

FIRST THINGS

*Understanding The Core Concepts
In the New Testament*

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Introduction

Imagine that someone asked you "What is the gospel?" or "What are Jesus and the Bible really all about?" or "Why does Jesus matter?". What would you say? What have you said in the past? How do you answer these questions for yourself?

What if you could answer those questions clearly and concisely, with complete confidence that what you said was the truth? What if you knew what "the gospel" or "the message of Jesus" is, as the people in the New Testament did?

"First Things" is an introduction to what the Bible says about:

1. JESUS - Who is Jesus and what was his God-given mission?
2. MESSAGE - What is "the gospel" or "the message" that Jesus and his disciples believed and shared with others?
3. MISSION - What mission did God give the disciples in the New Testament?
4. MOTIVATION - Why was there such passion and urgency in the early disciples to get "the gospel" to people, to the point of enduring persecution and even death?

"The Short Version" is simple, functional and lists key concepts. "The Expanded Version" provides a biblical summary of those concepts, plus sections from the Bible that relate to them.

Please read "First Things" with an open mind and an open heart. Sincere questions, dialogue, disagreement and agreement are welcome. Feel free to send comments via LivewickMedia.com.

repent

believe

follow

The concepts and words on the following pages are intended to deal honestly and plainly with issues of first importance – or "first things" – as found in the New Testament. It is hoped and expected that there will be conversations, soul-searching, prayer, meditation... and likely some grief, anger and joy... as people read and process what follows. The goal is for us to seek and find the truth together.

Enjoy the journey...

• Part 1: The Short Version •

JESUS

Who is Jesus and what was his God-given mission?

Who

- Son of God/Messiah/Savior Matthew 3.17; John 4.25-26; John 20.31;
Mark 14.61-62; Luke 2.11
- The Word/Message of God John 1.1-14

What

- Testify to the truth John 18.37
- Tell the good news of the kingdom of God Luke 4.43; 9.11; Acts 1.3
- Bring good news to the poor, free prisoners,
give sight to the blind, release the oppressed,
& tell of God's favor Luke 4.16-21
- Seek and to save what was lost Luke 19.9-10
- Take away the sin of the world John 1.29,34; Matthew 9.6
- Give his life as a ransom for many Mark 10.45
- Rise from the dead Mark 8.31-33; 9.31-32

MESSAGE

What is "the gospel" or "the message" that Jesus and his disciples believed and shared with others?

- Jesus is the Messiah (see "Jesus" above)
- Repent Mark 1.14-17; Luke 5.31,32; 13.5; Acts 17.22-31;
20.21; 26.20; 2 Corinthians 7.10; 2 Peter 3.9
- Believe the gospel Mark 1.14-17; John 3.14-18; 5.24; Acts 8.12;
13.26-39; Romans 1.16,17; 4.23-25; 10.8-13;
1 Timothy 1.15,16
- Follow Jesus Mark 1.14-17; Mark 8.34-38; Matthew 4.19;
John 12.23-26; Luke 9.23-26

In a phrase, the message was "Jesus and the kingdom of God" (Acts 8.12, 28.23,31).

MISSION

What mission did God give the disciples in the New Testament?

- Make disciples Matthew 28.19-20; Luke 9.1-6; Acts 1.8

MOTIVATION

Why was there such passion and urgency in the early disciples to get "the gospel" to people, to the point of enduring persecution and even death?

Love for God and love for people were their motivation (Matthew 22.37-40; 2 Corinthians 5.14 15)

- Love for God produces obedience to God in what we say and do (John 14.23,24; 15.10-14; Matthew 11.28-30).
- Love for people means we say and do what is best for them, even if it costs us sometimes (Acts 4.18-20; Ephesians 5.1,2).

• Part 2: The Expanded Version •

Jesus

Who is Jesus and what was his God-given mission?

Jesus was and is the Son of God, Savior, Messiah and the message of God to humanity in human form. He - the fullest expression of God ever seen - was called a "friend of sinners". Jesus told his followers that he would be betrayed, beaten, killed and resurrected. After all that happened, he appeared to people to show them he was alive.

Jesus said that he came to earth to pour out his blood so our sins could be forgiven, to give his life as a ransom for many people, to seek and save what was lost and to become for us what we could not get on our own – righteousness, holiness and redemption. He said that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to himself. He also said that he came for judgment, to bring a sword and to bring fire on the earth. The Bible tells us that he came to speak the truth, to tell about the kingdom of God, to create one new humanity and to destroy the devil's work. He came to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. After he returned to heaven he sent the Holy Spirit to empower us to live and speak for him.

Matthew 1.20-21	"Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus , because he will save his people from their sins. "
Matthew 3.17	And a voice from heaven said, " This is my Son , whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
Matthew 9.6	But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . ." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."
Matthew 9.12-13	On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. "
Matthew 10.34-36	"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— 36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'
Matthew 16.21	From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Matthew 20.17-19	Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, 18 “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death 19 and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified . On the third day he will be raised to life! ”
Matthew 20.28	the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many .
Matthew 26.28	This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins .
Mark 2.10-12	But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” He said to the paralytic, 11 “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”
Mark 2.17	Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners .”
Mark 9.31-32	He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise .” 32 But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.
Mark 10.32-34	Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. 33 “We are going up to Jerusalem,” he said, “and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, 34 who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise .”
Mark 10.45	For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many .
Mark 14.61-62	Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One ?” 62 “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”
Luke 2.11	Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.
Luke 3.15-18	The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. 16 John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire . 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” 18 And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them .
Luke 4.16-21	He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. 17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor . He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind , to release the oppressed , 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor .”

	20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, 21 and he began by saying to them, " Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."
Luke 4.36	All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!"
Luke 4.43	he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent. "
Luke 5.24	But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . . " He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."
Luke 7.22-23	"Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. 23 Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."
Luke 7.34	The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."
Luke 8.1-3	After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; 3 Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others.
Luke 9.11	the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.
Luke 9.22	And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. "
Luke 12.49-53	" I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! 51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. 52 From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."
Luke 18.31-33	Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. 32 He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. 33 On the third day he will rise again. "
Luke 19.9-10	Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost. "
Luke 24.25-27	He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory? " 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.
Luke 24.45-49	Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be

	preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”
John 1.1-14	<p>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.</p> <p>6 There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9 The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.</p> <p>10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.</p>
John 1.17	For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
John 4.41-42	And because of his words many more became believers. 42 They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world. ”
John 8.12	When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “ I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”
John 9.39-10.6	<p>Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.”</p> <p>40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?”</p> <p>41 Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains. 10.1 “I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. 3 The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.</p>
John 10.7-10	Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 18.37	Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."
Acts 4.8-12	Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead , that this man stands before you healed. 11 Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone" 12 Salvation is found in no one else , for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved."
Acts 17.2-3	As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. " This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah, " he said.
1 Cor 1.30	It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.
1 Cor 15.3-8	For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried , that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.
Galatians 1.4	4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
Ephesians 2.15-17	His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross , by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.
Ephesians 5.1-2	1 Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
Colossians 1.15-20	He is the image of the invisible God , the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him , 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
Hebrews 1.1-3	In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son , whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the

	Majesty in heaven.
Hebrews 2.9-11	But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family . So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.
Hebrews 2.14-15	Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.
Hebrews 5.8-9	Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered 9 and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him
Hebrews 7.25	Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him , because he always lives to intercede for them.
Hebrews 9.26-28	now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.
1 Peter 1.18-21	For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ , a lamb without blemish or defect. 20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him , and so your faith and hope are in God.
1 John 3.5	But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins . And in him is no sin.
1 John 3.7-10	Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. 8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work . 9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. 10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.
1 John 3.16	This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us . And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.
1 John 4.9-10	This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him . 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
Revelation 1.5	Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood
Revelation 1.18	I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades .

MESSAGE

What is "the gospel" or "the message" that Jesus and his disciples believed and shared with others?

Jesus came to earth to speak and live God's message to humanity. The message (simply put) is: Jesus is the Messiah. Repent, believe, follow Jesus and help others do the same.

In other words, Jesus came to free people from sin, oppression and bondage to the kingdom of darkness. He came to bring us into his kingdom of freedom, life and light. He has enabled us to become new creations who are made right with God and no longer fear the day of judgment. We can leave the corruption in the world and enter God's kingdom if we repent, believe and follow Jesus. Biblically these terms mean:

Repent – To repent is to thoughtfully, sincerely choose to turn from (or, die to) sin, self-centered living or serving other gods and turn to Jesus. Repentance takes humility and leads us to knowledge of the truth and to salvation. Repenting is critical to spiritual life and health.

Believe – To believe in Jesus is to put our trust in him as Savior, not simply to believe he exists. Specifically, we are called to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and confess him as our Lord, or Master. This faith in Jesus is how we become a new creation. Through faith we are justified and made righteous (or made right with God).

Follow – To follow is to yield or submit our lives to God and his ways; to listen to God and obey. Jesus often said "Follow me". He called people to "count the cost" of following him, of taking up their cross (dying to themselves) in order to follow him.

When we repent, believe and follow Jesus we join his body, his army and become part of his family. We have a shared mission to "go, make disciples" together.

Matthew 4.17	From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."
Matthew 4.19	"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
Matthew 4.23	Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom , and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Matthew 7.21-23	“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven , but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’
Matthew 9.35	Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.
Matthew 10.39	Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 12.36-37	But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted , and by your words you will be condemned.
Matthew 13.18-23	“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. 22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. 23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”
Matthew 13.24-30	“ The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. 27 “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ 28 “ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. “The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ 29 “ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn. ”
Matthew 13.31-32	“ The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed , which a man took and planted in his field. 32 Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.”
Matthew 13.33	“ The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.”
Matthew 13.36-43	His disciples came to him and said, “ Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field. ” 37 He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. 40 “As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let

	him hear.
Matthew 13.44	"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.
Matthew 13.45-46	"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.
Matthew 13.47-50	"Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
Matthew 19.14	Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. "
Matthew 20.1-16	"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard...
Mark 1.14-15	Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news! "
Mark 1.17	"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
Mark 8.34-38	Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? 37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."
Mark 10.14-15	He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."
Luke 5.31-32	Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. "
Luke 6.46	"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?
Luke 9.23-26	Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? 26 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.
Luke 12.32-34	"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Luke 13.2-5	"Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? 3 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. 4 Or those eighteen who died when the

	tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. ”
Luke 13.18-21	Then Jesus asked, “ What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? 19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches.” 20 Again he asked, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? 21 It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.”
Luke 13.23-24	Someone asked him, “Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?” He said to them, 24 “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door , because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.
Luke 14.28-33	Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? 29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, 30 saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’ 31 “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. 33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.
Luke 16.13	“No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. ”
Luke 17.20-21	Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, 21 nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you. ”
Luke 22.16-18	“For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God. ” 17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. ”
John 3.3	In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”
John 3.14-21	Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. 16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”
John 3.34-36	For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. 35 The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but

	whoever rejects the Son will not see life , for God's wrath remains on him."
John 4.13-14	Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. "
John 5.24	I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.
John 5.28-29	Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out—those who have done good will rise to live , and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.
John 5.39-40	You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.
John 6.40	For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."
John 6.53-59	Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life , and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.
John 8.31-32	To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, " If you hold to my teaching , you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
John 12.23-26	Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me ; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.
John 13.8	Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you , you have no part with me."
John 17.3	Now this is eternal life : that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
Acts 1.10-11	They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus , who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."
Acts 4.17-20	But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name." 18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! 20 As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard. "
Acts 4.33	With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 5.20	“Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people all about this new life. ”
Acts 8.4	Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.
Acts 8.5-6	Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. 6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said.
Acts 8.12	But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ , they were baptized, both men and women.
Acts 8.25	After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus , Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.
Acts 8.35	Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.
Acts 10.34-38	Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts those from every nation who fear him and do what is right. 36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel , announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ , who is Lord of all. 37 You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.
Acts 13.16-45	... 26 “Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. 27 The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. 28 Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. 29 When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. 30 But God raised him from the dead , 31 and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people. ... 38 “Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses. ...
Acts 17.11-13	Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. 12 Many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men. 13 But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up.
Acts 17.22-31	started with altar "To The Unknown God"; we are God's offspring; repent; God will judge the world with justice ... Acts 17.29 “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead. ”
Acts 18.11	So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

Acts 19.8	Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God .
Acts 20.17-35	From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. ... 21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus 24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace . 25 “Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. 26 Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God . 28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. 29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them...
Acts 22.1-21	Paul's testimony ... 15 You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. 16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name .' ...
Acts 24.24-25	Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus . 25 As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come , Felix was afraid and said, “That’s enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.”
Acts 26.1-29	Paul's testimony; The Christ would suffer, rise from the dead, proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles. ... 8 Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead ? ... 17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them 18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light , and from the power of Satan to God , so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me .' ... 20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. 21 That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. 22 But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen— 23 that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead , would proclaim light...
Acts 28.17-28	... 23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. ...
Acts 28.30-31	For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ .
Romans 1.1-5	... the gospel of God - 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 regarding his Son , who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the

	dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to faith and obedience for his name's sake.
Romans 1.16-17	I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes : first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed —a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”
Romans 2.5-16	God will judge all people regarding our deeds; ... 16 This will take place on the day when God judges everyone's secrets through Jesus Christ , as my gospel declares.
Romans 3.19-28	... 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. ...
Romans 4.5	However, to anyone who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.
Romans 4.23-25	The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. 25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.
Romans 5.1-2	Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ , 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.
Romans 5.8-11	But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.
Romans 5.17	For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!
Romans 6.2-4	By no means! We are those who have died to sin ; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.
Romans 6.22	But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.
Romans 8.1-4	Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus , 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful humanity to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in human flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8.14-15	For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship . And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."
Romans 10.1-4	Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved . 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3 Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes .
Romans 10.8-13	"The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: 9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved . 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
Romans 14.17-18	17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, 18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.
Romans 16.25-27	Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ , in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to faith and obedience — 27 to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.
1 Cor 1.17-18	17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel —not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God .
1 Cor 1.20-23	Where are the wise? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe . 22 Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified : a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,
1 Cor 6.11	11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed , you were sanctified , you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
1 Cor 15.12-19	But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith . 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins . 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost . 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

2 Cor 4.13-15	With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, 14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. 15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.
2 Cor 5.10	For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ , that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.
2 Cor 5.17-21	Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation ; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation . 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
2 Cor 7.10	Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.
2 Cor 11.4	For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted , you put up with it easily enough.
2 Cor 13.5	Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith ; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?
Galatians 2.15-16	We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' 16 know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ . So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.
Galatians 5.7-12	You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? 8 That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 9 "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough." 10 I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion will pay the penalty, whoever he may be. 11 Brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. 12 As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!
Galatians 5.24	those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires
Galatians 6.12	Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ .
Galatians 6.14	May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ , through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
Galatians 6.15	Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation .
Ephesians 1.7	... redemption, the forgiveness of sins, through his blood ...
Ephesians 1.13	And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth , the gospel of your salvation. Having believed , you were marked in him with a

	seal, the promised Holy Spirit ...
Ephesians 2.1-10	As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions —it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s workmanship
Ephesians 2.12-13	remember that at that time you were separate from Christ , excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ .
Ephesians 2.19-22	Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.
Ephesians 3.8-12	Although I am less than the least of all the Lord’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ , 9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. 10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Ephesians 5.8	For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord . Live as children of light
Colossians 1.4-6	we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints— 5 the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth , the gospel 6 that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s grace in all its truth.
Colossians 1.10-14	And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light . 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
Colossians 1.21-23	Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23 if you continue in your faith,

	established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.
Colossians 1.25-27	I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness — 26 the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. 27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you , the hope of glory.
Colossians 2.2-3	My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God , namely, Christ , 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
Colossians 2.9-15	For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.
Colossians 2.20	Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world , why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules:
Colossians 3.1	Since, then, you have been raised with Christ , set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.
Colossians 3.3-4	For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
Colossians 4.3-4	And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message , so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ , for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.
1 Thess 1.5	our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power , with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.
1 Thess 1.6-10	You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 7 And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 8 The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia— your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, 9 for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead— Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.
1 Thess 5.4-10	But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. 6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. 9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep,

	we may live together with him.
2 Thess 2.9-12	The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.
2 Thess 2.13-15	But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. 14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.
1 Timothy 1.15-16	Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners —of whom I am the worst. 16 But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.
1 Timothy 2.3-7	God our Savior, 4 who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men —the testimony given in its proper time. 7 And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.
1 Timothy 4.9-10	This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance 10 (and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.
1 Timothy 6.3-5	If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4 he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5 and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.
1 Timothy 6.12	Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
1 Timothy 6.20-21	Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, 21 which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith.
2 Timothy 1.8-12	So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life —not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

2 Timothy 2.8-10	Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel , 9 for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. 10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus , with eternal glory.
2 Timothy 2.14-19	Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth . 16 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. 17 Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have wandered away from the truth . They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some . 19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."
2 Timothy 2.22-26	Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23 Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth , 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.
2 Timothy 4.2-4	Preach the Word ; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine . Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.
2 Timothy 4.7	I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith .
2 Timothy 4.15	You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message .
2 Timothy 4.17	the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.
Titus 1.3	and at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior,
Titus 1.9	He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught ,
Titus 2.11-14	For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
Titus 3.3-8	At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us , not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of

	rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit , 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior , 7 so that, having been justified by his grace , we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. 8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.
Hebrews 2.2-4	if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, 3 how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation ? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.
Hebrews 4.2	For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.
Hebrews 6.18-20	we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. 19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul , firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.
Hebrews 7.18-19	The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless 19 (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.
Hebrews 10.10	And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
Hebrews 12.24	Jesus the mediator of a new covenant
Hebrews 13.8-9	Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9 Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings.
James 1.18	He chose to give us birth through the word of truth , that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.
James 1.20-21	man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you .
James 2.14	What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?
1 Peter 1.3-5	Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead , 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
1 Peter 1.22-23	Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again , not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God .
1 Peter 2.24	He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness ; by his wounds you have been healed.
1 Peter 4.3-6	For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4 They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. 5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those

	who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.
1 Peter 5.12	I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God . Stand fast in it.
2 Peter 2.9	the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment , while continuing their punishment.
2 Peter 2.20-21	If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.
2 Peter 3.9	The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance .
1 John 1.1-3	the Word of life . 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life , which was with the Father and has appeared to us. 3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ .
1 John 1.5-7	This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.
1 John 2.1-2	Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world .
1 John 2.22-23	Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ . Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.
1 John 3.1-2	How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God ! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.
1 John 3.11	This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.
1 John 3.14	We know that we have passed from death to life , because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.
1 John 3.23	And this is his command : to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.
1 John 4.4	You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.
1 John 4.14-15	we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world . 15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.
1 John 4.17	in this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment , because in this world we are like him.
1 John 4.21	he has given us this command : Whoever loves God must also love his brother.
1 John 5.11-12	this is the testimony : God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He who has the Son has life ; he who does not have the Son of

	God does not have life.
1 John 5.13	I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.
2 John 7-11	Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching , do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.
Jude 3	Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.
Jude 4	They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.
Revelation 1.2	who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.
Revelation 1.9	I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus,

MISSION

What mission did God give the disciples in the New Testament?

God has given all disciples or followers of Jesus a specific mission to "Go, make disciples." In other words, "follow Jesus and help others follow Jesus".

As those who have repented, believed and now follow Jesus, each of us is called to take up our cross daily. Live the Jesus-centered, new way of life you learned in the gospel. Let God's power flow in you each day so that you stand firm and obey the word of God you have received. Live the truth in love with a good conscience and a sincere faith. Speak the truth – including truth about God's kingdom - plainly and sincerely. Enforce the victory Jesus won over evil spirits, over sickness and over any oppression from the kingdom of darkness in your own life, and in the lives of others as possible. Seek to rescue the perishing as you, too, have been rescued. Help others follow Jesus.

Matthew 5.13	You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness , how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.
Matthew 5.14-16	You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men , that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.
Matthew 10.1	He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.
Matthew 10.7-8	As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.
Matthew 16.24-27	"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul ? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.
Matthew 18.2-4	He called a little child and had him stand among them. 3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children , you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
Matthew 21.43-44	"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. 44 He who falls on

	this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”
Matthew 24.9-14	“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. 10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved . 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations , and then the end will come.
Matthew 28.18-20	“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
Mark 3.13-15	Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons .
Mark 3.34-35	Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”
Mark 4.26-29	He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. 27 Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. 28 All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29 As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”
Mark 4.30-32	Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? 31 It is like a mustard seed , which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. 32 Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”
Mark 13.10	And the gospel must first be preached to all nations .
Mark 16.15-18	He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved , but whoever does not believe will be condemned . 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”
Mark 16.20	Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere , and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.
Luke 5.10	Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men .”
Luke 9.1-6	When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases , 2 and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick . 3 He told them: “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. 4 Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5 If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them.” 6 So they

	set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.
John 17.18	As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.
John 17.20-23	My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message , 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
Acts 1.1-8	In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Acts 1.6 So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" Acts 1.7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
Acts 11.23	When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.
Acts 14.21-22	Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God ," they said.
Acts 16.13-15	On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. 14 One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message . 15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.
Acts 18.4	Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.
Acts 18.19	They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews .
Acts 18.23	After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples .
Acts 18.26	He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Acts 19.2-6	... Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus ." 5 On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them , and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.
Acts 19.9-10	But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way . So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. 10 This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord .
Acts 20.7	On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them ; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight.
Romans 1.6	And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ .
Romans 1.7	To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people :
Romans 6.13	offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life
Romans 6.17-18	But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness .
Romans 7.4	So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God .
1 Cor 2.4-5	My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power , 5 so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.
1 Cor 4.19-20	I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. 20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power .
2 Cor 2.14-17	But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him . 15 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing . 16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task? 17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity , like men sent from God.
2 Cor 4.2-6	we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ , who is the image of God. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord , and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

2 Cor 5.14-15	For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all , and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.
2 Cor 8.18	the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel .
2 Cor 9.13	men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ
Galatians 2.11-14	When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong . 12 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. 13 The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy , so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. 14 When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel , I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"
Ephesians 4.20-24	That, however, is not the way of life you learned 21 when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self , which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self , created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
Ephesians 6.19-20	Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel , 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.
Philippians 3.7-8	But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord , for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them <u>garbage</u> , that I may gain Christ
Colossians 1.28	We proclaim him , admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.
Colossians 2.6-7	So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him , 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.
Colossians 3.5-11	Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived . 8 But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. 11 Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all , and is in all.
Colossians 3.16	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
Colossians 4.5-6	Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace , seasoned

	with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.
1 Thess 2.2-6	We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel . We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.
1 Thess 3.2-3	We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ , to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, 3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them.
1 Thess 4.11-12	Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.
1 Timothy 1.3-7	As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work —which is by faith. 5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. 7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.
1 Timothy 4.6-7	If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed . 7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.
1 Timothy 4.16	Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers .
2 Timothy 1.13-14	What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching , with faith and love in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you— guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.
2 Timothy 3.1-9	But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power . Have nothing to do with them. They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, 7 always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth . 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. 9 But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.
2 Timothy 3.14-17	But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to

	make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus . 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
2 Timothy 4.9-10	Do your best to come to me quickly, 10 for Demas, because he loved this world , has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.
Philemon 6	I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ . (this is the NIV; NASB says "fellowship of your faith")
1 Peter 1.14	As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance .
2 Peter 3.17-18	Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.
1 John 2.24-25	See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you . If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what he promised us—even eternal life .
1 John 2.26	I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray .
1 John 4.1-3	Dear friends, do not believe every spirit , but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.
1 John 5.5	Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God .
3 John 3-4	It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
Jude .22-23	Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 snatch others from the fire and save them ; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.
Revelation ch 2 & 3	these messages to the churches clearly are intended to provide correction and motivation to followers of Jesus

MOTIVATION

Why was there such passion and urgency in the early disciples to get "the gospel" to people, to the point of enduring persecution and even death?

God has given all disciples or followers of Jesus a specific motivation for getting the gospel message to people. That motivation is loving God and loving people enough to live & speak the truth so they can be saved.

As followers of Jesus, He is master and our lives are his. Because God loves us and we love him, we want to serve him. He wants to live in us and through us to share his message, his salvation and his life with others. So, we share the gospel with others out of love for God.

In addition to love for God, his love for people in us motivates us to reach out to other people to share the gospel. A day of judgment is coming for us all when we will give an account to God for our lives. Some people will be shut out from God's presence and experience eternal punishment. Others will be welcomed into God's presence and experience eternal life. Jesus paid the penalty for sin so that by faith in him we can be saved from God's wrath and be with him forever. He also came to give us greater love, joy, power, community, peace and freedom here and now.

Matthew 5.11-12	"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven , for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
Matthew 5.13	"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness , how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.
Matthew 7.13-14	"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life , and only a few find it .
Matthew 11.28-30	28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me , for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Matthew 13.18-23	<p>“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. 22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. 23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”</p>
Matthew 13.24-30	<p>“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. Matt. 13.27 “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ Matt. 13.28 “ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. “The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ Matt. 13.29 “ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.””</p>
Matthew 13.36-43	<p>His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” Matt. 13.37 He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Matt. 13.40 “As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.</p>
Matthew 13.44	<p>“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.</p>
Matthew 13.45-46	<p>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.</p>
Matthew 13.47-50	<p>“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.</p>

Matthew 16.24-27	“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul ? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.
Matthew 18.2-4	He called a little child and had him stand among them. 3 And he said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
Matthew 21.43-44	“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. 44 He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed. ”
Matthew 22.1-14	Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son...
Matthew 22.37-40	37 Jesus replied: “ ‘ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘ Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”
Matthew 24.9-14	“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. 10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
Matthew 25.46	“Then they will go away to eternal punishment , but the righteous to eternal life. ”
Matthew 28.18-20	“ All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
Mark 4.9	Then Jesus said, “ Whoever has ears to hear , let them hear.”
Mark 8.34-38	Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? 37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

Mark 9.43-49	If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell , where the fire never goes out. 45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. 47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, Mark 9.48 where “ ‘their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ 49 Everyone will be salted with fire.
Mark 10.25	It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.
Mark 16.15-18	He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved , but whoever does not believe will be condemned . 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”
Luke 12.8-9	I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men , the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. 9 But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God.
Luke 13.23-24	Someone asked him, “Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?” He said to them, 24 “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door , because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.
John 3.5-6	“I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit . 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
John 3.14-21	14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life . 16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him . 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”
John 6.53-59	Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you . 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life , and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.” 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

John 8.23-24	But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am he, you will indeed die in your sins. "
John 8.31-32	To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, " If you hold to my teaching , you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
John 14.23-24	23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.
John 15.10-14	10 If you obey my commands , you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command.
Acts 4.18-20	18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. 20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."
Acts 14.21-22	Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God, " they said.
Acts 17.22-31	started with altar "To The Unknown God"; we are God's offspring; repent; God will judge the world with justice ... 29 "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead. "
Acts 20.2	He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece,
Acts 20.7	On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them ; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight.
1 Cor 15.1-2	Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved , if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
1 Cor 15.12-19	But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

2 Cor 2.14-17	But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him . 15 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing . 16 To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task? 17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity , like men sent from God.
2 Cor 5.10	For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ , that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.
2 Cor 5.14-15	14 For Christ's love compels us , because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.
2 Cor 13.5	Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith ; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?
Ephesians 2.12,13	12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ , excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ .
Ephesians 4.17-19	17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.
Ephesians 5.1-2	1 Be imitators of God , therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
Colossians 3.3,4	3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
1 Thess 2.2-6	We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel . We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.
1 Thess 2.13-16	And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God , which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. 14 For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, 15 who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men 16 in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved . In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

1 Thess 4.5	the heathen, who do not know God ;
1 Thess 4.11,12	11 Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.
2 Thess 1.8-10	8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power 10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.
1 Timothy 1.3-7	As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work —which is by faith. 5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. 7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.
1 Timothy 4.1	The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons
1 Timothy 4.9-10	This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance 10 (and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe .
1 Timothy 4.16	Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers .
2 Timothy 3.1-9	But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power . Have nothing to do with them. They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, 7 always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth . 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. 9 But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.
Hebrews 2.2-4	if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, 3 how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation ? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.
James 1.13-15	When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death .

James 1.20-21	man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you .
James 2.14	What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?
1 Peter 1.3-5	Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead , 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
1 Peter 1.9	you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls .
1 Peter 2.7	Now to you who believe , this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe ,
1 Peter 4.3-6	For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4 They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. 5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.
2 Peter 2.9	the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment , while continuing their punishment.
2 Peter 2.20-21	If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.
2 Peter 3.9	The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance .
2 Peter 3.15	Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation , just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.
2 Peter 3.17-18	Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.
1 John 2.24-25	See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you . If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what he promised us—even eternal life .
1 John 3.1-2	How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3.7-10	Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. 8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work . 9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. 10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.
1 John 3.14	We know that we have passed from death to life , because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.
1 John 5.11-12	this is the testimony : God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He who has the Son has life ; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life .
Jude .22-23	Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 snatch others from the fire and save them ; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.
Revelation ch 2,3	these messages to the churches clearly are intended to provide correction and motivation to followers of Jesus

Some final thoughts...

“But, what about...” – Some people will read “First Things” and wonder why this issue or that doctrine was ‘left out’. Please remember that “First Things” is not intended to be a complete statement of everything that matters, but only of the things that matter most in the New Testament. That being said, if you sincerely believe there is something in the New Testament that is more important than the four subjects covered here, please contact me. The goal is the truth, always.

A Crippling Misunderstanding – Some people think confusion shows humility and certainty shows arrogance. If you get rid of objective reality you are left with subjective experience only. In other words, if you eliminate the notion of “the truth” all you have left is “my truth” and “your truth”. You just can’t read the New Testament – honestly – and find those ideas endorsed by Jesus or anyone else.

BTBL – We must – in principle – be committed to the “**Big, Thick Black Line**” between truth and opinion. Yes, we will always have discussions about what goes on either side. However, to do away with the BTBL in principle would mean either a) endless disagreement because everything is true or false, or b) no great mission and meaning in life because everything is just opinion.

All Figured Out – Nobody in their right mind would claim to have God all figured out. However, it seems clear that the body of truth (set of ideas) that was “the gospel” fueled and directed Jesus and his early followers. We can know what the content (message) of the gospel was, and is. We can have that same fuel and direction in our lives today. We can live the vibrant reality that you see on the pages of the New Testament right here, right now!

However, if we do not clearly understand the gospel we will wander around and have the same priorities as the world system around us: survival, comfort and entertainment. If we do not clearly understand the gospel, we will lack the clear objectives and strong motivation needed to persevere when following Jesus gets inconvenient, difficult or dangerous. If we do not clearly understand the gospel, we will present Jesus as one option among many to people we think are ultimately going to be fine, with or without Jesus. You just can’t read the New Testament – honestly – and find these ideas endorsed by Jesus or anyone else.

Jesus said to

"Go and make disciples"

We must always grow those among us and go look for the spiritually hungry and interested who want to seek and find what it means to simply follow Jesus.

We are ever reaching and expanding, for them...

repent

believe

follow

"First Things" is intended to be clear statement of truth and a catalyst for reflection, exploration and change that matters in people's lives. Surely you and I seek truth above all – above popularity, riches, comfort or anything else. I'm not trying to pick a fight, but rather to find and share truth in a sea of opinion. I hope this is your heartbeat as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'S'.

