or stubble; each man's work will be revealed. For the Day will declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself will test what sort of work each man's work is. If any man's work remains which he built on it, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but as through fire.

Don't you know that you are a temple of God, and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, which you are.

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone thinks that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He has taken the wise in their craftiness." And again, "The Lord knows the reasoning of the wise, that it is worthless." Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. All are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

So let a man think of us as Christ's servants, and stewards of God's mysteries. Here, moreover, it is required of stewards, that they be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you, or by man's judgment. Yes, I don't judge my own self. For I know

nothing against myself. Yet I am not justified by this, but he who judges me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each man will get his praise from God.

Now these things, brothers, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to think beyond the things which are written, that none of you be puffed up against one another. For who makes you different? And what do you have that you didn't receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? You are already filled. You have already become rich. You have come to reign without us. Yes, and I wish that you did reign, that we also might reign with you. For, I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last of all, like men sentenced to death. For we are made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You have honor, but we have dishonor. Even to this present hour we hunger, thirst, are naked, are beaten, and have no certain dwelling place. We toil, working with our own hands. When people curse us, we bless. Being persecuted, we endure. Being defamed, we entreat. We are made as the filth of the world, the dirt wiped off by all, even until now.

I don't write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have ten thousand tutors in Christ, you don't have many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I became your father through the Good News. I beg you therefore, be imitators of me. Because of

this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every assembly. Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord is willing. And I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. For God's Kingdom is not in word, but in power. What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles, that one has his father's wife. You are arrogant, and didn't mourn instead, that he who had done this deed might be removed from among you. For I most certainly, as being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him who has done this thing. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole lump? Purge out the old yeast, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed in our place. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old yeast, neither with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

I wrote to you in my letter to have no company with sexual sinners; yet not at all meaning with the sexual sinners of this world, or with the covetous and extortionists, or with idolaters; for then you would have to leave the world. But as it is, I wrote to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother who is a sexual sinner, or covetous, or an idolater, or a slanderer, or a drunkard, or an extortionist. Don't even eat with such a person. For what do I have to do with also judging those who are outside? Don't you judge those who are within? But those who are outside, God judges. "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves."

Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Don't you know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Don't you know that we will judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then, you have to judge things pertaining to this life, do you set them to judge who are of no account in the assembly? I say this to move you to shame. Isn't there even one wise man among you who would be able to decide between his brothers? But brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers! Therefore it is already altogether a defect in you, that you have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? No, but you yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that against your brothers. Or don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit God's Kingdom? Don't be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals, nor

thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor extortionists, will inherit God's Kingdom. Such were some of you, but you were washed. But you were sanctified. But you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God.

“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are expedient. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be brought under the power of anything. “Foods for the belly, and the belly for foods,” but God will bring to nothing both it and them. But the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. Now God raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his power. Don't you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! Or don't you know that he who is joined to a prostitute is one body? For, “The two”, he says, “will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee sexual immorality! “Every sin that a man does is outside the body,” but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Now concerning the things about which you wrote to me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But, because of sexual immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband give his wife the affection owed her, and likewise also the wife her husband. The wife doesn't have authority over her own

body, but the husband. Likewise also the husband doesn't have authority over his own body, but the wife. Don't deprive one another, unless it is by consent for a season, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and may be together again, that Satan doesn't tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

But this I say by way of concession, not of commandment. Yet I wish that all men were like me. However each man has his own gift from God, one of this kind, and another of that kind. But I say to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them if they remain even as I am. But if they don't have self-control, let them marry. For it's better to marry than to burn. But to the married I command—not I, but the Lord—that the wife not leave her husband (but if she departs, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband not leave his wife.

But to the rest I—not the Lord—say, if any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she is content to live with him, let him not leave her. The woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he is content to live with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. Yet if the unbeliever departs, let there be separation. The brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us in peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? Only, as the

Lord has distributed to each man, as God has called each, so let him walk. So I command in all the assemblies.

Was anyone called having been circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let each man stay in that calling in which he was called. Were you called being a bondservant? Don't let that bother you, but if you get an opportunity to become free, use it. For he who was called in the Lord being a bondservant is the Lord's free man. Likewise he who was called being free is Christ's bondservant. You were bought with a price. Don't become bondservants of men. Brothers, let each man, in whatever condition he was called, stay in that condition with God.

Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who has obtained mercy from the Lord to be trustworthy. Therefore I think that because of the distress that is on us, that it's good for a man to remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Don't seek to be freed. Are you free from a wife? Don't seek a wife. But if you marry, you have not sinned. If a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have oppression in the flesh, and I want to spare you. But I say this, brothers: the time is short, that from now on, both those who have wives may be as though they had none; and those who weep, as though they didn't weep; and those who rejoice, as though they didn't rejoice; and those who buy, as though they didn't possess; and those who use the world, as not using it to the fullest. For the mode of this world passes away. But I desire

to have you to be free from cares. He who is unmarried is concerned for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife. There is also a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please her husband. This I say for your own profit; not that I may ensnare you, but for that which is appropriate, and that you may attend to the Lord without distraction. But if any man thinks that he is behaving inappropriately toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of her age, and if need so requires, let him do what he desires. He doesn't sin. Let them marry. But he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no urgency, but has power over his own will, and has determined in his own heart to keep his own virgin, does well. So then both he who gives his own virgin in marriage does well, and he who doesn't give her in marriage does better.

A wife is bound by law for as long as her husband lives; but if the husband is dead, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, only in the Lord. But she is happier if she stays as she is, in my judgment, and I think that I also have God's Spirit.

Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. But if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he doesn't yet know as he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, the same is known by him. Therefore concerning the

eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For though there are things that are called “gods”, whether in the heavens or on earth; as there are many “gods” and many “lords”; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we live through him. However, that knowledge isn’t in all men. But some, with consciousness of the idol until now, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. But food will not commend us to God. For neither, if we don’t eat, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better. But be careful that by no means does this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to the weak. For if a man sees you who have knowledge sitting in an idol’s temple, won’t his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols? And through your knowledge, he who is weak perishes, the brother for whose sake Christ died. Thus, sinning against the brothers, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore if food causes my brother to stumble, I will eat no meat forever more, that I don’t cause my brother to stumble.

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Haven’t I seen Jesus Christ, our Lord? Aren’t you my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defense to those who examine me is this. Have we no right to eat and to drink? Have we no right to take along a wife who is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or have only Barnabas and I no right

to not work? What soldier ever serves at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and doesn't eat of its fruit? Or who feeds a flock, and doesn't drink from the flock's milk? Do I speak these things according to the ways of men? Or doesn't the law also say the same thing? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it for the oxen that God cares, or does he say it assuredly for our sake? Yes, it was written for our sake, because he who plows ought to plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should partake of his hope. If we sowed to you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your fleshly things? If others partake of this right over you, don't we yet more? Nevertheless we did not use this right, but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the Good News of Christ. Don't you know that those who serve around sacred things eat from the things of the temple, and those who wait on the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so the Lord ordained that those who proclaim the Good News should live from the Good News. But I have used none of these things, and I don't write these things that it may be done so in my case; for I would rather die, than that anyone should make my boasting void. For if I preach the Good News, I have nothing to boast about; for necessity is laid on me; but woe is to me, if I don't preach the Good News. For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward. But if not of my own will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. What then is my reward? That, when I preach the Good News, I may present the Good News of Christ without charge, so as not to abuse my authority in the Good News. For though I was free from all, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might

gain Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became as weak, that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. Now I do this for the sake of the Good News, that I may be a joint partaker of it. Don't you know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run like that, that you may win. Every man who strives in the games exercises self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore run like that, not aimlessly. I fight like that, not beating the air, but I beat my body and bring it into submission, lest by any means, after I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.

Now I would not have you ignorant, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. However with most of them, God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Don't be idolaters, as some of them were. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Let us not commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell. Let us not test Christ, as some of them tested,

and perished by the serpents. Don't grumble, as some of them also grumbled, and perished by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them by way of example, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands be careful that he doesn't fall.

No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men. Judge what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, isn't it a sharing of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, isn't it a sharing of the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf of bread, we, who are many, are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf of bread. Consider Israel according to the flesh. Don't those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

What am I saying then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God, and I don't desire that you would have fellowship with demons. You can't both drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You can't both partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons. Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are profitable. "All things are lawful for me," but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own, but each one his

neighbor's good. Whatever is sold in the butcher shop, eat, asking no question for the sake of conscience, for "the earth is the Lord's, and its fullness." But if one of those who don't believe invites you to a meal, and you are inclined to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no questions for the sake of conscience. But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," don't eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for the sake of conscience. For "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness." Conscience, I say, not your own, but the other's conscience. For why is my liberty judged by another conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced for something I give thanks for? Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no occasion for stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the assembly of God; even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved.

Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ.

Now I praise you, brothers, that you remember me in all things, and hold firm the traditions, even as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonors her head. For it is one and the same thing as if she were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her hair also be cut off. But if it is shameful for a woman to have her hair cut off or be shaved, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to have his head covered, because he is the image

and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man; for man wasn't created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this cause the woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels.

Nevertheless, neither is the woman independent of the man, nor the man independent of the woman, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, so a man also comes through a woman; but all things are from God. Judge for yourselves. Is it appropriate that a woman pray to God unveiled? Doesn't even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given to her for a covering. But if any man seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither do God's assemblies.

But in giving you this command, I don't praise you, that you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together in the assembly, I hear that divisions exist among you, and I partly believe it. For there also must be factions among you, that those who are approved may be revealed among you. When therefore you assemble yourselves together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in your eating each one takes his own supper first. One is hungry, and another is drunken. What, don't you have houses to eat and to drink in? Or do you despise God's assembly, and put them to shame who don't have enough? What shall I tell you? Shall I praise you? In this I don't praise you.

For I received from the Lord that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed took bread. When he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, **“Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in memory of me.”** In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, **“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink, in memory of me.”** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks the Lord’s cup in a way unworthy of the Lord will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy way eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he doesn’t discern the Lord’s body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. For if we discerned ourselves, we wouldn’t be judged. But when we are judged, we are punished by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. Therefore, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest your coming together be for judgment. The rest I will set in order whenever I come.

Now concerning spiritual things, brothers, I don’t want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were heathen, you were led away to those mute idols, however you might be led. Therefore I make known to you that no man speaking by God’s Spirit says, “Jesus is accursed.” No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” but by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are various kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are various kinds of service, and the same Lord. There are various kinds of workings, but the same God, who works all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the profit of all. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, by the same Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of spirits; to another different kinds of languages; and to another the interpretation of languages. But the one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing to each one separately as he desires.

For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot would say, "Because I'm not the hand, I'm not part of the body," it is not therefore not part of the body. If the ear would say, "Because I'm not the eye, I'm not part of the body," it's not therefore not part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the smelling be? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body, just as he desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now they are many members, but one body. The eye can't tell the hand, "I have no need for you," or again the head to the feet, "I have no

need for you.” No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. Those parts of the body which we think to be less honorable, on those we bestow more abundant honor; and our unrepresentable parts have more abundant propriety; whereas our representable parts have no such need. But God composed the body together, giving more abundant honor to the inferior part, that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. God has set some in the assembly: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracle workers, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, and various kinds of languages. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all miracle workers? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with various languages? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. Moreover, I show a most excellent way to you.

If I speak with the languages of men and of angels, but don't have love, I have become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but don't have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but don't have love, it profits me nothing.

Love is patient and is kind; love doesn't envy. Love doesn't brag, is not proud, doesn't behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil; doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will be done away with. Where there are various languages, they will cease. Where there is knowledge, it will be done away with. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is complete has come, then that which is partial will be done away with. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child. Now that I have become a man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, even as I was also fully known. But now faith, hope, and love remain—these three. The greatest of these is love.

Follow after love, and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For he who speaks in another language speaks not to men, but to God; for no one understands; but in the Spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks to men for their edification, exhortation, and consolation. He who speaks in another language edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the assembly. Now I desire to have you all speak with other languages, but rather that you would prophesy. For he is greater who prophesies than he who speaks with other languages, unless he interprets, that the assembly may be built up.

But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking with other languages, what would I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching? Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they didn't give a distinction in the sounds, how would it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet gave an uncertain sound, who would prepare himself for war? So also you, unless you uttered by the tongue words easy to understand, how would it be known what is spoken? For you would be speaking into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of sounds in the world, and none of them is without meaning. If then I don't know the meaning of the sound, I would be to him who speaks a foreigner, and he who speaks would be a foreigner to me. So also you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, seek that you may abound to the building up of the assembly. Therefore let him who speaks in another language pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in another language, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Otherwise if you bless with the spirit, how will he who fills the place of the unlearned say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, seeing he doesn't know what you say? For you most certainly give thanks well, but the other person is not built up. I thank my God, I speak with other languages more than you all. However in the assembly I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in another language.

Brothers, don't be children in thoughts, yet in malice be babies, but in thoughts be mature. In the law it is written, "By men of strange languages and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people. Not even thus will they hear me, says the Lord." Therefore other languages are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to the unbelieving; but prophesying is for a sign, not to the unbelieving, but to those who believe. If therefore the whole assembly is assembled together and all speak with other languages, and unlearned or unbelieving people come in, won't they say that you are crazy? But if all prophesy, and someone unbelieving or unlearned comes in, he is reprov'd by all, and he is judged by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed. So he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed.

What is it then, brothers? When you come together, each one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has another language, has an interpretation. Let all things be done to build each other up. If any man speaks in another language, let it be two, or at the most three, and in turn; and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the assembly, and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak, two or three, and let the others discern. But if a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first keep silent. For you all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as in all the assemblies of the saints. Let the wives be quiet in the assemblies, for it has not been permitted for them to be talking except in

submission, as the law also says, if they desire to learn anything. “Let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is shameful for a wife to be talking in the assembly.” What!? Was it from you that the word of God went out? Or did it come to you alone?

If any man thinks himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him recognize the things which I write to you, that they are the commandment of the Lord. But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

Therefore, brothers, desire earnestly to prophesy, and don't forbid speaking with other languages. Let all things be done decently and in order.

Now I declare to you, brothers, the Good News which I preached to you, which also you received, in which you also stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold firmly the word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to over five hundred brothers at once, most of whom remain until now, but some have also fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all, as to the child born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, who is not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the assembly of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am. His grace which was given to me was not futile, but I worked more than all of them; yet

not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Whether then it is I or they, so we preach, and so you believed.

Now if Christ is preached, that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised. If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also is in vain. Yes, we are also found false witnesses of God, because we testified about God that he raised up Christ, whom he didn't raise up, if it is so that the dead are not raised. For if the dead aren't raised, neither has Christ been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. Then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable.

But now Christ has been raised from the dead. He became the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since death came by man, the resurrection of the dead also came by man. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then those who are Christ's, at his coming. Then the end comes, when he will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he will have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For, "He put all things in subjection under his feet." But when he says, "All things are put in subjection", it is evident that he is excepted who subjected all things to him. When all things have been subjected to

him, then the Son will also himself be subjected to him who subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all.

Or else what will they do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead aren't raised at all, why then are they baptized for the dead? Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour? I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If I fought with animals at Ephesus for human purposes, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, then "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Don't be deceived! "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." Wake up righteously, and don't sin, for some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised?" and, "With what kind of body do they come?" You foolish one, that which you yourself sow is not made alive unless it dies. That which you sow, you don't sow the body that will be, but a bare grain, maybe of wheat, or of some other kind. But God gives it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial differs from that of the terrestrial. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown perishable; it is raised imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is also a spiritual body.

So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However that which is spiritual isn't first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, made of dust. The second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the one made of dust, such are those who are also made of dust; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. As we have borne the image of those made of dust, let's also bear the image of the heavenly. Now I say this, brothers, that flesh and blood can't inherit God's Kingdom; neither does the perishable inherit imperishable.

Behold, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must become imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable body will have become imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then what is written will happen: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

"Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I commanded the assemblies of Galatia, you do likewise. On

the first day of every week, let each one of you save, as he may prosper, that no collections are made when I come. When I arrive, I will send whoever you approve with letters to carry your gracious gift to Jerusalem. If it is appropriate for me to go also, they will go with me. But I will come to you when I have passed through Macedonia, for I am passing through Macedonia. But with you it may be that I will stay, or even winter, that you may send me on my journey wherever I go. For I do not wish to see you now in passing, but I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay at Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear, for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do. Therefore let no one despise him. But set him forward on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I expect him with the brothers.

Now concerning Apollos, the brother, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brothers; and it was not at all his desire to come now; but he will come when he has an opportunity.

Watch! Stand firm in the faith! Be courageous! Be strong! Let all that you do be done in love.

Now I beg you, brothers (you know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have set themselves to serve the saints), that you also be in subjection to such, and to everyone who helps in the work and labors. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus,

and Achaicus; for that which was lacking on your part, they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge those who are like that.

The assemblies of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you much in the Lord, together with the assembly that is in their house. All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

This greeting is by me, Paul, with my own hand. If any man doesn't love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. Come, Lord! The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## **Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the assembly of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound to us, even so our comfort also abounds through Christ. But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation. If we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer. Our hope for you is steadfast, knowing that, since you are partakers of the sufferings, so also are you of the comfort. For we don't desire to have you uninformed, brothers, concerning our affliction which happened to us in Asia, that we were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power, so much that we despaired even of life. Yes, we ourselves have had the sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us out of so great a death, and does deliver; on whom we have set our hope that he will also still deliver us; you also helping together on our behalf by your supplication; that, for the gift given to us by means of many, thanks may be given by many persons on your behalf.

For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God we behaved ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you. For we write no other things to you, than what you read or even acknowledge, and I hope you will acknowledge to the end; as also you acknowledged us in part, that we are your boasting, even as you also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus.

In this confidence, I was determined to come first to you, that you might have a second benefit; and by you to pass into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and to be sent forward by you on my journey to Judea. When I therefore was thus determined, did I show fickleness? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the “Yes, yes” and the “No, no?” But as God is faithful, our word toward you was not “Yes and no.” For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, by me, Silvanus, and Timothy, was not “Yes and no,” but in him is “Yes.” For however many are the promises of God, in him is the “Yes.” Therefore also through him is the “Amen”, to the glory of God through us.

Now he who establishes us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the down payment of the Spirit in our hearts.

But I call God for a witness to my soul, that I didn't come to Corinth to spare you. Not that we control your faith,

but are fellow workers with you for your joy. For you stand firm in faith.

But I determined this for myself, that I would not come to you again in sorrow. For if I make you sorry, then who will make me glad but he who is made sorry by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, so that, when I came, I wouldn't have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy would be shared by all of you. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not that you should be made sorry, but that you might know the love that I have so abundantly for you. But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I not press too heavily) to you all. This punishment which was inflicted by the many is sufficient for such a one; so that on the contrary you should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his excessive sorrow. Therefore I beg you to confirm your love toward him. For to this end I also wrote, that I might know the proof of you, whether you are obedient in all things. Now I also forgive whomever you forgive anything. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

Now when I came to Troas for the Good News of Christ, and when a door was opened to me in the Lord, I had no relief for my spirit, because I didn't find Titus, my brother, but taking my leave of them, I went out into Macedonia.

Now thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and reveals through us the sweet aroma of his knowledge in every place. For we are a sweet aroma of Christ to God, in those who are saved, and in those who perish; to the one a stench from death to death; to the other a sweet aroma from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as so many, peddling the word of God. But as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, we speak in Christ.

Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as do some, letters of commendation to you or from you? You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; being revealed that you are a letter of Christ, served by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone, but in tablets that are hearts of flesh. Such confidence we have through Christ toward God; not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God; who also made us sufficient as servants of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the service of death, written engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly on the face of Moses for the glory of his face, which was passing away; won't service of the Spirit be with much more glory? For if the service of condemnation has glory, the service of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. For most certainly that which has been made glorious has not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory

that surpasses. For if that which passes away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech, and not as Moses, who put a veil on his face, that the children of Israel wouldn't look steadfastly on the end of that which was passing away. But their minds were hardened, for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains, because in Christ it passes away. But to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. But whenever one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face seeing the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we don't faint. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Even if our Good News is veiled, it is veiled in those who are dying; in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the Good News of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn on them. For we don't preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake; seeing it is God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in clay vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not to despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed; always carrying in the body the putting to death of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh. So then death works in us, but life in you. But having the same spirit of faith, according to that which is written, "I believed, and therefore I spoke." We also believe, and therefore also we speak; knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the grace, being multiplied through the many, may cause the thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Therefore we don't faint, but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we don't look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

For we know that if the earthly house of our tent is dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For most certainly in this we groan, longing to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven; if so be that being clothed we will not be found naked. For indeed we who are in this tent do groan,

being burdened; not that we desire to be unclothed, but that we desire to be clothed, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now he who made us for this very thing is God, who also gave to us the down payment of the Spirit.

Therefore we are always confident and know that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are courageous, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well pleasing to him. For we must all be revealed before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are revealed to God; and I hope that we are revealed also in your consciences. For we are not commending ourselves to you again, but speak as giving you occasion of boasting on our behalf, that you may have something to answer those who boast in appearance, and not in heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God. Or if we are of sober mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ constrains us; because we judge thus, that one died for all, therefore all died. He died for all, that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who for their sakes died and rose again. Therefore we know no one after the flesh from now on. Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. But all

things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation; namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning to them their trespasses, and having committed to us the word of reconciliation.

We are therefore ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Working together, we entreat also that you do not receive the grace of God in vain, for he says,

“At an acceptable time I listened to you,  
in a day of salvation I helped you.”

Behold, now is the acceptable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. We give no occasion of stumbling in anything, that our service may not be blamed, but in everything commending ourselves, as servants of God, in great endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; in pureness, in knowledge, in perseverance, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in sincere love, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Our mouth is open to you, Corinthians. Our heart is enlarged. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. Now in return, I speak as to my children, you also open your hearts. Don't be unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What agreement has Christ with Belial? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? What agreement has a temple of God with idols? For you are a temple of the living God. Even as God said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore

“Come out from among them,  
and be separate,’ says the Lord.  
‘Touch no unclean thing.  
I will receive you.  
I will be to you a Father.  
You will be to me sons and daughters,’  
says the Lord Almighty.”

Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Open your hearts to us. We wronged no one. We corrupted no one. We took advantage of no one. I say this not to condemn you, for I have said before, that you are in our hearts to die together and live together. Great is my boldness of speech toward you. Great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I overflow with joy in all our affliction.

For even when we had come into Macedonia, our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every side. Fightings were outside. Fear was inside. Nevertheless, he who comforts the lowly, God, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, while he told us of your longing, your mourning, and your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced still more.

For though I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret it. For I see that my letter made you sorry, though just for a while. I now rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that you were made sorry to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly way, that you might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation, which brings no regret. But the sorrow of the world produces death. For behold, this same thing, that you were made sorry in a godly way, what earnest care it worked in you. Yes, what defense, indignation, fear, longing, zeal, and vengeance! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be pure in the matter. So although I wrote to you, I wrote not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that your earnest care for us might be revealed in you in the sight of God. Therefore we have been comforted. In our comfort we rejoiced the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. For if in anything I have boasted to him on your behalf, I was not disappointed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, so our glorying also which I made before Titus was found to be truth. His affection is more abundantly toward you, while he

remembers all of your obedience, how with fear and trembling you received him. I rejoice that in everything I am confident concerning you.

Moreover, brothers, we make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the assemblies of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their generosity. For according to their power, I testify, yes and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty to receive this grace and the fellowship in the service to the saints. This was not as we had expected, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God. So we urged Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace. But as you abound in everything, in faith, utterance, knowledge, all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that you also abound in this grace. I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich. I give a judgment in this: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to start a year ago, not only to do, but also to be willing. But now complete the doing also, that as there was the readiness to be willing, so there may be the completion also out of your ability. For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what you have, not according to what you don't have. For this is not that others may be eased and you distressed, but for equality. Your abundance at this

present time supplies their lack, that their abundance also may become a supply for your lack; that there may be equality. As it is written, "He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack."

But thanks be to God, who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. For he indeed accepted our exhortation, but being himself very earnest, he went out to you of his own accord. We have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the Good News is known throughout all the assemblies. Not only so, but he was also appointed by the assemblies to travel with us in this grace, which is served by us to the glory of the Lord himself, and to show our readiness. We are avoiding this, that any man should blame us concerning this abundance which is administered by us. Having regard for honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. We have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he has in you. As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for you. As for our brothers, they are the apostles of the assemblies, the glory of Christ. Therefore show the proof of your love to them before the assemblies, and of our boasting on your behalf.

It is indeed unnecessary for me to write to you concerning the service to the saints, for I know your readiness, of which I boast on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia has been prepared for a year past. Your zeal has stirred up very many of them. But I have sent the brothers that our boasting on your behalf may not be in vain in this respect, that, just as I said, you may be

prepared, lest by any means, if anyone from Macedonia comes there with me and finds you unprepared, we (to say nothing of you) would be disappointed in this confident boasting. I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brothers that they would go before to you, and arrange ahead of time the generous gift that you promised before, that the same might be ready as a matter of generosity, and not of greediness.

Remember this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. He who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let each man give according as he has determined in his heart; not grudgingly, or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that you, always having all sufficiency in everything, may abound to every good work. As it is written,

“He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor. His righteousness remains forever.”

Now may he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; you being enriched in everything to all generosity, which produces through us thanksgiving to God. For this service of giving that you perform not only makes up for lack among the saints, but abounds also through much giving of thanks to God; seeing that through the proof given by this service, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the Good News of Christ, and for the generosity of your contribution to them and to all; while they themselves also, with supplication on

your behalf, yearn for you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you. Now thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!

Now I Paul, myself, entreat you by the humility and gentleness of Christ; I who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. Yes, I beg you that I may not, when present, show courage with the confidence with which I intend to be bold against some, who consider us to be walking according to the flesh. For though we walk in the flesh, we don't wage war according to the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the throwing down of strongholds, throwing down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience will be made full. Do you look at things only as they appear in front of your face? If anyone trusts in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again with himself, that, even as he is Christ's, so also we are Christ's. For though I should boast somewhat abundantly concerning our authority, (which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for casting you down) I will not be disappointed, that I may not seem as if I desire to terrify you by my letters. For, "His letters", they say, "are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech is despised." Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such are we also in deed when we are present. For we are not bold to number or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves. But they

themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding. But we will not boast beyond proper limits, but within the boundaries with which God appointed to us, which reach even to you. For we don't stretch ourselves too much, as though we didn't reach to you. For we came even as far as to you with the Good News of Christ, not boasting beyond proper limits in other men's labors, but having hope that as your faith grows, we will be abundantly enlarged by you in our sphere of influence, so as to preach the Good News even to the parts beyond you, not to boast in what someone else has already done. But "he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord." For it isn't he who commends himself who is approved, but whom the Lord commends.

I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness, but indeed you do bear with me. For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. For I married you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve in his craftiness, so your minds might be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different "good news", which you did not accept, you put up with that well enough. For I reckon that I am not at all behind the very best apostles. But though I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not unskilled in knowledge. No, in every way we have been revealed to you in all things. Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached to you God's Good News free of

charge? I robbed other assemblies, taking wages from them that I might serve you. When I was present with you and was in need, I wasn't a burden on anyone, for the brothers, when they came from Macedonia, supplied the measure of my need. In everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and I will continue to do so. As the truth of Christ is in me, no one will stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Why? Because I don't love you? God knows. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them that desire an occasion, that in which they boast, they may be found even as we. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as Christ's apostles. And no wonder, for even Satan masquerades as an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

I say again, let no one think me foolish. But if so, yet receive me as foolish, that I also may boast a little. That which I speak, I don't speak according to the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many boast after the flesh, I will also boast. For you bear with the foolish gladly, being wise. For you bear with a man, if he brings you into bondage, if he devours you, if he takes you captive, if he exalts himself, if he strikes you on the face. I speak by way of disparagement, as though we had been weak. Yet in whatever way anyone is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the offspring of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I am more so; in labors more

abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Five times from the Jews I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I suffered shipwreck. I have been a night and a day in the deep. I have been in travels often, perils of rivers, perils of robbers, perils from my countrymen, perils from the Gentiles, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, perils among false brothers; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, and in cold and nakedness.

Besides those things that are outside, there is that which presses on me daily: anxiety for all the assemblies. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is caused to stumble, and I don't burn with indignation? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that concern my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, he who is blessed forever more, knows that I don't lie. In Damascus the governor under King Aretas guarded the Damascenes' city, desiring to arrest me. Through a window I was let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands.

It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. For I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I don't know, or whether out of the body, I don't know; God knows), such a one caught up into the third heaven. I know such a man (whether in the body, or outside of the body, I don't know; God knows), how he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. On behalf of such a one I will

boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in my weaknesses. For if I would desire to boast, I will not be foolish; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, so that no man may think more of me than that which he sees in me, or hears from me. By reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted excessively, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, that I should not be exalted excessively. Concerning this thing, I begged the Lord three times that it might depart from me. He has said to me, **“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”** Most gladly therefore I will rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest on me.

Therefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong. I have become foolish in boasting. You compelled me, for I ought to have been commended by you, for in nothing was I inferior to the very best apostles, though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were worked among you in all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty works. For what is there in which you were made inferior to the rest of the assemblies, unless it is that I myself was not a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong.

Behold, this is the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I seek not your possessions, but you. For the children ought not to save up for the parents, but the parents for the children. I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved the less? But be it so, I did not

myself burden you. But, being crafty, I caught you with deception. Did I take advantage of you by anyone of them whom I have sent to you? I exhorted Titus, and I sent the brother with him. Did Titus take any advantage of you? Didn't we walk in the same spirit? Didn't we walk in the same steps?

Again, do you think that we are excusing ourselves to you? In the sight of God we speak in Christ. But all things, beloved, are for your edifying. For I am afraid that by any means, when I come, I might find you not the way I want to, and that I might be found by you as you don't desire; that by any means there would be strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, whisperings, proud thoughts, riots; that again when I come my God would humble me before you, and I would mourn for many of those who have sinned before now, and not repented of the uncleanness and sexual immorality and lustfulness which they committed.

This is the third time I am coming to you. "At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." I have said beforehand, and I do say beforehand, as when I was present the second time, so now, being absent, I write to those who have sinned before now, and to all the rest, that, if I come again, I will not spare; seeing that you seek a proof of Christ who speaks in me; who toward you is not weak, but is powerful in you. For he was crucified through weakness, yet he lives through the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we will live with him through the power of God toward you. Examine your own selves, whether you are in the faith. Test your own selves. Or don't you know as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed

you are disqualified. But I hope that you will know that we aren't disqualified.

Now I pray to God that you do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but that you may do that which is honorable, though we are as reprobate. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. And this we also pray for, even your perfecting. For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not deal sharply when present, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for tearing down.

Finally, brothers, rejoice. Be perfected, be comforted, be of the same mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

All the saints greet you.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's love, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

## **Paul's Letter to the Galatians**

Paul, an apostle (not from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead), and all the brothers who are with me, to the assemblies of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father— to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

I marvel that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different “good news”; and there isn't another “good news.” Only there are some who trouble you, and want to pervert the Good News of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you any “good news” other than that which we preached to you, let him be cursed. As we have said before, so I now say again: if any man preaches to you any “good news” other than that which you received, let him be cursed. For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? For if I were still pleasing men, I wouldn't be a servant of Christ.

But I make known to you, brothers, concerning the Good News which was preached by me, that it is not according to man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my way of living in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the assembly of God, and ravaged it. I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of my own age among my

countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I didn't immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia. Then I returned to Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Peter, and stayed with him fifteen days. But of the other apostles I saw no one, except James, the Lord's brother. Now about the things which I write to you, behold, before God, I'm not lying. Then I came to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. I was still unknown by face to the assemblies of Judea which were in Christ, but they only heard: "He who once persecuted us now preaches the faith that he once tried to destroy." And they glorified God in me.

Then after a period of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. I went up by revelation, and I laid before them the Good News which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before those who were respected, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. This was because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who stole in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage; to whom we gave no place in the way of subjection, not for an hour, that the truth of the Good News might continue with you. But from those who were reputed to be important (whatever they were, it

makes no difference to me; God doesn't show partiality to man)—they, I say, who were respected imparted nothing to me, but to the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the Good News for the uncircumcised, even as Peter with the Good News for the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter in the apostleship with the circumcised also worked through me with the Gentiles); and when they perceived the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision. They only asked us to remember the poor—which very thing I was also zealous to do.

But when Peter came to Antioch, I resisted him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before some people came from James, he ate with the Gentiles. But when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in his hypocrisy; so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they didn't walk uprightly according to the truth of the Good News, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live as the Gentiles do, and not as the Jews do, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as the Jews do?"

"We, being Jews by nature, and not Gentile sinners, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law, because no flesh will be justified by the works of the law. But if, while we sought to be justified

in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a servant of sin? Certainly not! For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a law-breaker. For I, through the law, died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me. That life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I don't reject the grace of God. For if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nothing!"

Foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you not to obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed among you as crucified? I just want to learn this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now completed in the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain, if it is indeed in vain? He therefore who supplies the Spirit to you, and does miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law, or by hearing of faith? Even as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." Know therefore that those who are of faith, the same are children of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Good News beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you all the nations will be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse. For it is written, "Cursed is everyone who doesn't continue in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them." Now that no man is justified by the

law before God is evident, for, “The righteous will live by faith.” The law is not of faith, but, “The man who does them will live by them.”

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us. For it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,” that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Brothers, speaking of human terms, though it is only a man’s covenant, yet when it has been confirmed, no one makes it void, or adds to it. Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his offspring. He doesn’t say, “To descendants”, as of many, but as of one, “To your offspring”, which is Christ. Now I say this: A covenant confirmed beforehand by God in Christ, the law, which came four hundred thirty years after, does not annul, so as to make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by promise.

Then why is there the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise has been made. It was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not between one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could make alive, most certainly righteousness would have been of the law. But the Scripture imprisoned all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, confined for the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law has become our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all children of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to promise.

But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a bondservant, though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed by the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental principles of the world. But when the fullness of the time came, God sent out his Son, born to a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of children. And because you are children, God sent out the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" So you are no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

However at that time, not knowing God, you were in bondage to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, why do you turn back again to the weak and miserable elemental principles, to which you desire to be in bondage all over again? You observe days, months, seasons, and

years. I am afraid for you, that I might have wasted my labor for you.

I beg you, brothers, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong, but you know that because of weakness in the flesh I preached the Good News to you the first time. That which was a temptation to you in my flesh, you didn't despise nor reject; but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

What was the blessing you enjoyed? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. So then, have I become your enemy by telling you the truth? They zealously seek you in no good way. No, they desire to alienate you, that you may seek them. But it is always good to be zealous in a good cause, and not only when I am present with you.

My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ is formed in you— but I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, don't you listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the servant, and one by the free woman. However, the son by the servant was born according to the flesh, but the son by the free woman was born through promise. These things contain an allegory, for these are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to the Jerusalem that exists now, for she

is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written,

“Rejoice, you barren who don't bear.  
Break out and shout, you that don't travail.

For more are the children of the desolate than of her who has a husband.”

Now we, brothers, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as then, he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. However what does the Scripture say? “Throw out the servant and her son, for the son of the servant will not inherit with the son of the free woman.” So then, brothers, we are not children of a servant, but of the free woman.

Stand firm therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and don't be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yes, I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. You are alienated from Christ, you who desire to be justified by the law. You have fallen away from grace. For we, through the Spirit, by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision amounts to anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love. You were running well! Who interfered with you that you should not obey the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little yeast

grows through the whole lump. I have confidence toward you in the Lord that you will think no other way. But he who troubles you will bear his judgment, whoever he is.

But I, brothers, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been removed. I wish that those who disturb you would cut themselves off.

For you, brothers, were called for freedom. Only don't use your freedom for gain to the flesh, but through love be servants to one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, be careful that you don't consume one another.

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, that you may not do the things that you desire. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the deeds of the flesh are obvious, which are: adultery, sexual immorality, uncleanness, lustfulness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, divisions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these; of which I forewarn you, even as I also forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit God's Kingdom.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.

If we live by the Spirit, let's also walk by the Spirit. Let's not become conceited, provoking one another, and envying one another.

Brothers, even if a man is caught in some fault, you who are spiritual must restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourself so that you also aren't tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each man examine his own work, and then he will have reason to boast in himself, and not in someone else. For each man will bear his own burden.

But let him who is taught in the word share all good things with him who teaches. Don't be deceived. God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption. But he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not be weary in doing good, for we will reap in due season, if we don't give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let's do what is good toward all men, and especially toward those who are of the household of the faith.

See with what large letters I write to you with my own hand. As many as desire to make a good impression in the flesh compel you to be circumcised; just so they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even they who receive circumcision don't keep the law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh. But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been

crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. As many as walk by this rule, peace and mercy be on them, and on God's Israel.

From now on, let no one cause me any trouble, for I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus branded on my body.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.



## **Paul's Letter to the Ephesians**

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

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ; even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without defect before him in love; having predestined us for adoption as children through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his desire, to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he freely gave us favor in the Beloved, in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him to an administration of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, in him; in whom also we were assigned an inheritance, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who does all things after the counsel of his will; to the end that we should be to the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ. In him you also, having heard the word of the truth, the Good News of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is a pledge of our

inheritance, to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory.

For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which you have toward all the saints, don't cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come. He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things for the assembly, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

You were made alive when you were dead in transgressions and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our

trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus; for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no one would boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before that we would walk in them.

Therefore remember that once you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “uncircumcision” by that which is called “circumcision”, (in the flesh, made by hands); that you were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off are made near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the hostility, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man of the two, making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the hostility thereby. He came and preached peace to you who were far off and to those who were near. For through him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief

cornerstone; in whom the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

For this cause I, Paul, am the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles, if it is so that you have heard of the administration of that grace of God which was given me toward you; how that by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I wrote before in few words, by which, when you read, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other generations was not made known to the children of men, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of his promise in Christ Jesus through the Good News, of which I was made a servant, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power. To me, the very least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now through the assembly the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him. Therefore I ask that you may not lose heart at my troubles for you, which are your glory.

For this cause, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that you may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strengthened to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and height and depth, and to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to him be the glory in the assembly and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and humility, with patience, bearing with one another in love; being eager to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you also were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all. But to each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Therefore he says,

“When he ascended on high,  
he led captivity captive,  
and gave gifts to people.”

Now this, "He ascended", what is it but that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.

He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, shepherds and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of serving, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a full grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we may no longer be children, tossed back and forth and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, Christ; from whom all the body, being fitted and knit together through that which every joint supplies, according to the working in measure of each individual part, makes the body increase to the building up of itself in love.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their hearts; who having become callous gave themselves up to lust, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you did not learn Christ that way; if indeed you heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: that you put away, as concerning your former way of life, the old man, that grows corrupt after the lusts of deceit; and that you be renewed in the spirit of

your mind, and put on the new man, who in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Therefore putting away falsehood, speak truth each one with his neighbor. For we are members of one another. “Be angry, and don’t sin.” Don’t let the sun go down on your wrath, and don’t give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, producing with his hands something that is good, that he may have something to give to him who has need. Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but only what is good for building others up as the need may be, that it may give grace to those who hear. Don’t grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outcry, and slander, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ forgave you.

Be therefore imitators of God, as beloved children. Walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling fragrance.

But sexual immorality, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be mentioned among you, as becomes saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not appropriate; but rather giving of thanks.

Know this for sure, that no sexually immoral person, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words. For because of these things, the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience. Therefore don't be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is well pleasing to the Lord. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather even reprove them. For the things which are done by them in secret, it is a shame even to speak of. But all things, when they are reproved, are revealed by the light, for everything that reveals is light. Therefore he says, "Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Therefore watch carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore don't be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Don't be drunken with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; singing, and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always concerning all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves to one another in the fear of Christ.

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the assembly, being himself the savior of the body. But as the assembly is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the assembly, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the assembly to himself gloriously, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without defect. Even so husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord also does the assembly; because we are members of his body, of his flesh and bones. “For this cause a man will leave his father and mother, and will be joined to his wife. The two will become one flesh.” This mystery is great, but I speak concerning Christ and of the assembly. Nevertheless each of you must also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with a promise: “that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.”

You fathers, don’t provoke your children to wrath, but nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Servants, be obedient to those who according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as to Christ; not in the way of service only when eyes are on you, as men pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that

whatever good thing each one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord, whether he is bound or free.

You masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world's rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having the utility belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having fitted your feet with the preparation of the Good News of peace; above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; with all prayer and requests, praying at all times in the Spirit, and being watchful to this end in all perseverance and requests for all the saints: on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the Good News, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

But that you also may know my affairs, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the

- Ephesians -

Lord, will make known to you all things; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.

Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love. Amen.



## **Paul's Letter to the Philippians**

Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ;

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and servants: Grace to you, and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God whenever I remember you, always in every request of mine on behalf of you all, making my requests with joy, for your partnership in furtherance of the Good News from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is even right for me to think this way on behalf of all of you, because I have you in my heart, because, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the Good News, you all are partakers with me of grace. For God is my witness, how I long after all of you in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus.

This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that you may approve the things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense to the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Now I desire to have you know, brothers, that the things which happened to me have turned out rather to the progress of the Good News; so that it became evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my bonds are in Christ; and that most of the brothers in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more abundantly bold to

speak the word of God without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even out of envy and strife, and some also out of good will. The former insincerely preach Christ from selfish ambition, thinking that they add affliction to my chains; but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the Good News.

What does it matter? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed. I rejoice in this, yes, and will rejoice. For I know that this will turn out to my salvation, through your prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will in no way be disappointed, but with all boldness, as always, now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will bring fruit from my work; yet I don't know what I will choose. But I am in a dilemma between the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Yet, to remain in the flesh is more needful for your sake. Having this confidence, I know that I will remain, yes, and remain with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, that your rejoicing may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again.

Only let your way of life be worthy of the Good News of Christ, that, whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your state, that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the Good News; and in nothing frightened by the adversaries, which is for them a proof of destruction, but to you of salvation, and that from God. Because it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ,

not only to believe in him, but also to suffer on his behalf, having the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear is in me.

If therefore there is any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassion, make my joy full, by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through rivalry or through conceit, but in humility, each counting others better than himself; each of you not just looking to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.

Have this in your mind, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, didn't consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, yes, the death of the cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him, and gave to him the name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, those on earth, and those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputes, that you may become blameless and harmless,

children of God without defect in the middle of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you are seen as lights in the world, holding up the word of life; that I may have something to boast in the day of Christ, that I didn't run in vain nor labor in vain. Yes, and if I am poured out on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice, and rejoice with you all. In the same way, you also rejoice, and rejoice with me.

But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered up when I know how you are doing. For I have no one else like-minded, who will truly care about you. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But you know the proof of him, that, as a child serves a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the Good News. Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I myself also will come shortly. But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, and your apostle and servant of my need; since he longed for you all, and was very troubled, because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick, nearly to death, but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow on sorrow. I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when you see him again, you may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy, and hold such people in honor, because for the work of Christ he came near to death, risking his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not tiresome, but for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision. For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh; though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If any other man thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I yet more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the assembly; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.

However, I consider those things that were gain to me as a loss for Christ. Yes most certainly, and I count all things to be a loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and count them nothing but refuse, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed to his death; if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect; but I press on, that I may take hold of that for which also I was taken hold of by Christ Jesus.

Brothers, I don't regard myself as yet having taken hold, but one thing I do. Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, think this way. If in anything you think otherwise, God will also reveal that to you. Nevertheless, to the extent that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule. Let us be of the same mind.

Brothers, be imitators together of me, and note those who walk this way, even as you have us for an example. For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, as the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who think about earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from where we also wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will change the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working by which he is able even to subject all things to himself.

Therefore, my brothers, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to think the same way in the Lord. Yes, I beg you also, true partner, help these women, for they labored with me in the Good News, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, "Rejoice!" Let your gentleness be known to all men. The

Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think about these things. The things which you learned, received, heard, and saw in me: do these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length you have revived your thought for me; in which you did indeed take thought, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak because of lack, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content in it. I know how to be humbled, and I know also how to abound. In everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in need. I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. However you did well that you shared in my affliction. You yourselves also know, you Philippians, that in the beginning of the Good News, when I departed from Macedonia, no assembly shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent once and again to my need. Not that I seek for the gift, but I seek for the fruit that increases to your account. But I have all things, and abound. I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that came

from you, a sweet-smelling fragrance, an acceptable and well-pleasing sacrifice to God. My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. All the saints greet you, especially those who are of Caesar's household.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.  
Amen.

## **Paul's Letter to the Colossians**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have toward all the saints, because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the Good News, which has come to you; even as it is in all the world and is bearing fruit and growing, as it does in you also, since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; even as you learned of Epaphras our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

For this cause, we also, since the day we heard this, don't cease praying and making requests for you, that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, that you may walk worthily of the Lord, to please him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, for all endurance and perseverance with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the

forgiveness of our sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things are held together. He is the head of the body, the assembly, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For all the fullness was pleased to dwell in him; and through him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, whether things on the earth, or things in the heavens, having made peace through the blood of his cross.

You, being in past times alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil deeds, yet now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without defect and blameless before him, if it is so that you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the Good News which you heard, which is being proclaimed in all creation under heaven; of which I, Paul, was made a servant.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the assembly; of which I was made a servant, according to the stewardship of God which was given me toward you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations. But now it has been revealed to his saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is

Christ in you, the hope of glory; whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; for which I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily.

For I desire to have you know how greatly I struggle for you, and for those at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and gaining all riches of the full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. Now this I say that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech. For though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, rejoicing and seeing your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

As therefore you received Christ Jesus, the Lord, walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, even as you were taught, abounding in it in thanksgiving.

Be careful that you don't let anyone rob you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ. For in him all the fullness of the Deity dwells bodily, and in him you are made full, who is the head of all principality and power; in whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, in the circumcision of

Christ; having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. You were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, wiping out the handwriting in ordinances which was against us; and he has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; having stripped the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Let no one therefore judge you in eating, or in drinking, or with respect to a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day, which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's. Let no one rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshiping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding firmly to the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and ligaments, grows with God's growth.

If you died with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances, "Don't handle, nor taste, nor touch" (all of which perish with use), according to the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things indeed appear like wisdom in self-imposed worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but aren't of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

If then you were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right

hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, our life, is revealed, then you will also be revealed with him in glory.

Put to death therefore your members which are on the earth: sexual immorality, uncleanness, depraved passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience. You also once walked in those, when you lived in them; but now you also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and shameful speaking out of your mouth. Don't lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, who is being renewed in knowledge after the image of his Creator, where there can't be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondservant, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all.

Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, humility, and perseverance; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, if any man has a complaint against any; even as Christ forgave you, so you also do.

Above all these things, walk in love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.

Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father, through him.

Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives, and don't be bitter against them.

Children, obey your parents in all things, for this pleases the Lord.

Fathers, don't provoke your children, so that they won't be discouraged.

Servants, obey in all things those who are your masters according to the flesh, not just when they are looking, as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord, and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will receive again for the wrong that he has done, and there is no partiality.

Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving; praying together for us also, that God may open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may reveal it as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with

grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

All my affairs will be made known to you by Tychicus, the beloved brother, faithful servant, and fellow bondservant in the Lord. I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts, together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you everything that is going on here.

Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you received commandments, “if he comes to you, receive him”), and Jesus who is called Justus. These are my only fellow workers for God’s Kingdom who are of the circumcision, men who have been a comfort to me.

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, salutes you, always striving for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I testify about him, that he has great zeal for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you. Greet the brothers who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the assembly that is in his house. When this letter has been read among you, cause it to be read also in the assembly of the Laodiceans; and that you also read the letter from Laodicea. Tell Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it.”

The salutation of me, Paul, with my own hand:  
remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

## **Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians**

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the assembly of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We always give thanks to God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and perseverance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father. We know, brothers loved by God, that you are chosen, and that our Good News came to you not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and with much assurance. You know what kind of men we showed ourselves to be among you for your sake. You became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you the word of the Lord has been declared, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone out; so that we need not to say anything. For they themselves report concerning us what kind of a reception we had from you; and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.

For you yourselves know, brothers, our visit to you wasn't in vain, but having suffered before and been

shamefully treated, as you know, at Philippi, we grew bold in our God to tell you the Good News of God in much conflict. For our exhortation is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in deception. But even as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who tests our hearts. For neither were we at any time found using words of flattery, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness (God is witness), nor seeking glory from men (neither from you nor from others), when we might have claimed authority as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

Even so, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not the Good News of God only, but also our own souls, because you had become very dear to us. For you remember, brothers, our labor and travail; for working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached to you the Good News of God. You are witnesses with God, how holy, righteously, and blamelessly we behaved ourselves toward you who believe. As you know, we exhorted, comforted, and implored every one of you, as a father does his own children, to the end that you should walk worthily of God, who calls you into his own Kingdom and glory. For this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when you received from us the word of the message of God, you accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also works in you who believe. For you, brothers, became imitators of the assemblies of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus; for you also suffered the same things from your own

countrymen, even as they did from the Jews; who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove us out, and don't please God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins always. But wrath has come on them to the uttermost.

But we, brothers, being bereaved of you for a short season, in presence, not in heart, tried even harder to see your face with great desire, because we wanted to come to you—indeed, I, Paul, once and again—but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Isn't it even you, before our Lord Jesus at his coming? For you are our glory and our joy.

Therefore when we couldn't stand it any longer, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone, and sent Timothy, our brother and God's servant in the Good News of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you know that we are appointed to this task. For most certainly, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction, even as it happened, and you know. For this cause I also, when I couldn't stand it any longer, sent that I might know your faith, for fear that by any means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor would have been in vain. But when Timothy came just now to us from you, and brought us glad news of your faith and love, and that you have good memories of us always, longing to see us, even as we also long to see you; for this cause, brothers, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through

your faith. For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we render again to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face, and may perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you; and the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you, to the end he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Finally then, brothers, we beg and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, that you abound more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God: your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality, that each one of you know how to control his own body in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who don't know God; that no one should take advantage of and wrong a brother or sister in this matter; because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned you and testified. For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Therefore he who rejects this doesn't reject man, but God, who has also given his Holy Spirit to you.

But concerning brotherly love, you have no need that one write to you. For you yourselves are taught by God to love one another, for indeed you do it toward all the brothers who are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brothers, that you abound more and more; and that you make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, even as we instructed you; that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and may have need of nothing.

But we don't want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning those who have fallen asleep, so that you don't grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we tell you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will in no way precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with God's trumpet. The dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

But concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need that anything be written to you. For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night. For when they are saying, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction will come on them, like birth pains on a pregnant woman; and they will in no way

escape. But you, brothers, aren't in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief. You are all children of light, and children of the day. We don't belong to the night, nor to darkness, so then let's not sleep, as the rest do, but let's watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep in the night; and those who are drunk are drunk in the night. But let us, since we belong to the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and, for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God didn't appoint us to wrath, but to the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Therefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as you also do. But we beg you, brothers, to know those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to respect and honor them in love for their work's sake.

Be at peace among yourselves. We exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all. See that no one returns evil for evil to anyone, but always follow after that which is good, for one another, and for all.

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you. Don't quench the Spirit. Don't despise prophesies. Test all things, and hold firmly that which is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He who calls you is faithful, who will also do it. Brothers, pray for us. Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all the holy brothers.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.



## **Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians**

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the assembly of the Thessalonians in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are bound to always give thanks to God for you, brothers, even as it is appropriate, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of each and every one of you towards one another abounds; so that we ourselves boast about you in the assemblies of God for your perseverance and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which you endure. This is an obvious sign of the righteous judgment of God, to the end that you may be counted worthy of God's Kingdom, for which you also suffer. Since it is a righteous thing with God to repay affliction to those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted with us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, punishing those who don't know God, and to those who don't obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus, who will pay the penalty: eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes in that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired among all those who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

To this end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire of goodness and work of faith, with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in

him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, brothers, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to him, we ask you not to be quickly shaken in your mind, and not be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by letter as if from us, saying that the day of Christ has already come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For it will not be, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of destruction, he who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself up as God. Don't you remember that, when I was still with you, I told you these things? Now you know what is restraining him, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness already works. Only there is one who restrains now, until he is taken out of the way. Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will kill with the breath of his mouth, and destroy by the manifestation of his coming; even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deception of wickedness for those who are being lost, because they didn't receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. Because of this, God sends them a working of error, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who didn't believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

But we are bound to always give thanks to God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification of the Spirit

and belief in the truth; to which he called you through our Good News, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers, stand firm, and hold the traditions which you were taught by us, whether by word, or by letter.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good work and word.

Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, even as also with you; and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men; for not all have faith. But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you, and guard you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you both do and will do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love, and into the perseverance of Christ.

Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother who walks in rebellion, and not after the tradition which they received from us. For you know how you ought to imitate us. For we didn't behave ourselves rebelliously among you, neither did we eat bread from anyone's hand without paying for it, but in labor and travail worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you; not because we don't have the right, but to make ourselves an example to you, that you should imitate us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: "If anyone will not work, don't let him eat." For we hear of some who walk among

you in rebellion, who don't work at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are that way, we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

But you, brothers, don't be weary in doing what is right. If any man doesn't obey our word in this letter, note that man, that you have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. Don't count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all.

The greeting of me, Paul, with my own hand, which is the sign in every letter: this is how I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

## **Paul's First Letter to Timothy**

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ our hope; to Timothy, my true child in faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

As I urged you when I was going into Macedonia, stay at Ephesus that you might command certain men not to teach a different doctrine, and not to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which cause disputes, rather than God's stewardship, which is in faith— but the goal of this command is love, out of a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith; from which things some, having missed the mark, have turned away to vain talking; desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor about what they strongly affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a person uses it lawfully, as knowing this, that law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for the sexually immoral, for homosexuals, for slave-traders, for liars, for perjurers, and for any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine; according to the Good News of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

I thank him who enabled me, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he counted me faithful, appointing me to service; although I used to be a blasphemer, a persecutor, and

insolent. However, I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. The grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. The saying is faithful and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. However, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might display all his patience, for an example of those who were going to believe in him for eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

This instruction I commit to you, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which were given to you before, that by them you may wage the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust away made a shipwreck concerning the faith; of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I delivered to Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme.

I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and givings of thanks, be made for all men: for kings and all who are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who desires all people to be saved and come to full knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all; the testimony in its own times; to which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth in Christ, not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

I desire therefore that the men in every place pray, lifting up holy hands without anger and doubting. In the same way, that women also adorn themselves in decent clothing, with modesty and propriety; not just with braided hair, gold, pearls, or expensive clothing; but (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works. Let a woman learn in quietness with full submission. But I don't permit a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. Adam wasn't deceived, but the woman, being deceived, has fallen into disobedience; but she will be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith, love, and sanctification with sobriety.

This is a faithful saying: someone who seeks the office of an overseer desires a good work. The overseer therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, modest, hospitable, good at teaching; not a drinker, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having children in subjection with all reverence; (but how could someone who doesn't know how to rule one's own house take care of God's assembly?) not a new convert, lest being puffed up he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have good testimony from those who are outside, to avoid falling into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Servants, in the same way, must be reverent, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for money; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure

conscience. Let them also first be tested; then let them serve if they are blameless. Their wives in the same way must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let servants be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well gain for themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

These things I write to you, hoping to come to you shortly; but if I wait long, that you may know how men ought to behave themselves in God's house, which is the assembly of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Without controversy, the mystery of godliness is great:

God was revealed in the flesh,  
justified in the spirit,  
seen by angels,  
preached among the nations,  
believed on in the world,  
and received up in glory.

But the Spirit says expressly that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding marriage and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer.

If you instruct the brothers of these things, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which you have followed. But refuse profane and old wives' fables. Exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise has some value, but godliness has value in all things, having the promise of the life which is now, and of that which is to come. This saying is faithful and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we have set our trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things.

Let no man despise your youth; but be an example to those who believe, in word, in your way of life, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity. Until I come, pay attention to reading, to exhortation, and to teaching. Don't neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the elders. Be diligent in these things. Give yourself wholly to them, that your progress may be revealed to all. Pay attention to yourself, and to your teaching. Continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Don't rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brothers; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity. Honor widows who are widows indeed. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to repay their parents, for this is acceptable in the sight of God. Now she who is a widow indeed, and desolate, has her hope set on God, and continues

in petitions and prayers night and day. But she who gives herself to pleasure is dead while she lives. Also command these things, that they may be without reproach. But if anyone doesn't provide for his own, and especially his own household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. Let no one be enrolled as a widow under sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, being approved by good works, if she has brought up children, if she has been hospitable to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, and if she has diligently followed every good work.

But refuse younger widows, for when they have grown wanton against Christ, they desire to marry; having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge. Besides, they also learn to be idle, going about from house to house. Not only idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, and give no occasion to the adversary for insulting. For already some have turned away after Satan. If any man or woman who believes has widows, let them relieve them, and don't let the assembly be burdened; that it might relieve those who are widows indeed.

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox when it treads out the grain." And, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

Don't receive an accusation against an elder, except at the word of two or three witnesses. Those who sin, reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear. I command you in the sight of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the chosen angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands hastily on no one, neither be a participant in other people's sins. Keep yourself pure. Be no longer a drinker of water only, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.

Some men's sins are evident, preceding them to judgment, and some also follow later. In the same way also there are good works that are obvious, and those that are otherwise can't be hidden.

Let as many as are bondservants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and the doctrine not be blasphemed. Those who have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brothers, but rather let them serve them, because those who partake of the benefit are believing and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.

If anyone teaches a different doctrine, and doesn't consent to sound words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is conceited, knowing nothing, but obsessed with arguments, disputes, and word battles, from which come envy, strife, insulting, evil suspicions, constant friction of people of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. Withdraw yourself from such.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we certainly can't carry anything out. But having food and clothing, we will be content with that. But those who are determined to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful lusts, such as drown men in ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some have been led astray from the faith in their greed, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

But you, man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you confessed the good confession in the sight of many witnesses. I command you before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate testified the good confession, that you keep the commandment without spot, blameless, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in its own times he will show, who is the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and eternal power. Amen.

Charge those who are rich in this present world that they not be arrogant, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on the living God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to share; laying up in store for themselves a good

foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life.

Timothy, guard that which is committed to you, turning away from the empty chatter and oppositions of what is falsely called knowledge; which some profess, and thus have wandered from the faith.

Grace be with you. Amen.



## **Paul's Second Letter to Timothy**

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

I thank God, whom I serve as my forefathers did, with a pure conscience. How unceasing is my memory of you in my petitions, night and day longing to see you, remembering your tears, that I may be filled with joy; having been reminded of the sincere faith that is in you; which lived first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and, I am persuaded, in you also.

For this cause, I remind you that you should stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God didn't give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control. Therefore don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but endure hardship for the Good News according to the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Good News. For this, I was appointed as a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For this cause I also suffer these things.

Yet I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed to him against that day.

Hold the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed to you, guard through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

This you know, that all who are in Asia turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. May the Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain, but when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me (the Lord grant to him to find the Lord's mercy in that day); and in how many things he served at Ephesus, you know very well.

You therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit the same to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. You therefore must endure hardship, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on duty entangles himself in the affairs of life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. Also, if anyone competes in athletics, he isn't crowned unless he has competed by the rules. The farmer who labors must be the first to get a share of the crops. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the offspring of David, according to my Good News, in which I suffer hardship to the point of chains as a criminal. But

God's word isn't chained. Therefore I endure all things for the chosen ones' sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy:

“For if we died with him,  
we will also live with him.  
If we endure,  
we will also reign with him.  
If we deny him,  
he also will deny us.  
If we are faithless,  
he remains faithful.  
For he can't deny himself.”

Remind them of these things, charging them in the sight of the Lord, that they don't argue about words, to no profit, to the subverting of those who hear.

Give diligence to present yourself approved by God, a workman who doesn't need to be ashamed, properly handling the Word of Truth. But shun empty chatter, for it will go further in ungodliness, and those words will consume like gangrene, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who have erred concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past, and overthrowing the faith of some. However God's firm foundation stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Let every one who names the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.” Now in a large house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of clay. Some are for honor, and some for dishonor. If anyone

therefore purges himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, and suitable for the master's use, prepared for every good work.

Flee from youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But refuse foolish and ignorant questionings, knowing that they generate strife. The Lord's servant must not quarrel, but be gentle towards all, able to teach, patient, in gentleness correcting those who oppose him: perhaps God may give them repentance leading to a full knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the devil's snare, having been taken captive by him to his will.

But know this, that in the last days, grievous times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, not lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied its power. Turn away from these, also. For some of these are people who creep into houses, and take captive gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Even as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so do these also oppose the truth; men corrupted in mind, who concerning the faith are rejected. But they will proceed no further. For their folly will be evident to all men, as theirs also came to be. But you did follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, steadfastness, persecutions, and sufferings: those things that

happened to me at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. I endured those persecutions. The Lord delivered me out of them all. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you remain in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them. From infancy, you have known the holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that each person who belongs to God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

I command you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all patience and teaching. For the time will come when they will not listen to the sound doctrine, but, having itching ears, will heap up for themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn away to fables. But you be sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, and fulfill your ministry.

For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith. From now on, there is stored up for me the crown of righteousness, which the

Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day; and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved his appearing.

Be diligent to come to me soon, for Demas left me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. But I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. Bring the cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus when you come, and the books, especially the parchments. Alexander, the coppersmith, did much evil to me. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds, of whom you also must beware; for he greatly opposed our words.

At my first defense, no one came to help me, but all left me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me, that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me for his heavenly Kingdom; to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus. Erastus remained at Corinth, but I left Trophimus at Miletus sick. Be diligent to come before winter. Eubulus salutes you, as do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

## **Paul's Letter to Titus**

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's chosen ones, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who can't lie, promised before time began; but in his own time revealed his word in the message with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior; to Titus, my true child according to a common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

I left you in Crete for this reason, that you would set in order the things that were lacking, and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you; if anyone is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, who are not accused of loose or unruly behavior. For the overseer must be blameless, as God's steward; not self-pleasing, not easily angered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for dishonest gain; but given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober minded, fair, holy, self-controlled; holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict those who contradict him.

For there are also many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for dishonest gain's sake. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and idle gluttons." This testimony is true. For this cause, reprove them sharply, that they may

be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess that they know God, but by their deeds they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and unfit for any good work.

But say the things which fit sound doctrine, that older men should be temperate, sensible, sober minded, sound in faith, in love, and in perseverance: and that older women likewise be reverent in behavior, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; that they may train the young wives to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that God's word may not be blasphemed. Likewise, exhort the younger men to be sober minded; in all things showing yourself an example of good works; in your teaching showing integrity, seriousness, incorruptibility, and soundness of speech that can't be condemned; that he who opposes you may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say about us. Exhort servants to be in subjection to their own masters, and to be well-pleasing in all things; not contradicting; not stealing, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we would live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ; who gave himself

for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good works.

Say these things and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise you.

Remind them to be in subjection to rulers and to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, not to be contentious, to be gentle, showing all humility toward all men. For we were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love toward mankind appeared, not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy, he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This saying is faithful, and concerning these things I desire that you affirm confidently, so that those who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men; but shun foolish questionings, genealogies, strife, and disputes about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. Avoid a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a one is perverted and sins, being self-condemned.

When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me to Nicopolis, for I have determined to winter there. Send Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos on their journey

speedily, that nothing may be lacking for them. Let our people also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they may not be unfruitful.

All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

## **Paul's Letter to Philemon**

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon, our beloved fellow worker, to the beloved Apphia, to Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the assembly in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, hearing of your love, and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; that the fellowship of your faith may become effective, in the knowledge of every good thing which is in us in Christ Jesus. For we have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Therefore though I have all boldness in Christ to command you that which is appropriate, yet for love's sake I rather beg, being such a one as Paul, the aged, but also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beg you for my child, whom I have become the father of in my chains, Onesimus, who once was useless to you, but now is useful to you and to me. I am sending him back. Therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, whom I desired to keep with me, that on your behalf he might serve me in my chains for the Good News. But I was willing to do nothing without your consent, that your goodness would not be as of necessity, but of free will. For perhaps he was therefore separated from you for a while, that you would have him forever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to

me, but how much rather to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

If then you count me a partner, receive him as you would receive me. But if he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, put that to my account. I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it (not to mention to you that you owe to me even your own self besides). Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in the Lord.

Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even beyond what I say.

Also, prepare a guest room for me, for I hope that through your prayers I will be restored to you.

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.  
Amen.

## **The Letter to the Hebrews**

God, having in the past spoken to the fathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, has at the end of these days spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds. His Son is the radiance of his glory, the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, who, when he had by himself purified us of our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become so much better than the angels, as he has inherited a more excellent name than they have. For to which of the angels did he say at any time,

“You are my Son. Today I have become your father?”

and again,

“I will be to him a Father, and he will be to me a Son?”

When he again brings in the firstborn into the world he says, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” Of the angels he says,

“Who makes his angels winds, and his servants a flame of fire.”

But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.

The scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your Kingdom.

You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity;

therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows.”

And,

“You, Lord, in the beginning, laid the foundation of the earth.

The heavens are the works of your hands.

They will perish, but you continue.

They all will grow old like a garment does.

You will roll them up like a mantle,

and they will be changed;

but you are the same.

Your years will not fail.”

But which of the angels has he told at any time,

“Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet?”

Aren't they all serving spirits, sent out to do service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Therefore we ought to pay greater attention to the things that were heard, lest perhaps we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense; how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation— which at the first having been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard; God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders, by various works of power, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?

For he didn't subject the world to come, of which we speak, to angels. But one has somewhere testified, saying,

“What is man, that you think of him?  
Or the son of man, that you care for him?  
You made him a little lower than the angels.  
You crowned him with glory and honor.  
You have put all things in subjection under his feet.”

For in that he subjected all things to him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we don't see all things subjected to him, yet. But we see him who has been made a little lower than the angels, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for everyone. For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many children to glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying,

“I will declare your name to my brothers.  
Among the congregation I will sing your praise.”

Again, “I will put my trust in him.” Again, “Behold, here I am with the children whom God has given me.” Since then the children have shared in flesh and blood, he also himself in the same way partook of the same, that through death he might bring to nothing him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver all of them who

through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For most certainly, he doesn't give help to angels, but he gives help to the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he was obligated in all things to be made like his brothers, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Therefore, holy brothers, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus; who was faithful to him who appointed him, as also was Moses in all his house. For he has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, because he who built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone; but he who built all things is God. Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken, but Christ is faithful as a Son over his house; whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the glorying of our hope firm to the end. Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says,

“Today if you will hear his voice,  
don't harden your hearts, as in the rebellion,  
like as in the day of the trial in the wilderness,  
where your fathers tested me by proving me,  
and saw my deeds for forty years.  
Therefore I was displeased with that generation,  
and said, ‘They always err in their heart,  
but they didn't know my ways;’

as I swore in my wrath,  
“They will not enter into my rest.””

Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God; but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called “today”; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm to the end: while it is said,

“Today if you will hear his voice,  
don’t harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.”

For who, when they heard, rebelled? No, didn’t all those who came out of Egypt by Moses? With whom was he displeased forty years? Wasn’t it with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? To whom did he swear that they wouldn’t enter into his rest, but to those who were disobedient? We see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.

Let us fear therefore, lest perhaps anyone of you should seem to have come short of a promise of entering into his rest. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, even as they also did, but the word they heard didn’t profit them, because it wasn’t mixed with faith by those who heard. For we who have believed do enter into that rest, even as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, they will not enter into my rest”; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has said this somewhere about the seventh day, “God rested on the seventh day from

all his works"; and in this place again, "They will not enter into my rest."

Seeing therefore it remains that some should enter into it, and they to whom the good news was preached before failed to enter in because of disobedience, he again defines a certain day, today, saying through David so long a time afterward (just as has been said),

"Today if you will hear his voice,  
don't harden your hearts."

For if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day. There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For he who has entered into his rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from his. Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

There is no creature that is hidden from his sight, but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him to whom we must give an account.

Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold tightly to our confession. For we don't have a high priest who can't be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one who has been in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace,

that we may receive mercy, and may find grace for help in time of need.

For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. The high priest can deal gently with those who are ignorant and going astray, because he himself is also surrounded with weakness. Because of this, he must offer sacrifices for sins for the people, as well as for himself. Nobody takes this honor on himself, but he is called by God, just like Aaron was. So also Christ didn't glorify himself to be made a high priest, but it was he who said to him,

“You are my Son.  
Today I have become your father.”

As he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,  
after the order of Melchizedek.”

He, in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and petitions with strong crying and tears to him who was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Having been made perfect, he became to all of those who obey him the author of eternal salvation, named by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

About him we have many words to say, and hard to interpret, seeing you have become dull of hearing. For

although by this time you should be teachers, you again need to have someone teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the revelations of God. You have come to need milk, and not solid food. For everyone who lives on milk is not experienced in the word of righteousness, for he is a baby. But solid food is for those who are full grown, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

Therefore leaving the teaching of the first principles of Christ, let us press on to perfection—not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. This will we do, if God permits. For concerning those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify the Son of God for themselves again, and put him to open shame. For the land which has drunk the rain that comes often on it, and produces a crop suitable for them for whose sake it is also tilled, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and thistles, it is rejected and near being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

But, beloved, we are persuaded of better things for you, and things that accompany salvation, even though we speak like this. For God is not unrighteous, so as to forget your work and the labor of love which you showed toward his name, in that you served the saints, and still do serve them. We desire that each one of you may show the same

diligence to the fullness of hope even to the end, that you won't be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and perseverance inherited the promises. For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." Thus, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by a greater one, and in every dispute of theirs the oath is final for confirmation. In this way God, being determined to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; where as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham divided a tenth part of all (being first, by interpretation, "king of righteousness", and then also "king of Salem", which means "king of peace"; without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God), remains a priest continually.

Now consider how great this man was, to whom even Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth out of the best

plunder. They indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brothers, though these have come out of the body of Abraham, but he whose genealogy is not counted from them has accepted tithes from Abraham, and has blessed him who has the promises. But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. Here people who die receive tithes, but there one receives tithes of whom it is testified that he lives. We can say that through Abraham even Levi, who receives tithes, has paid tithes, for he was yet in the body of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Now if there were perfection through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people have received the law), what further need was there for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is of necessity a change made also in the law. For he of whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord has sprung out of Judah, about which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. This is yet more abundantly evident, if after the likeness of Melchizedek there arises another priest, who has been made, not after the law of a fleshly commandment, but after the power of an endless life: for it is testified,

“You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”

For there is an annulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect), and a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. Inasmuch as he was not made priest without the taking of an oath (for they indeed have been made priests without an oath), but he with an oath by him that says of him,

“The Lord swore and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.’”

By so much, Jesus has become the collateral of a better covenant. Many, indeed, have been made priests, because they are hindered from continuing by death. But he, because he lives forever, has his priesthood unchangeable. Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, seeing that he lives forever to make intercession for them.

For such a high priest was fitting for us: holy, guiltless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who doesn't need, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices daily, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. For he did this once for all, when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men as high priests who have weakness, but the word of the oath which came after the law appoints a Son forever who has been perfected.

Now in the things which we are saying, the main point is this. We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a

servant of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. For if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, even as Moses was warned by God when he was about to make the tabernacle, for he said, "See, you shall make everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain." But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which on better promises has been given as law. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he said,

"Behold, the days come", says the Lord,  
"that I will make a new covenant with the house of  
Israel and with the house of Judah;  
not according to the covenant that I made with their  
fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to  
lead them out of the land of Egypt;  
for they didn't continue in my covenant,  
and I disregarded them," says the Lord.  
"For this is the covenant that I will make with the  
house of Israel. After those days," says the Lord;  
"I will put my laws into their mind,  
I will also write them on their heart.  
I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.  
They will not teach every man his fellow citizen,

and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all will know me,  
from their least to their greatest.  
For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness.  
I will remember their sins and lawless deeds no more."

In that he says, "A new covenant", he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and grows aged is near to vanishing away.

Now indeed even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service, and an earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared. In the first part were the lamp stand, the table, and the show bread; which is called the Holy Place. After the second veil was the tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden altar of incense, and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which was a golden pot holding the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, of which things we can't speak now in detail. Now these things having been thus prepared, the priests go in continually into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the services, but into the second the high priest alone, once in the year, not without blood, which he offers for himself, and for the errors of the people. The Holy Spirit is indicating this, that the way into the Holy Place wasn't yet revealed while the first tabernacle was still standing; which is a symbol of the present age, where gifts and sacrifices are offered that are incapable, concerning the conscience, of making the worshiper

perfect; being only (with meats and drinks and various washings) fleshly ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation.

But Christ having come as a high priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify to the cleanness of the flesh: how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without defect to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, since a death has occurred for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, that those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a last will and testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him who made it. For a will is in force where there has been death, for it is never in force while he who made it lives. Therefore even the first covenant has not been dedicated without blood. For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you."

Moreover he sprinkled the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry in the same way with the blood. According to the law, nearly everything is cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.

It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ hasn't entered into holy places made with hands, which are representations of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place year by year with blood not his own, or else he must have suffered often since the foundation of the world. But now once at the end of the ages, he has been revealed to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this, judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, without sin, to those who are eagerly waiting for him for salvation.

For the law, having a shadow of the good to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. Or else wouldn't they have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having been once cleansed, would have had no more consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a yearly reminder of sins. For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Therefore when he comes into the world, he says,

“Sacrifice and offering you didn’t desire,  
but you prepared a body for me.

You had no pleasure in whole burnt offerings and  
sacrifices for sin.

Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (in the scroll of  
the book it is written of me)  
to do your will, O God.’”

Previously saying, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you didn’t desire, neither had pleasure in them” (those which are offered according to the law), then he has said, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He takes away the first, that he may establish the second, by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Every priest indeed stands day by day serving and often offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins, but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from that time waiting until his enemies are made the footstool of his feet. For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. The Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying,

“This is the covenant that I will make with them:  
‘After those days,’ says the Lord,  
‘I will put my laws on their heart,  
I will also write them on their mind;’”

then he says,

“I will remember their sins and their iniquities no more.”

Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Having therefore, brothers, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over God's house, let's draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and having our body washed with pure water, let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering; for he who promised is faithful.

Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good works, not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as you see the Day approaching.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which will devour the adversaries. A man who disregards Moses' law dies without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will be judged worthy of who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified an unholy thing, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "Vengeance belongs to me," says the Lord, "I will repay." Again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

But remember the former days, in which, after you were enlightened, you endured a great struggle with sufferings; partly, being exposed to both reproaches and oppressions; and partly, becoming partakers with those who were treated so. For you both had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your possessions, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an enduring one in the heavens. Therefore don't throw away your boldness, which has a great reward. For you need endurance so that, having done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

“In a very little while,  
he who comes will come, and will not wait.  
But the righteous will live by faith.  
If he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.”

But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the saving of the soul.

Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, proof of things not seen. For by this, the elders obtained testimony. By faith, we understand that the universe has been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which are visible. By faith, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had testimony given to him that he was righteous, God testifying with respect to his gifts; and through it he, being dead, still speaks. By faith, Enoch was taken away, so that he wouldn't see death, and he was not found, because God translated him. For he has had testimony given to him that before his translation he had been well pleasing to God. Without faith

it is impossible to be well pleasing to him, for he who comes to God must believe that he exists, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him. By faith, Noah, being warned about things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared a ship for the saving of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he went. By faith, he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith, even Sarah herself received power to conceive, and she bore a child when she was past age, since she counted him faithful who had promised. Therefore as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as innumerable as the sand which is by the sea shore, were fathered by one man, and him as good as dead. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and embraced them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. If indeed they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had enough time to return. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

By faith, Abraham, being tested, offered up Isaac. Yes, he who had gladly received the promises was offering up his

one and only son, to whom it was said, “your offspring will be accounted as from Isaac”; concluding that God is able to raise up even from the dead. Figuratively speaking, he also did receive him back from the dead. By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even concerning things to come. By faith, Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith, Joseph, when his end was near, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel; and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that he was a beautiful child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill treatment with God's people, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked to the reward. By faith, he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. By faith, he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, that the destroyer of the firstborn should not touch them. By faith, they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land. When the Egyptians tried to do so, they were swallowed up. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith, Rahab the prostitute, didn't perish with those who were disobedient, having received the spies in peace. What more shall I say? For the time would fail me if I told of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets; who, through faith subdued kingdoms, worked out righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the

mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, grew mighty in war, and caused foreign armies to flee. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Others were tried by mocking and scourging, yes, moreover by bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned. They were sawn apart. They were tempted. They were slain with the sword. They went around in sheep skins and in goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts, mountains, caves, and the holes of the earth. These all, having had testimony given to them through their faith, didn't receive the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Therefore let us also, seeing we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him who has endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, that you don't grow weary, fainting in your souls. You have not yet resisted to blood, striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with children,

“My son, don't take lightly the chastening of the Lord,  
nor faint when you are reproved by him;  
For whom the Lord loves, he chastens,  
and scourges every son whom he receives.”

It is for discipline that you endure. God deals with you as with children, for what son is there whom his father doesn't discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have been made partakers, then are you illegitimate, and not children. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they indeed, for a few days, punished us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. All chastening seems for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been exercised thereby. Therefore lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man will see the Lord, looking carefully lest there be any man who falls short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and many be defiled by it; lest there be any sexually immoral person, or profane person, like Esau, who sold his birthright for one meal. For you know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found

no place for a change of mind though he sought it diligently with tears.

For you have not come to a mountain that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and to blackness, darkness, storm, the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which those who heard it begged that not one more word should be spoken to them, for they could not stand that which was commanded, “If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned”; and so fearful was the appearance that Moses said, “I am terrified and trembling.”

But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable multitudes of angels, to the festal gathering and assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel.

See that you don't refuse him who speaks. For if they didn't escape when they refused him who warned on the earth, how much more will we not escape who turn away from him who warns from heaven, whose voice shook the earth then, but now he has promised, saying, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens.” This phrase, “Yet once more”, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain. Therefore, receiving a Kingdom that can't be shaken, let us have grace, through which we serve God acceptably, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Let brotherly love continue. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for in doing so, some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in bonds, as bound with them; and those who are ill-treated, since you are also in the body. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: but God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers.

Be free from the love of money, content with such things as you have, for he has said, "I will in no way leave you, neither will I in any way forsake you." So that with good courage we say,

"The Lord is my helper. I will not fear.  
What can man do to me?"

Remember your leaders, men who spoke to you the word of God, and considering the results of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Don't be carried away by various and strange teachings, for it is good that the heart be established by grace, not by food, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.

We have an altar from which those who serve the holy tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside of the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside of the gate. Let us therefore go out to him outside of the camp, bearing his reproach. For we don't have here an enduring city, but we seek that which is to come. Through him, then,

let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which proclaim allegiance to his name. But don't forget to be doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they watch on behalf of your souls, as those who will give account, that they may do this with joy, and not with groaning, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Pray for us, for we are persuaded that we have a good conscience, desiring to live honorably in all things. I strongly urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you sooner.

Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, our Lord Jesus, make you complete in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

But I exhort you, brothers, endure the word of exhortation; for I have written to you in few words. Know that our brother Timothy has been freed, with whom, if he comes shortly, I will see you.

Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. The Italians greet you.

Grace be with you all. Amen.



## **The Letter from James**

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are in the Dispersion: Greetings.

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various temptations, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. Let endurance have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach; and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, without any doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. For that man shouldn't think that he will receive anything from the Lord. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

But let the brother in humble circumstances glory in his high position; and the rich, in that he is made humble, because like the flower in the grass, he will pass away. For the sun arises with the scorching wind, and withers the grass, and the flower in it falls, and the beauty of its appearance perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in his pursuits.

Blessed is a person who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to those who love him.

Let no man say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God," for God can't be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it has

conceived, bears sin; and the sin, when it is full grown, produces death. Don't be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, nor turning shadow. Of his own will he gave birth to us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

So, then, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for the anger of man doesn't produce the righteousness of God. Therefore, putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with humility the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not only hearers, deluding your own selves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man looking at his natural face in a mirror; for he sees himself, and goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of freedom, and continues, not being a hearer who forgets, but a doer of the work, this man will be blessed in what he does.

If anyone among you thinks himself to be religious while he doesn't bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, this man's religion is worthless. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

My brothers, don't hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory with partiality. For if a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, comes into your synagogue, and a poor man

in filthy clothing also comes in; and you pay special attention to him who wears the fine clothing, and say, "Sit here in a good place"; and you tell the poor man, "Stand there," or "Sit by my footstool"; haven't you shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers. Didn't God choose those who are poor in this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Don't the rich oppress you, and personally drag you before the courts? Don't they blaspheme the honorable name by which you are called? However, if you fulfill the royal law, according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law, and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak, and so do, as men who are to be judged by a law of freedom. For judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

What good is it, my brothers, if a man says he has faith, but has no works? Can faith save him? And if a brother or sister is naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you tells them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled"; and yet you didn't give them the things the body needs, what good is it? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself. Yes, a man will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me

your faith without works, and I by my works will show you my faith.

You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe, and shudder. But do you want to know, vain man, that faith apart from works is dead? Wasn't Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith worked with his works, and by works faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness"; and he was called the friend of God. You see then that by works, a man is justified, and not only by faith. In the same way, wasn't Rahab the prostitute also justified by works, in that she received the messengers, and sent them out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

Let not many of you be teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive heavier judgment. For in many things we all stumble. If anyone doesn't stumble in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. Indeed, we put bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, and we guide their whole body. Behold, the ships also, though they are so big and are driven by fierce winds, are yet guided by a very small rudder, wherever the pilot desires. So the tongue is also a little member, and boasts great things. See how a small fire can spread to a large forest! And the tongue is a fire. The world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire by Gehenna. For every kind of animal, bird, creeping thing, and sea creature, is

tamed, and has been tamed by mankind; but nobody can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the image of God. Out of the same mouth comes blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send out from the same opening fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, yield olives, or a vine figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh water.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by his good conduct that his deeds are done in gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, don't boast and don't lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, sensual, and demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition are, there is confusion and every evil deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Where do wars and fightings among you come from? Don't they come from your pleasures that war in your members? You lust, and don't have. You murder and covet, and can't obtain. You fight and make war. You don't have, because you don't ask. You ask, and don't receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?

Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who lives in us yearns jealously"?

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament, mourn, and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Don't speak against one another, brothers. He who speaks against a brother and judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. Only one is the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge another?

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow let's go into this city, and spend a year there, trade, and make a profit." Whereas you don't know what your life will be like tomorrow. For what is your life? For you are a vapor that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. For you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will both live, and do this or that." But now you glory in your boasting. All such boasting is evil. To him therefore who knows to do good, and doesn't do it, to him it is sin.

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming on you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are

corroded, and their corrosion will be for a testimony against you, and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up your treasure in the last days. Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you have kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Armies. You have lived in luxury on the earth, and taken your pleasure. You have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the righteous one. He doesn't resist you.

Be patient therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receives the early and late rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Don't grumble, brothers, against one another, so that you won't be judged. Behold, the judge stands at the door. Take, brothers, for an example of suffering and of perseverance, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call them blessed who endured. You have heard of the perseverance of Job, and have seen the Lord in the outcome, and how the Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

But above all things, my brothers, don't swear— not by heaven, or by the earth, or by any other oath; but let your "yes" be "yes", and your "no", "no"; so that you don't fall into hypocrisy.

Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praises. Is any among you sick? Let

him call for the elders of the assembly, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will heal him who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your offenses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The insistent prayer of a righteous person is powerfully effective. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it didn't rain on the earth for three years and six months. He prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Brothers, if any among you wanders from the truth and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

## **Peter's First Letter**

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that doesn't fade away, reserved in Heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been put to grief in various trials, that the proof of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ— whom not having known you love; in whom, though now you don't see him, yet believing, you rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory— receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching for who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to, when he predicted the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them. To them it was revealed, that not to themselves, but to you, they ministered these things, which

now have been announced to you through those who preached the Good News to you by the Holy Spirit sent out from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.

Therefore prepare your minds for action, be sober, and set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ—as children of obedience, not conforming yourselves according to your former lusts as in your ignorance, but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; because it is written, “You shall be holy; for I am holy.” If you call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judges according to each man’s work, pass the time of your living as foreigners here in reverent fear: knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from the useless way of life handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish or spot, the blood of Christ; who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in this last age for your sake, who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God.

Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth through the Spirit in sincere brotherly affection, love one another from the heart fervently: having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and remains forever. For,

“All flesh is like grass,  
and all of man’s glory like the flower in the grass.

The grass withers, and its flower falls;  
but the Lord's word endures forever.”

This is the word of Good News which was preached to you.

Putting away therefore all wickedness, all deceit, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking, as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, that with it you may grow, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious: coming to him, a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious. You also, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in Scripture,

“Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen, and precious:

He who believes in him will not be disappointed.”

For you who believe therefore is the honor, but for those who are disobedient,

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

and,

“a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.”

For they stumble at the word, being disobedient, to which also they were appointed. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him

who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: who in time past were no people, but now are God's people, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Beloved, I beg you as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having good behavior among the nations, so in that of which they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they see, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Therefore subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; or to governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evildoers and for praise to those who do well. For this is the will of God, that by well-doing you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God.

Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the wicked. For it is commendable if someone endures pain, suffering unjustly, because of conscience toward God. For what glory is it if, when you sin, you patiently endure beating? But if, when you do well, you patiently endure suffering, this is commendable with God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow his steps, who did not sin, "neither was deceit found in his mouth." Who, when he was cursed, didn't curse back. When he suffered, didn't threaten, but

committed himself to him who judges righteously. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. For you were going astray like sheep; but now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

In the same way, wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; so that, even if any don't obey the Word, they may be won by the behavior of their wives without a word; seeing your pure behavior in fear. Let your beauty be not just the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on fine clothing; but in the hidden person of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God very precious. For this is how the holy women before, who hoped in God also adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose children you now are, if you do well, and are not put in fear by any terror.

You husbands, in the same way, live with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor to the woman, as to the weaker vessel, as being also joint heirs of the grace of life; that your prayers may not be hindered.

Finally, be all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tender hearted, courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or insult for insult; but instead blessing; knowing that to this were you called, that you may inherit a blessing. For,

“He who would love life,  
and see good days,  
let him keep his tongue from evil,  
and his lips from speaking deceit.  
Let him turn away from evil, and do good.  
Let him seek peace, and pursue it.  
For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,  
and his ears open to their prayer;  
but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

Now who is he who will harm you, if you become imitators of that which is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. “Don't fear what they fear, neither be troubled.” But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear: having a good conscience; that, while you are spoken against as evildoers, they may be disappointed who curse your good way of life in Christ. For it is better, if it is God's will, that you suffer for doing well than for doing evil. Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison, who before were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ship was being built. In it, few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. This is a symbol of baptism, which now saves you—not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having gone

into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin; that you no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past time doing the desire of the Gentiles, and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries. They think it is strange that you don't run with them into the same excess of riot, blaspheming: who will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For to this end the Good News was preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed as men in the flesh, but live as to God in the spirit.

But the end of all things is near. Therefore be of sound mind, self-controlled, and sober in prayer. And above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms. If anyone speaks, let it be as it were the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be as of the strength which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Beloved, don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you, to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. But because you are partakers of Christ's

sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed; because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or a meddler in other men's matters. But if one of you suffers for being a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen to those who don't obey the Good News of God? "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?" Therefore let them also who suffer according to the will of God in doing good entrust their souls to him, as to a faithful Creator.

Therefore I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and who will also share in the glory that will be revealed. Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, not for dishonest gain, but willingly; neither as lording it over those entrusted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. When the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that doesn't fade away.

Likewise, you younger ones, be subject to the elder. Yes, all of you clothe yourselves with humility, to subject yourselves to one another; for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due

time; casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you.

Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Withstand him steadfast in your faith, knowing that your brothers who are in the world are undergoing the same sufferings. But may the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Through Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you; and so does Mark, my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace be to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.



## **Peter's Second Letter**

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, seeing that his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and virtue; by which he has granted to us his precious and exceedingly great promises; that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yes, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence; and in moral excellence, knowledge; and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control perseverance; and in perseverance godliness; and in godliness brotherly affection; and in brotherly affection, love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. Therefore, brothers, be more diligent to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never stumble. For thus you will be richly supplied with the entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Therefore I will not be negligent to remind you of these things, though you know them, and are established in the present truth. I think it right, as long as I am in this tent, to

stir you up by reminding you; knowing that the putting off of my tent comes swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. Yes, I will make every effort that you may always be able to remember these things even after my departure. For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We heard this voice come out of heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

We have the more sure word of prophecy; and you do well that you heed it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the morning star arises in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke, being moved by the Holy Spirit.

But false prophets also arose among the people, as false teachers will also be among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction. Many will follow their immoral ways, and as a result, the way of the truth will be maligned. In covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words: whose sentence now from of old doesn't linger, and their destruction will not slumber. For if God didn't spare angels when they sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and didn't spare the ancient

world, but preserved Noah with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when he brought a flood on the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, having made them an example to those who would live in an ungodly way; and delivered righteous Lot, who was very distressed by the lustful life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, was tormented in his righteous soul from day to day with seeing and hearing lawless deeds): the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment; but chiefly those who walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries; whereas angels, though greater in might and power, don't bring a railing judgment against them before the Lord. But these, as unreasoning creatures, born natural animals to be taken and destroyed, speaking evil in matters about which they are ignorant, will in their destroying surely be destroyed, receiving the wages of unrighteousness; people who count it pleasure to revel in the daytime, spots and defects, reveling in their deceit while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and who can't cease from sin; enticing unsettled souls; having a heart trained in greed; children of cursing; forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of wrongdoing; but he was rebuked for his own disobedience. A mute donkey spoke with a man's voice and stopped the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds driven by a storm; for whom the blackness of

darkness has been reserved forever. For, uttering great swelling words of emptiness, they entice in the lusts of the flesh, by licentiousness, those who are indeed escaping from those who live in error; promising them liberty, while they themselves are bondservants of corruption; for a man is brought into bondage by whoever overcomes him.

For if, after they have escaped the defilement of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in it and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb, "The dog turns to his own vomit again," and "the sow that has washed to wallowing in the mire."

This is now, beloved, the second letter that I have written to you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by reminding you; that you should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior: knowing this first, that in the last days mockers will come, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." For this they willfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth formed out of water and amid water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens that now exist, and the earth, by

the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

But don't forget this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some count slowness; but is patient with us, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore since all these things will be destroyed like this, what kind of people ought you to be in holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, which will cause the burning heavens to be dissolved, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, seeing that you look for these things, be diligent to be found in peace, without defect and blameless in his sight. Regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you; as also in all of his letters, speaking in them of these things. In those, there are some things that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unsettled twist, as they also do to the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware, lest being carried away with the error of the wicked, you fall from your own

steadfastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

## **John's First Letter**

That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we saw, and our hands touched, concerning the Word of life (and the life was revealed, and we have seen, and testify, and declare to you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was revealed to us); that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us. Yes, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And we write these things to you, that our joy may be fulfilled.

This is the message which we have heard from him and announce to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and don't tell the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us the sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we haven't sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I write these things to you so that you may not sin. If anyone sins, we have a Counselor with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. And he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commandments. One who says, "I know him," and

doesn't keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth isn't in him. But whoever keeps his word, God's love has most certainly been perfected in him. This is how we know that we are in him: he who says he remains in him ought himself also to walk just like he walked.

Brothers, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Again, I write a new commandment to you, which is true in him and in you; because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shines. He who says he is in the light and hates his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no occasion for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in the darkness, and walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.

I write to you, little children, because you know the Father.

I have written to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Don't love the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the Father's love isn't in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, isn't the Father's, but is the world's. The world is passing away with its lusts, but he who does God's will remains forever.

Little children, these are the end times, and as you heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen. By this we know that it is the final hour. They went out from us, but they didn't belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have continued with us. But they left, that they might be revealed that none of them belong to us. You have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. I have not written to you because you don't know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son, the same doesn't have the Father. He who confesses the Son has the Father also.

Therefore, as for you, let that remain in you which you heard from the beginning. If that which you heard from the beginning remains in you, you also will remain in the Son, and in the Father. This is the promise which he promised us, the eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who would lead you astray. As for you, the

anointing which you received from him remains in you, and you don't need for anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, you will remain in him. Now, little children, remain in him, that when he appears, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

See how great a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God! For this cause the world doesn't know us, because it didn't know him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it is not yet revealed what we will be. But we know that, when he is revealed, we will be like him; for we will see him just as he is. Everyone who has this hope set on him purifies himself, even as he is pure. Everyone who sins also commits lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away our sins, and in him is no sin. Whoever remains in him doesn't sin. Whoever sins hasn't seen him and doesn't know him.

Little children, let no one lead you astray. He who does righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. To this end the Son of God was revealed: that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever is born of God doesn't commit sin, because his seed remains in him; and he can't sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are revealed, and the children of the devil. Whoever doesn't do righteousness is not of God, neither is he who doesn't love his brother. For this is the message

which you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; unlike Cain, who was of the evil one, and killed his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Don't be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. He who doesn't love his brother remains in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.

By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does God's love remain in him? My little children, let's not love in word only, or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and persuade our hearts before him, because if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have boldness toward God; and whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight. This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he commanded. He who keeps his commandments remains in him, and he in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.

Beloved, don't believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit who doesn't confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God, and this is the spirit of the Antichrist, of whom you have heard that it comes. Now it is in the world already. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God listens to us. He who is not of God doesn't listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves has been born of God, and knows God. He who doesn't love doesn't know God, for God is love. By this God's love was revealed in us, that God has sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love has been perfected in us.

By this we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him, and he in God. We know and have believed

the love which God has for us. God is love, and he who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him. In this love has been made perfect among us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has punishment. He who fears is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who doesn't love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? This commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should also love his brother.

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. Whoever loves the Father also loves the child who is born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is loving God, that we keep his commandments. His commandments are not grievous. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world: your faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who testify: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and the three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is God's testimony which he has testified concerning his Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. He who doesn't believe God has made him a liar, because he

has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. The testimony is this, that God gave to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has the life. He who doesn't have God's Son doesn't have the life.

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

This is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he listens to us. And if we know that he listens to us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him.

If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for those who sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death. I don't say that he should make a request concerning this. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death.

We know that whoever is born of God doesn't sin, but he who was born of God keeps himself, and the evil one doesn't touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. We know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we know him who is true, and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

## **John's Second Letter**

The elder, to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not I only, but also all those who know the truth; for the truth's sake, which remains in us, and it will be with us forever: Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

I rejoice greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, even as we have been commanded by the Father. Now I beg you, dear lady, not as though I wrote to you a new commandment, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. This is love, that we should walk according to his commandments. This is the commandment, even as you heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it. For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who don't confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the Antichrist. Watch yourselves, that we don't lose the things which we have accomplished, but that we receive a full reward. Whoever transgresses and doesn't remain in the teaching of Christ, doesn't have God. He who remains in the teaching, the same has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you, and doesn't bring this teaching, don't receive him into your house, and don't welcome him, for he who welcomes him participates in his evil deeds.

Having many things to write to you, I don't want to do so with paper and ink, but I hope to come to you, and to speak face to face, that our joy may be made full. The children of your chosen sister greet you. Amen.



## **John's Third Letter**

The elder to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth.

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be healthy, even as your soul prospers. For I rejoiced greatly, when brothers came and testified about your truth, even as you walk in truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear about my children walking in truth.

Beloved, you do a faithful work in whatever you accomplish for those who are brothers and strangers. They have testified about your love before the assembly. You will do well to send them forward on their journey in a way worthy of God, because for the sake of the Name they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

I wrote to the assembly, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, doesn't accept what we say. Therefore if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words. Not content with this, neither does he himself receive the brothers, and those who would, he forbids and throws out of the assembly. Beloved, don't imitate that which is evil, but that which is good. He who does good is of God. He who does evil hasn't seen God. Demetrius has the testimony of all, and of the truth itself; yes, we also testify, and you know that our testimony is true.

I had many things to write to you, but I am unwilling to write to you with ink and pen; but I hope to see you soon,

and we will speak face to face. Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

## **The Letter from Jude**

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ: Mercy to you and peace and love be multiplied.

Beloved, while I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I was constrained to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For there are certain men who crept in secretly, even those who were long ago written about for this condemnation: ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into indecency, and denying our only Master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Now I desire to remind you, though you already know this, that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who didn't believe. Angels who didn't keep their first domain, but deserted their own dwelling place, he has kept in everlasting bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them, having, in the same way as these, given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are shown as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire. Yet in the same way, these also in their dreaming defile the flesh, despise authority, and slander celestial beings. But Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil and arguing about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him an abusive condemnation, but said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" But these speak evil of whatever things they don't

know. They are destroyed in these things that they understand naturally, like the creatures without reason. Woe to them! For they went in the way of Cain, and ran riotously in the error of Balaam for hire, and perished in Korah's rebellion. These are hidden rocky reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you, shepherds who without fear feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness has been reserved forever. About these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." These are murmurers and complainers, walking after their lusts (and their mouth speaks proud things), showing respect of persons to gain advantage.

But you, beloved, remember the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you that "In the last time there will be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts." These are they who cause divisions, and are sensual, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, keep building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. On some have compassion, making a distinction, and some save, snatching them out of the fire with fear, hating even the clothing stained by the flesh.

- Jude -

Now to him who is able to keep them from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory in great joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.



## **The Revelation to John**

This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things which must happen soon, which he sent and made known by his angel to his servant, John, who testified to God's word, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, about everything that he saw.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it, for the time is at hand.

John, to the seven assemblies that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from God, who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits who are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us, and washed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a Kingdom, priests to his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, including those who pierced him. All the tribes of the earth will mourn over him. Even so, Amen.

**“I am the Alpha and the Omega,”** says the Lord God, **“who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”**

I John, your brother and partner with you in the oppression, Kingdom, and perseverance in Christ Jesus, was on the isle that is called Patmos because of God's Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the

Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, like a trumpet saying, **“What you see, write in a book and send to the seven assemblies: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”**

I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. Having turned, I saw seven golden lamp stands. And among the lamp stands was one like a son of man, clothed with a robe reaching down to his feet, and with a golden sash around his chest. His head and his hair were white as white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace. His voice was like the voice of many waters. He had seven stars in his right hand. Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining at its brightest. When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man.

He laid his right hand on me, saying, **“Don't be afraid. I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever. Amen. I have the keys of Death and of Hades. Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will happen hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lamp stands. The seven stars are the angels of the seven assemblies. The seven lamp stands are seven assemblies.**

**“To the angel of the assembly in Ephesus write:**

**“He who holds the seven stars in his right hand, he who walks among the seven golden lamp stands says these things:**

**“I know your works, and your toil and perseverance, and that you can’t tolerate evil men, and have tested those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and found them false. You have perseverance and have endured for my name’s sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I am coming to you swiftly, and will move your lamp stand out of its place, unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of my God.**

**“To the angel of the assembly in Smyrna write:**

**“The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life says these things:**

**“I know your works, oppression, and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Don’t be afraid of the things which you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested; and you will have oppression for ten days. Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. He who overcomes won’t be harmed by the second death.**

**“To the angel of the assembly in Pergamum write:**

**“He who has the sharp two-edged sword says these things:**

**“I know your works and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. You hold firmly to my name, and didn’t deny my faith in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans likewise. Repent therefore, or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he who receives it.**

**“To the angel of the assembly in Thyatira write:**

**“The Son of God, who has his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished brass, says these things:**

**“I know your works, your love, faith, service, patient endurance, and that your last works are more than the first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate your woman, Jezebel, who calls herself a**

**prophetess. She teaches and seduces my servants to commit sexual immorality, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great oppression, unless they repent of her works. I will kill her children with Death, and all the assemblies will know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But to you I say, to the rest who are in Thyatira, as many as don't have this teaching, who don't know what some call 'the deep things of Satan,' to you I say, I am not putting any other burden on you. Nevertheless, hold that which you have firmly until I come. He who overcomes, and he who keeps my works to the end, to him I will give authority over the nations. He will rule them with a rod of iron, shattering them like clay pots; as I also have received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.**

**“And to the angel of the assembly in Sardis write:**

**“He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars says these things:**

**“I know your works, that you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and keep the things that remain, which you were about to throw away, for I have found no works of yours perfected before my God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If therefore you won't watch,**

**I will come as a thief, and you won't know what hour I will come upon you. Nevertheless you have a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments. They will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no way blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.**

**“To the angel of the assembly in Philadelphia write:**

**“He who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one can shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says these things:**

**“I know your works (behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one can shut), that you have a little power, and kept my word, and didn't deny my name. Behold, I give some of the synagogue of Satan, of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but lie. Behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you kept my command to endure, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, which is to come on the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly! Hold firmly that which you have, so that no one takes your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will go out from there no more. I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God, and my**

**own new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.**

**“To the angel of the assembly in Laodicea write:**

**“The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of God’s creation, says these things:**

**“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing;’ and don’t know that you are the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked; I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich; and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. As many as I love, I reprove and chasten. Be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with me. He who overcomes, I will give to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.”**

After these things I looked and saw a door opened in heaven, and the first voice that I heard, like a trumpet speaking with me, was one saying, “Come up here, and I will show you the things which must happen after this.”

Immediately I was in the Spirit. Behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting on the throne that looked like a jasper stone and a sardius. There was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald to look at. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones. On the thrones were twenty-four elders sitting, dressed in white garments, with crowns of gold on their heads. Out of the throne proceed lightnings, sounds, and thunders. There were seven lamps of fire burning before his throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. Before the throne was something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal. In the middle of the throne, and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within. They have no rest day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come!"

When the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to him who sits on the throne, to him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever, and throw their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, the Holy One, to receive the glory, the honor, and the power, for you created all things, and because of your desire they existed, and were created!"

I saw, in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written inside and outside, sealed shut with seven seals. I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice,

“Who is worthy to open the book, and to break its seals?” No one in heaven above, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look in it. And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look in it. One of the elders said to me, “Don’t weep. Behold, the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome; he who opens the book and its seven seals.” I saw in the middle of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. Then he came, and he took it out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne. Now when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sang a new song, saying,

“You are worthy to take the book,  
and to open its seals:  
for you were killed,  
and bought us for God with your blood,  
out of every tribe, language, people, and nation,  
and made us kings and priests to our God,  
and we will reign on the earth.”

I saw, and I heard something like a voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousands of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the

power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!”

I heard every created thing which is in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing, the honor, the glory, and the dominion, forever and ever! Amen!”

The four living creatures said, “Amen!” Then the elders fell down and worshiped.

I saw that the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying, as with a voice of thunder, “Come and see!” And behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow. A crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.

When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come!” Another came out, a red horse. To him who sat on it was given power to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. There was given to him a great sword.

When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come and see!” And behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a balance in his hand. I heard a voice in the middle of the four living creatures saying, “A choenix of wheat for a denarius, and three choenix of barley for a denarius! Don't damage the oil and the wine!”

When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see!” And behold, a pale horse, and he who sat on it, his name was Death.

Hades followed with him. Authority over one fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine, with death, and by the wild animals of the earth was given to him.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed for the Word of God, and for the testimony of the Lamb which they had. They cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, Master, the holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” A long white robe was given to each of them. They were told that they should rest yet for a while, until their fellow servants and their brothers, who would also be killed even as they were, should complete their course.

I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. The sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became as blood. The stars of the sky fell to the earth, like a fig tree dropping its unripe figs when it is shaken by a great wind. The sky was removed like a scroll when it is rolled up. Every mountain and island were moved out of their places. The kings of the earth, the princes, the commanding officers, the rich, the strong, and every slave and free person, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains. They told the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath has come; and who is able to stand?”

After this, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any

tree. I saw another angel ascend from the sunrise, having the seal of the living God. He cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Don't harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we have sealed the bondservants of our God on their foreheads!" I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel:

of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand,  
of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could count, out of every nation and of all tribes, peoples, and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands. They cried with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation be to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

All the angels were standing around the throne, the elders, and the four living creatures; and they fell on their

faces before his throne, and worshiped God, saying, “Amen! Blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might, be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

One of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and from where did they come?”

I told him, “My lord, you know.”

He said to me, “These are those who came out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes, and made them white in the Lamb’s blood. Therefore they are before the throne of God, they serve him day and night in his temple. He who sits on the throne will spread his tabernacle over them. They will never be hungry, neither thirsty any more; neither will the sun beat on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the middle of the throne shepherds them, and leads them to springs of life-giving waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

Another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censer. Much incense was given to him, that he should add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. The smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand. The angel took the censer, and he filled it with

the fire of the altar, and threw it on the earth. Thunders, sounds, lightnings, and an earthquake followed.

The seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. One third of the earth was burned up, and one third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

The second angel sounded, and something like a great burning mountain was thrown into the sea. One third of the sea became blood, and one third of the living creatures which were in the sea died. One third of the ships were destroyed.

The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from the sky, burning like a torch, and it fell on one third of the rivers, and on the springs of the waters. The name of the star is called "Wormwood." One third of the waters became wormwood. Many people died from the waters, because they were made bitter.

The fourth angel sounded, and one third of the sun was struck, and one third of the moon, and one third of the stars; so that one third of them would be darkened, and the day wouldn't shine for one third of it, and the night in the same way. I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe! Woe! Woe for those who dwell on the earth, because of the other voices of the trumpets of the three angels, who are yet to sound!"

The fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from the sky which had fallen to the earth. The key to the pit of the abyss

was given to him. He opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke from a burning furnace. The sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke from the pit. Then out of the smoke came locusts on the earth, and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were told that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those people who don't have God's seal on their foreheads. They were given power, not to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion, when it strikes a person. In those days people will seek death, and will in no way find it. They will desire to die, and death will flee from them. The shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared for war. On their heads were something like golden crowns, and their faces were like people's faces. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like those of lions. They had breastplates, like breastplates of iron. The sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, or of many horses rushing to war. They have tails like those of scorpions, and stings. In their tails they have power to harm men for five months. They have over them as king the angel of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is "Abaddon", but in Greek, he has the name "Apollyon". The first woe is past. Behold, there are still two woes coming after this.

The sixth angel sounded. I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Free the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates!"

The four angels were freed who had been prepared for that hour and day and month and year, so that they might kill one third of mankind. The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million. I heard the number of them. Thus I saw the horses in the vision, and those who sat on them, having breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the horses' heads resembled lions' heads. Out of their mouths proceed fire, smoke, and sulfur. By these three plagues were one third of mankind killed: by the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur, which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and in their tails. For their tails are like serpents, and have heads, and with them they harm. The rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, didn't repent of the works of their hands, that they wouldn't worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can't see, hear, or walk. They didn't repent of their murders, their sorceries, their sexual immorality, or their thefts.

I saw a mighty angel coming down out of the sky, clothed with a cloud. A rainbow was on his head. His face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. He had in his hand a little open book. He set his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land. He cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars. When he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. When the seven thunders sounded, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from the sky saying, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders said, and don't write them."

The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to the sky, and swore by him

who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there will no longer be delay, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as he declared to his servants, the prophets. The voice which I heard from heaven, again speaking with me, said, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."

I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book.

He said to me, "Take it, and eat it up. It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey."

I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth. When I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. They told me, "You must prophesy again over many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."

A reed like a rod was given to me. Someone said, "Rise, and measure God's temple, and the altar, and those who worship in it. Leave out the court which is outside of the temple, and don't measure it, for it has been given to the nations. They will tread the holy city under foot for forty-two months. I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands, standing before the Lord of the earth. If anyone

desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. If anyone desires to harm them, he must be killed in this way. These have the power to shut up the sky, that it may not rain during the days of their prophecy. They have power over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. Their dead bodies will be in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. From among the peoples, tribes, languages, and nations people will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not allow their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. Those who dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and they will be glad. They will give gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. After the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet. Great fear fell on those who saw them. I heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" They went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies saw them. In that day there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe comes quickly.

The seventh angel sounded, and great voices in heaven followed, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!"

The twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God's throne, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: "We give you thanks, Lord God, the Almighty, the one who is and who was; because you have taken your great power, and reigned. The nations were angry, and your wrath came, as did the time for the dead to be judged, and to give your bondservants the prophets, their reward, as well as to the saints, and those who fear your name, to the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

God's temple that is in heaven was opened, and the ark of the Lord's covenant was seen in his temple. Lightnings, sounds, thunders, an earthquake, and great hail followed.

A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child. She cried out in pain, laboring to give birth. Another sign was seen in heaven. Behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven crowns. His tail drew one third of the stars of the sky, and threw them to the earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. Her child was caught up to God, and to his throne. The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that there they may nourish her one thousand two hundred sixty days.

There was war in the sky. Michael and his angels made war on the dragon. The dragon and his angels made war. They didn't prevail, neither was a place found for them

any more in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, the old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, the power, and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ has come; for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. They overcame him because of the Lamb's blood, and because of the word of their testimony. They didn't love their life, even to death. Therefore rejoice, heavens, and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time."

When the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. Two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, so that she might be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. The serpent spewed water out of his mouth after the woman like a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. The earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon spewed out of his mouth. The dragon grew angry with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep God's commandments and hold Jesus' testimony.

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads. On his horns were ten crowns, and on his heads,

blasphemous names. The beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. One of his heads looked like it had been wounded fatally. His fatal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled at the beast. They worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" A mouth speaking great things and blasphemy was given to him. Authority to make war for forty-two months was given to him. He opened his mouth for blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his dwelling, those who dwell in heaven. It was given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. Authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been killed. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is to go into captivity, he will go into captivity. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, he must be killed. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints.

I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke like a dragon. He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. He makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. He performs great signs, even making fire come down out of the sky to the earth in the sight of people. He deceives my own people who dwell on the earth because of the signs he was granted

to do in front of the beast; saying to those who dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who had the sword wound and lived. It was given to him to give breath to it, to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause as many as wouldn't worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the slave, to be given marks on their right hands, or on their foreheads; and that no one would be able to buy or to sell, unless he has that mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. He who has understanding, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is six hundred sixty-six.

I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him a number, one hundred forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. I heard a sound from heaven, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of a great thunder. The sound which I heard was like that of harpists playing on their harps. They sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand, those who had been redeemed out of the earth. These are those who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed by Jesus from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb. In their mouth was found no lie, for they are blameless.

I saw an angel flying in mid heaven, having an eternal Good News to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He said with a loud voice, “Fear the Lord, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of waters!”

Another, a second angel, followed, saying, “Babylon the great has fallen, which has made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality.”

Another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger. He will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. Here is the perseverance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.”

I looked, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud one sitting like a son of man, having on his head a golden

crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. Another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Send your sickle, and reap; for the hour to reap has come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe!" He who sat on the cloud thrust his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven. He also had a sharp sickle. Another angel came out from the altar, he who has power over fire, and he called with a great voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Send your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for the earth's grapes are fully ripe!" The angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. The wine press was trodden outside of the city, and blood came out of the wine press, even to the bridles of the horses, as far as one thousand six hundred stadia.

I saw another great and marvelous sign in the sky: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them God's wrath is finished. I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who overcame the beast, his image, and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. They sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

"Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God, the Almighty!

Righteous and true are your ways, you King of the nations.

Who wouldn't fear you, Lord,

and glorify your name?  
For you only are holy.  
For all the nations will come and worship before you.  
For your righteous acts have been revealed.”

After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. The seven angels who had the seven plagues came out, clothed with pure, bright linen, and wearing golden sashes around their breasts.

One of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power. No one was able to enter into the temple, until the seven plagues of the seven angels would be finished.

I heard a loud voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God on the earth!”

The first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth, and it became a harmful and evil sore on the people who had the mark of the beast, and who worshiped his image.

The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man. Every living thing in the sea died.

The third poured out his bowl into the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. I heard the angel of the waters saying, “You are righteous, who are and who were, O

Holy One, because you have judged these things. For they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. They deserve this.” I heard the altar saying, “Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments.”

The fourth poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given to him to scorch men with fire. People were scorched with great heat, and people blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues. They didn't repent and give him glory.

The fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was darkened. They gnawed their tongues because of the pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores. They didn't repent of their works.

The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates. Its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings that come from the sunrise. I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, something like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs; which go out to the kings of the whole inhabited earth, to gather them together for the war of that great day of God, the Almighty.

**“Behold, I come like a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his clothes, so that he doesn't walk naked, and they see his shame.”** He gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew, Megiddo.

The seventh poured out his bowl into the air. A loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" There were lightnings, sounds, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men on the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty. The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. Great hailstones, about the weight of a talent, came down out of the sky on people. People blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for this plague is exceedingly severe.

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here. I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality; and those who dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her sexual immorality." He carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet-colored beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of the sexual immorality of the earth. And on her forehead a name was written, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

When I saw her, I wondered with great amazement. The angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into destruction. Those who dwell on the earth and whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel when they see that the beast was, and is not, and shall be present. Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. They are seven kings. Five have fallen, the one is, the other has not yet come. When he comes, he must continue a little while. The beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goes to destruction. The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority to the beast. These will war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and those who are with him are called chosen and faithful." He said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. The ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the prostitute, will make her desolate, will strip her naked, will eat her flesh, and will burn her utterly with fire. For God has put in their hearts to do what he has in mind, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished. The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

After these things, I saw another angel coming down out of the sky, having great authority. The earth was illuminated with his glory. He cried with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and she has become a habitation of demons, a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality, the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from the abundance of her luxury.”

I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, that you have no participation in her sins, and that you don’t receive of her plagues, for her sins have reached to the sky, and God has remembered her iniquities. Return to her just as she returned, and repay her double as she did, and according to her works. In the cup which she mixed, mix to her double. However much she glorified herself, and grew wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning. For she says in her heart, ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow, and will in no way see mourning.’ Therefore in one day her plagues will come: death, mourning, and famine; and she will be utterly burned with fire; for the Lord God who has judged her is strong. The kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived wantonly with her, will weep and wail over her, when they look at the smoke of her burning, standing far away for the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For your judgment has come in one hour.’ The merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise any more; merchandise of

gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, all expensive wood, every vessel of ivory, every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, wheat, sheep, horses, chariots, and people's bodies and souls. The fruits which your soul lusted after have been lost to you, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous have perished from you, and you will find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, will stand far away for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning; saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was dressed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in an hour such great riches are made desolate.' Every ship master, and everyone who sails anywhere, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood far away, and cried out as they looked at the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like the great city?' They cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her great wealth!' For she is made desolate in one hour.

"Rejoice over her, O heaven, you saints, apostles, and prophets; for God has judged your judgment on her." A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down, and will be found no more at all. The voice of harpists, minstrels, flute players, and trumpeters will be heard no more at all in you. No craftsman, of whatever craft, will be found any more at all in you. The

sound of a mill will be heard no more at all in you. The light of a lamp will shine no more at all in you. The voice of the bridegroom and of the bride will be heard no more at all in you; for your merchants were the princes of the earth; for with your sorcery all the nations were deceived. In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth.”

After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation, power, and glory belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments. For he has judged the great prostitute, who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.”

A second said, “Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up forever and ever.” The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, “Amen! Hallelujah!”

A voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, the small and the great!”

I heard something like the voice of a great multitude, and like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of mighty thunders, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns! Let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let us give the glory to him. For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready.” It was given to her that she would array herself in bright, pure, fine linen: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

He said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" He said to me, "These are true words of God."

I fell down before his feet to worship him. He said to me, "Look! Don't do it! I am a fellow bondservant with you and with your brothers who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy."

I saw the heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it is called Faithful and True. In righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has names written and a name written which no one knows but he himself. He is clothed in a garment sprinkled with blood. His name is called "The Word of God." The armies which are in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in white, pure, fine linen. Out of his mouth proceeds a sharp, double-edged sword, that with it he should strike the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He treads the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. He has on his garment and on his thigh a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

I saw an angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the sky, "Come! Be gathered together to the great supper of God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, small and great." I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their

armies, gathered together to make war against him who sat on the horse, and against his army. The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked the signs in his sight, with which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword of him who sat on the horse, the sword which came out of his mouth. All the birds were filled with their flesh.

I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. He seized the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole inhabited earth, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were finished. After this, he must be freed for a short time. I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as didn't worship the beast nor his image, and didn't receive the mark on their forehead and on their hand. They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead didn't live until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over these, the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him one thousand years.

And after the thousand years, Satan will be released from his prison, and he will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. They went up over the width of the earth, and surrounded the camp of the saints, and the beloved city. Fire came down out of heaven from God and devoured them. The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are also. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

I saw a great white throne, and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. There was found no place for them. I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and they opened books. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. The sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. They were judged, each one according to his works. Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. If anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice out of heaven saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with people, and he will dwell

with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more. The first things have passed away.”

He who sits on the throne said, **“Behold, I am making all things new.”** He said, **“Write, for these words of God are faithful and true.”** He said to me, **“I have become the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give freely to him who is thirsty from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes, I will give him these things. I will be his God, and he will be my son. But for the cowardly, unbelieving, sinners, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their part is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”**

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were loaded with the seven last plagues came, and he spoke with me, saying, “Come here. I will show you the wife, the Lamb’s bride.” He carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, as if it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal; having a great and high wall; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. On the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. The wall of the city had twelve

foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. He who spoke with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, its gates, and its walls. The city is square, and its length is as great as its width. He measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand twelve stadia. Its length, width, and height are equal. Its wall is one hundred forty-four cubits, by the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The construction of its wall was jasper. The city was pure gold, like pure glass. The foundations of the city's wall were adorned with all kinds of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, jacinth; and the twelfth, amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls. Each one of the gates was made of one pearl. The street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. The city has no need for the sun, neither of the moon, to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk in its light. The kings of the earth bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. Its gates will in no way be shut by day (for there will be no night there), and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it so that they may enter. There will in no way enter into it anything profane, or one who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

He showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the

middle of its street. On this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruits, yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will be no curse any more. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no night, and they need no lamp light; for the Lord God will illuminate them. They will reign forever and ever.

He said to me, “These words are faithful and true. The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show to his bondservants the things which must happen soon.”

**“Behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”**

Now I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who had shown me these things. He said to me, “See you don’t do it! I am a fellow bondservant with you and with your brothers, the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” He said to me, “Don’t seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who acts unjustly, let him act unjustly still. He who is filthy, let him be filthy still. He who is righteous, let him do righteousness still. He who is holy, let him be holy still.”

**“Behold, I come quickly. My reward is with me, to repay to each man according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the**

**Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify these things to you for the assemblies. I am the root and the offspring of David; the Bright and Morning Star.”**

The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” He who hears, let him say, “Come!” He who is thirsty, let him come. He who desires, let him take the water of life freely. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if anyone adds to them, may God add to him the plagues which are written in this book. If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, may God take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book. He who testifies these things says, **“Yes, I come quickly.”**

Amen! Yes, come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints.  
Amen.