

NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

THE
TONY EVANS
STUDY BIBLE

NASB 2020
EDITION



ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM AGENDA



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THE
**TONY EVANS
STUDY BIBLE**
NASB 2020 EDITION

The *NASB Tony Evans Study Bible* includes extensive study notes, commentary, sermons, and writings crafted and curated by Dr. Tony Evans. Including over 150 videos via QR code, these features are strategically placed alongside the biblical text to explain God’s Word in a fresh way, guiding readers into a deeper understanding of Scripture. With tools for application, this Bible is designed to inspire readers to live and share the values of the kingdom of God.

The *NASB Tony Evans Study Bible* features the trusted text of the New American Standard Bible (NASB, 2020 edition). The NASB is one of the most literal translations of the Bible, using a formal equivalence translation philosophy. This word-for-word translation method allows you to read, study, and teach with confidence.

FEATURES:

- Elegant design with 4 cover options
- Study notes crafted from Tony Evans’ sermons and writings
- 40 inspirational articles
- 50 “Lessons on Kingdom Living”
- 60 “Questions & Answers”
- More than 130 “Hope Words”
- 53 sets of “Personal Application Questions” (128 questions)
- Digital links to over 150 videos of sermons, devotionals, and teaching from Dr. Evans
- 22 audio sermons
- Page-edge cross-reference system
- Black-letter text
- Presentation page
- Introductory front matter
- Special back matter section with key definitions, theological and doctrinal charts, and other study helps
- Concordance
- Bible reading plans
- Full-color maps





ABOUT

DR. TONY EVANS

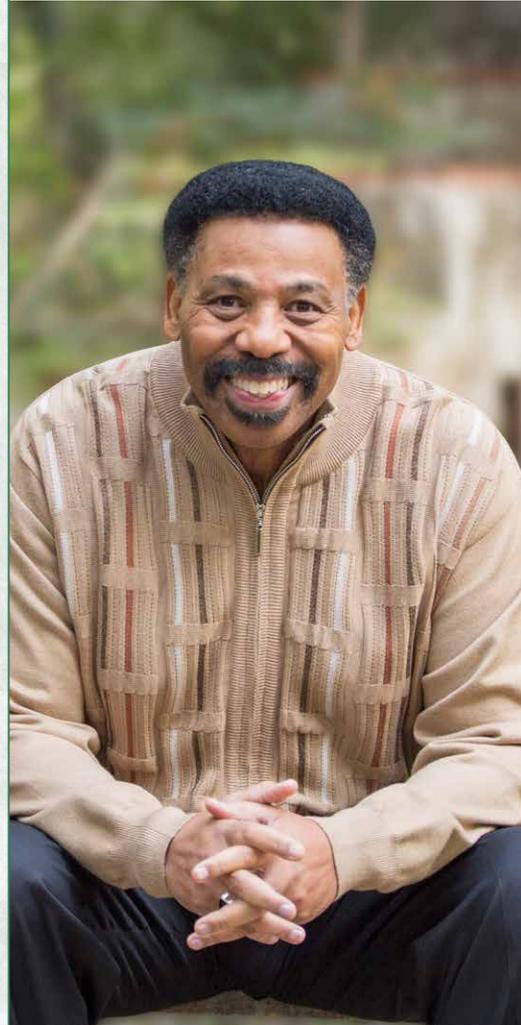
Dr. Tony Evans is the founder and senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, founder and president of The Urban Alternative, former chaplain of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks & Dallas Cowboys, author of over 125 books, booklets and Bible studies. The first African American to earn a doctorate of theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, he has been named one of the 12 Most Effective Preachers in the English-Speaking World by Baylor University.

Dr. Evans also holds the honor of writing and publishing the first full-Bible commentary and study Bible by an African American.

His radio broadcast, *The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans*, can be heard on more than 1,400 US outlets daily and in more than 130 countries.

Dr. Evans launched the Tony Evans Training Center in 2017, an online learning platform providing quality seminary-style courses for a fraction of the cost to any person in any place. The TETC currently has over 40 courses to choose from and has a student population of over 2000.

Dr. Tony Evans was married to Lois, his wife and ministry partner of over 50 years until Lois transitioned to glory in late 2019. They are the proud parents of four, grandparents of thirteen and great-grandparents of three.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
TONYEVANS.ORG



WITHIN OUR HEARTS IS
A DESIRE TO DISCOVER GOD.

TO SEE HIM.

TO EXPERIENCE HIM.

TO KNOW HIS STORY.

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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY BIBLE

Throughout *The Tony Evans Study Bible*, there are various features designed to enhance your reading experience. Whether you have questions about a passage, are seeking additional inspiration, or desire a deeper understanding through serious study, these resources will help you.

STUDY NOTES – These notes provide my exegesis, exposition, and exhortation to help you understand and apply a given passage. Words in bold are directly from the Scripture text.

1:1 Most ancient creation accounts chronicle a struggle between good and evil, with earth popping up as an accidental by-product of struggle. In these accounts, the gods who created the world did so out of prior material. They could not truly create. Scripture's story is different: **In the beginning God (Elohim, the Supreme One) created out of nothing.** With a mere word he made the entire universe of time, space, and matter—negating any possibility of atheistic evolution.

1:2 Formless and empty connotes a desolate, uninhabitable place. This suggests something happened between verses 1 and 2. Satan arrived on the scene. We get few details of Satan's fall here (Ezek 28 and Isa 14 provide more), but it appears his rebellion plunged earth into darkness (see Luke 10:18). Nevertheless, **the Spirit of God was hovering**, ready to bring order out of chaos. **1:3-5** God made the light, but he also named it. **God called the light "day"** (1:5).

By naming the parts of his creation, God expresses sovereign rule over them. Even the concept of light, which is fundamental to our world, only exists because God sustains it.

1:6-8 God placed some **water above the expanse** (1:7); this is the basis of our earthly water cycle. God created the atmosphere so that life here is possible.

1:9-13 God **gathered into one place** (1:9) all the water, essentially pulling the land into

KINGDOM LIVING LESSONS – Practical lessons regarding your ability to live your life according to God's kingdom agenda, the visible manifestation of the comprehensive rule of God over every area of your life. These are divided into five categories: Kingdom, Personal, Family, Church, and Community.

KINGDOM LIVING FAMILY

A Photograph of God

Looking at Genesis 1, we read that God created the heavens and the earth in such a way that they are functional, vibrant, and pulsating with life. On the fifth day, God started forming the creatures that would live on the earth. Then, on the sixth day, he reached the pinnacle of his creative purposes with the creation of humankind.

Important truths arise from this account in Genesis 1:26-28. First, we see the word "us" referring to the triune God: Father, Son, and Spirit. The Trinity consists of three individual and unique persons who make up the unified reality of the Godhead. Second, we see the commission of humankind—which is to bear the Trinitarian image of God. God created humanity (body, soul, and spirit) to mirror him, an institution called family to produce his image in particular

Kingdom. This category considers the theology of the kingdom. Throughout the Bible, God reveals how he advances his kingdom, his all-encompassing dominion over all that he created.

Personal. God's Word was written to equip you for every good work. It is sufficient for preparing you for life in his kingdom, both here on earth and in heaven. The personal sphere of God's kingdom agenda focuses on your self-management and how you use your time, talents, and treasures as his kingdom disciple.

Family. God created the family to be the foundation of civilization. As the family goes, so goes the culture. These lessons focus on strengthening family relationships based on biblical principles.

Church. The church exists as God's central governing mechanism through which he enacts his heavenly intervention on earth. I seek to provide you with a spiritual framework for the purpose and power of the church.

Community. Christians are to function as kingdom cit-

izens by personally modeling while also influencing government to maintain a safe, just, righteous, and compassionately responsible society where freedom flourishes.

HOPE WORDS – Brief insights inspired by Scripture to empower and encourage you.

HOPE WORDS

Faith is our positive response to what God has already provided.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY BIBLE

INSPIRATIONAL

ARTICLES – Heart-felt articles providing you with knowledge and inspiration as you strive to understand and apply the biblical text in a deeper way.

Video Devotional
“SUPER GAME SUNDAY”



We have been called to rule on behalf of God's kingdom while on earth.

VIDEO DEVOTIONALS – Brief videos on various topics, which you can access on your mobile device using the provided QR code. Some are devotional, others are segments from sermons. Each video is designed to enhance your study experience by helping you dive deeper on a topic or providing you with encouragement in your study.

Q&A WITH TONY EVANS

My answers to a variety of questions, including questions about my own life and ministry, how to understand various biblical texts and theological issues, and how to apply God's kingdom agenda in your daily life.

Faith Works

I WAS ONCE BATTLING A COLD and couldn't shake it. I called my doctor, told him my symptoms, and he told me I didn't need to come in. He would call in a prescription for me. He told me what medicine he was prescribing and how he wanted me to take it.

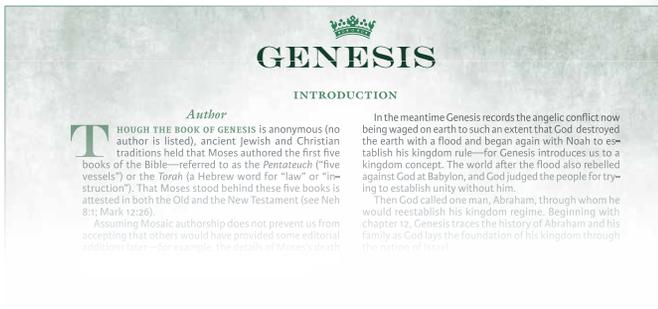
To benefit from this conversation, I had to believe that I was talking to the person I thought I was talking to, because I couldn't see him. Ours was just a brief talk over the phone, so I had to listen to and trust his voice. Then I had to respond when he told me how to fix my problem. Now I could've laid

Questions & Answers

Q You have called *The Kingdom Agenda* your “magnum opus.” Why do you view this book and philosophy of life as so critical and central to your life's work?

A *The Kingdom Agenda* is my life's work because of its comprehensive nature. When I saw that the whole Bible is the summary of God's kingdom program and

BIBLE BOOK INTRODUCTIONS – Each book of the Bible includes an introduction that discusses matters of authorship, historical background, and purpose. Each is accompanied by a video that you can access on your mobile device using the provided QR code. In these videos, I expound briefly on the biblical book's message and key themes.



GENESIS

INTRODUCTION

Author

THOUGH THE BOOK OF GENESIS is anonymous (no author is listed), ancient Jewish and Christian traditions held that Moses authored the first five books of the Bible—referred to as the *Pentateuch* (“five vessels”) or the *Torah* (a Hebrew word for “law” or “instruction”). That Moses stood behind these five books is attested in both the Old and the New Testament (see Neh 8:1; Mark 12:26).

Assuming Mosaic authorship does not prevent us from accepting that others would have provided some editorial additions later—for example, the details of Moses's death.

In the meantime Genesis records the angelic conflict now being waged on earth to such an extent that God destroyed the earth with a flood and began again with Noah to establish his kingdom rule—for Genesis introduces us to a kingdom concept. The world after the flood also rebelled against God at Babylon, and God judged the people for trying to establish unity without him.

Then God called one man, Abraham, through whom he would reestablish his kingdom regime. Beginning with chapter 12, Genesis traces the history of Abraham and his family as God lays the foundation of his kingdom through the nation of Israel.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Questions to help you engage the biblical text and apply God's Word to every area of your life.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ GENESIS 1:26–27

- What do these verses teach about family?
- How have you experienced God's provision in your efforts to manage your family and your other spheres of life?

^a 1:26 Gn 3:22; 11:7

^b Gn 5:1,3; 9:6; Rm 8:29; 1Co 11:7; 15:49; 2Co 3:18; 4:4; Eph 4:24; Col 1:15; Jms 3:9

^c Gn 9:2; Ps 8:6–8; Jms 3:7

^d 1:27 Gn 5:2; Mt 19:4; Mk 10:6

^e 1:28 Gn 9:1,7

^f 1:29 Gn 9:3; Ps 104:14–15; 136:25; 145:15–16

^g 1:30 Ps 147:9

^h 1:31 Ps 147:9

SIDE-MARGIN CROSS REFERENCES

Other Bible passages that are related to the text on which you are focusing.

AVAILABLE

VIDEOS & SERMONS

The *NASB Tony Evans Study Bible* features over 150 videos as well as over twenty audio sermons within the notes of the text, easily accessed by a specific QR Code or typing in the url listed. Below are examples of the types of videos available.

Simply scan using the QR Code reader on your cell phone or type in the web address listed beneath the code into your browser.

- *Books of the Bible (66)*
- *Old Testament Survey (10)*
- *Exposition of Ephesians (8)*
- *Spiritual Growth (10)*
- *Exposition of Judges (8)*
- *Spiritual Warfare (8)*
- *Intro to Bibliology (8)*
- *Theology Overview (9)*
- *Kingdom Agenda (6)*
- *Devotionals (35)*
- *New Testament Survey (10)*

		
<i>Kingdom Agenda</i>	<i>New Testament Survey</i>	<i>Genesis Video Intro</i>
WATCH  VIDEO	WATCH  VIDEO	WATCH  VIDEO
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Also available throughout are 35 audio sermons to aid with your study of God's Word.



bhpublishinggroup.com/qr/te/67-02

his face was gloomy.⁴ Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why is your face gloomy? If you do well, will your face not be cheerful? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door, and its desire is for you, but you must master it."⁵ Cain talked to his brother Abel, and it happened that when they were in the field Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.

⁶Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"⁷ Then He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground. Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.⁸ When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a wanderer and a drifter on the earth."⁹ Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is too great to endure!"¹⁰ Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground, and I will be hidden from Your face, and I will be a wanderer and a drifter on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.¹¹ So the Lord said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him seven times as much." And the Lord placed a mark on Cain, so that no one finding him would kill him.

¹²When Cain left the presence of the Lord, he settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

¹³Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch, and Cain built a city and named it after the name of his son.¹⁴ Now to Enoch were born Irad, and Irad fathered Methuselah, and Methuselah fathered Lamech, and Lamech took two wives for himself: the name of the first was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah.¹⁵ Adah gave birth to Jabal, he was the father of those who live in tents and have livestock.¹⁶ His brother's name was Jubah, he was the father of all those who play the lyre and flute.¹⁷ As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger

of all implements of bronze and iron; and of the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.¹⁸ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice. You wives of Lamech, pay attention to my words, for I have killed a man for wounding me.¹⁹ And a boy for striking me." If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times!²⁰ Adam had relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, "God has appointed me another child in place of Abel, because Cain killed him."²¹ To Seth also a son was born, and he named him Enosh. Then people began to call upon the name of the Lord.

DESCENDANTS OF ADAM
 This is the book of the generations of Adam. On the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.² He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them "man-kind" on the day when they were created.³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.⁴ Then the days of Adam after he fathered Seth were eight hundred years, and he fathered other sons and daughters.⁵ So all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.⁶ Now Seth lived 105 years, and fathered Enosh.⁷ Then Seth lived 90 years after he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters.⁸ So all the days of Seth were 310 years, and he died.⁹ Now Enosh lived ninety years, and fathered Kenan.¹⁰ Then Enosh lived 85 years after he fathered Kenan, and he fathered other sons and daughters.¹¹ So all the days of Enosh were 305 years, and he died.¹² Now Kenan lived seventy years, and fathered Mahalalel.¹³ Then Kenan lived 840 years after he fathered Mahalalel, and he fathered other sons and daughters.¹⁴ So all the days of Kenan were 940 years, and he died.

Video Devotional
 "EVERY GAME SUNDAY"
 We have been called to rest on behalf of God's Kingdom while on earth.

well, he would be cheerful (4:7). The cure for emotional problems is found in spiritual realignment.
 4-8 - Rather than hating his brother, Cain nursed his emotions until they manifested as murder (4:8). This time, instead of the ground merely becoming cursed as had happened following Adam's rebellion, it would no longer yield its strength to Cain (4:12).
 4:10-14 - Cain's murderous ways reflect his family. By the time we get to his great-grand-sons, we find a man bringing about his own violence. I have killed a man for wounding me. Lamech boasts (4:23). Notice how Cain, Lamech is talking to his wives (4:23).
 God's perfect design is only four chapters old, and already we're seeing evil in bloodshed and sporting to design for marriage (4:23-25). In place of Abel, God granted for a son named Seth (4:25). In connection with

1
 SEE A QR CODE IN THE PASSAGE YOU ARE READING

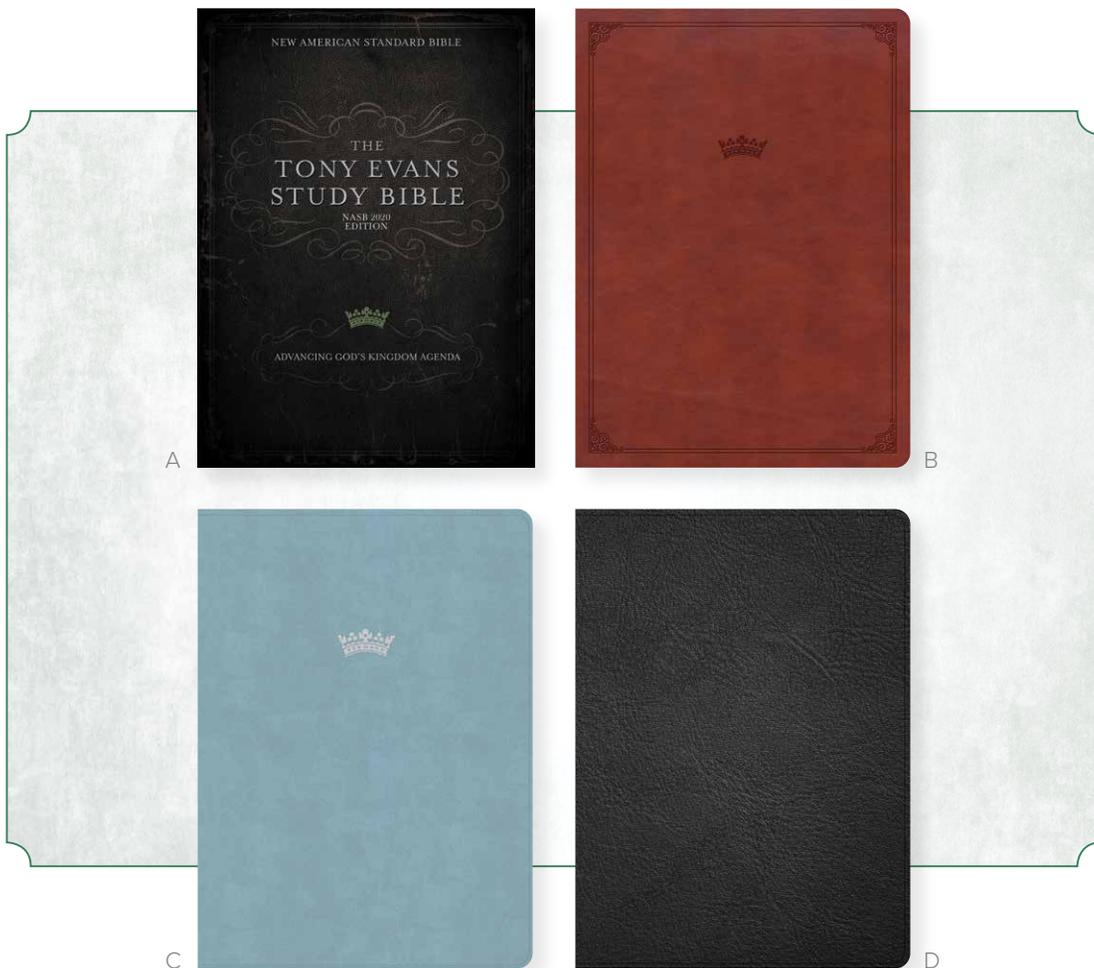
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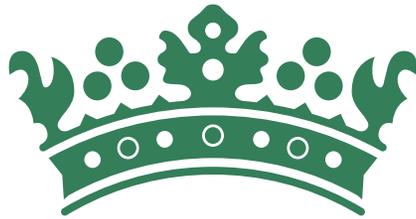
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MATTHEW

INTRODUCTION

Author

ALTHOUGH THE AUTHOR DIDN'T IDENTIFY himself by name in the text, the title of this Gospel includes the name "Matthew" in the earliest existing manuscripts. In addition, several early church fathers (including Papias, Irenaeus, and Origen) attributed authorship to Matthew. Papias also said that Matthew originally wrote the Gospel in Hebrew (what we have today is in Greek).

Many modern critical scholars deny that Matthew is the author. They claim that the Greek Matthew that we have does not look like it was translated from Hebrew. If Papias was wrong about that, they argue, he was probably wrong about who wrote it. But there are other scholars who think Matthew could be a Greek translation from Hebrew. Regardless, it wouldn't necessarily mean Papias was wrong about authorship. The early church unanimously claimed that the apostle Matthew penned the Gospel that bears his name.

There is also internal evidence to support this—that is, evidence within the Gospel itself. Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27 call the tax collector who became a disciple "Levi." In Matthew 9:9–13, this man is named "Matthew." Also, in 10:3, the apostle Matthew is identified as a tax collector, and it may be that he had two names like Simon/Peter.

Though we can't be absolutely certain, it is best to trust the testimony of the early church and affirm that Matthew wrote this Gospel.

Historical Background

Most—though not all—scholars today think that Matthew used Mark's Gospel as one of his sources when composing his own Gospel. If this is true, Matthew must have been written after Mark. It is likely that Mark's Gospel was written sometime in the AD 50s (see Historical Background in the introduction to Mark's Gospel). Matthew, then, could have been written any time beginning in the mid to late 50s. The church father Irenaeus, who wrote in the late second century, claimed that Matthew wrote his Gospel while Paul and Peter were preaching in Rome. This would have been in the early 60s.

Message and Purpose

Matthew was a tax collector, which means he was unpopular. He left everything to follow Jesus after he concluded that Jesus was the Messiah. Matthew was authorized to write the Gospel that bears his name,

and its subject is very simple: it's about the King and his kingdom. Matthew was introducing, especially to Jews, the message that God had sent his King, his Messiah, who would rule as his Regent on earth by offering the kingdom to his people. In this sense Matthew is the culmination of all the Old Testament's anticipation of the Messiah who was to come.

The apostle's concern was giving convincing proof that Jesus was the messianic King whom the Jews were anticipating and whom the world needs so desperately. That's why he began with Jesus's genealogy to establish his lineage through David. Matthew also presented Jesus's kingdom discourses, teaching, and miracles as proof of his messianic claim.

The book leads to a disquieting moment, the crucifixion. If Jesus is the Messiah, how could he be put to death? Thankfully, the scene is followed by the resurrection and the announcement that the King is alive and coming back and that his kingdom is in this world today. Jesus's Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel (28:18–20) means that the book of Matthew is relevant for us as believers today.



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Outline

- I. Genealogy, Birth, and Childhood (1:1–2:23)
- II. Baptism, Temptation, and the Start of Ministry (3:1–4:25)
- III. The Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29)
- IV. Healings and Miracles (8:1–9:38)
- V. Sending Out the Twelve (10:1–42)
- VI. Confusion and Opposition (11:1–12:50)
- VII. Parables about the Kingdom (13:1–58)
- VIII. Spreading Ministry and Growing Opposition (14:1–17:27)
- IX. Greatness, Restoration, and Forgiveness (18:1–35)
- X. Ministry on the Way to Jerusalem (19:1–20:34)
- XI. Ministry in Jerusalem (21:1–23:39)
- XII. The Olivet Discourse (24:1–25:46)
- XIII. Suffering, Crucifixion, and Death (26:1–27:66)
- XIV. Resurrection and Great Commission (28:1–20)

THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS
THE MESSIAH

1:1^a Is 9:6f; 11:1
1:3^b Ruth 4:18-22;
1 Chr 2:1-15
1:6^c 2 Sam 11:27; 12:24
1:7^d 1 Chr 3:10ff
1:10^e 1 Chr 3:14
1:11^f 2 Kin 24:14f; Jer 27:20
1:12^g 2 Kin 24:14f; Jer 27:20
1:16^h Matt 27:17, 22;
Luke 2:11
1:17ⁱ 2 Kin 24:14f; Jer 27:20
1:18^j Matt 12:46; Luke 1:27
1:19^k Deut 22:20-24;
24:1-4
1:20^l Luke 2:4
1:21^m Luke 2:11; John 1:29
1:22ⁿ Luke 24:44;
Rom 1:2-4
1:23^o Is 7:14
^aIs 9:6, 7
1:25^p Matt 1:21; Luke 2:21

The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, ^athe son of David, the son of Abraham:

²Abraham fathered Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered ¹Judah and his brothers. ³Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar, ^bPerez fathered Hezron, and Hezron fathered Ram. ⁴Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, and Nahshon fathered Salmon. ⁵Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, and Obed fathered Jesse. ⁶Jesse fathered David the king.

David ^cfathered Solomon by ³her who had been the wife of Uriah. ⁷Solomon ^bfathered Rehoboam, Rehoboam fathered Abijah, and Abijah fathered Asa. ⁸Asa fathered Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat fathered Joram, and Joram fathered Uzziah. ⁹Uzziah fathered Jotham, Jotham fathered Ahaz, and Ahaz fathered Hezekiah. ¹⁰Hezekiah fathered Manasseh, Manasseh fathered Amon, and Amon ^cfathered Josiah. ¹¹Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the ^ddeportation to Babylon.

¹²After the ^edeportation to Babylon: Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel, and Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel. ¹³Zerubbabel fathered Abihud, Abihud fathered Eliakim, and Eliakim fathered Azor. ¹⁴Azor fathered Zadok, Zadok fathered Achim, and Achim fathered Eliud. ¹⁵Eliud fathered Eleazar, Eleazar fathered Matthan, and Matthan fathered Jacob. ¹⁶Jacob fathered Joseph

the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, ^hwho is called the Messiah.

¹⁷So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the ⁱdeportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the ^jdeportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

CONCEPTION AND BIRTH OF JESUS

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah was as follows: when His ^kmother Mary had been ³ betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, since he was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her, planned to ⁴send her away secretly. ²⁰But when he had thought this over, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ¹“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a Son; and you shall name Him Jesus, for He ^hwill save His people from their sins.” ²²Now all this took place so that what was ^hspoken by the Lord through ⁵the prophet would be fulfilled: ²³ ^o“BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN WILL ^lCONCEIVE AND GIVE BIRTH TO A SON, AND THEY SHALL NAME HIM IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.” ²⁴And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife, ²⁵but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and ^hhe named Him Jesus.

1:2^g Gr *Judas*; a name of a person in the Old Testament is given in its Old Testament form 1:6^a 1.e., Bathsheba 1:18^j Unlike engagement, a betrothed couple was considered married, but did not yet live together 1:19^k Or *divorce her* 1:22^l 1.e., Isaiah

1:1 Jesus had a legitimate legal claim to be the Messiah. He was **the son of David**, heir to the throne (see 2 Sam 7:12–16; Is 11:1–10).

1:3–5 The women mentioned in Jesus’s line were particularly questionable. **Tamar** (1:3) was a Canaanite who posed as a prostitute. **Rahab** (1:5) was a prostitute. **Ruth** (1:5) was from Moab, a non-Israelite nation that worshiped idols. Moreover, the women were of Hamitic descent. Their mention here is a reminder that Jesus’s background is mixed racially, including both Jews and Gentiles and indicating that Jesus’s kingdom identity and rule extends to all people.

It blesses me to know that Jesus had black in his blood because this destroys any perception of black inferiority. In Christ we find perfect man and sinless Savior. This knowledge frees blacks from an inferiority complex, and at the same time it frees whites from the superiority myth. In Christ, we all have our heritage. Black people and all others

can find historical, cultural, and racial identity in him.

1:11–17 The genealogy in 1:2–16 is that of Jesus’s adoptive father, Joseph. The inclusion of **Jeconiah**—also known as Jehoiachin and Coniah (1:11; see 1 Chr 3:16; 2 Chr 36:8–9; and Jer 22:24)—signals a problem. Jeconiah would not have a biological descendant sitting on David’s throne because of his own sins (Jer 22:30). So, although Joseph had a legal right to the throne, because of Jeremiah’s prophecy, it would never happen biologically. Thus, Matthew makes it clear that Joseph is not Jesus’s *biological* father but his *adoptive* father. Jesus’s genealogy through Mary (see Luke 3:23–38) reveals that Jesus is also related to David biologically through David’s son Nathan (Luke 3:31). Therefore, he can sit on the throne.

1:18–19 In biblical times, a marriage in the Orient included several stages. The betrothal was a legal contract, as binding as marriage.

1:20 God has created laws (such as the law of gravity) that govern the universe. When he intervenes in the regular course of events, interrupts those laws, and demonstrates his power over creation, a *miracle* takes place. This would be the most unique birth in history because Mary had never been touched by a man. A virgin would miraculously give birth because of the activity of **the Holy Spirit**. The greatest miracle in human history occurred when God became man, combining full deity and full humanity in one person.

1:21 **Jesus** is a Greek name corresponding to the Hebrew name *Joshua*, which means “the Lord saves.” Thus, according to the angel, the child’s name was to indicate the reason he had come into the world.

1:23 **IMMANUEL**, Matthew tells us, means **GOD WITH US**. Jesus Christ is incarnate deity. That is the essence of Christmas. All the problems in this world can be traced back to sin, and Jesus Christ entered the world to forgive us for our

THE VISIT OF THE MAGI

2 Now after Jesus was ^aborn in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, ¹magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ²“Where is He who has been born ³King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

³When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written ^bby the prophet:

⁶ ¹⁰AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR FROM YOU WILL COME FORTH A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the magi and determined from them the exact time ^cthe star appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found *Him*, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.” ⁹After hearing the king, they went on their way; and behold, the star, which they had seen in the east, went on ahead of them until it came to a stop ^dover the *place* where the Child was *to be found*. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And after they came into the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary; and they fell down and ^eworshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And after being warned ^fby *God* ^gin a dream not to return to Herod, *the magi* left for their own country by another way.

THE ESCAPE TO EGYPT

¹³Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord ^h“appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to kill Him.”

¹⁴So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. ¹⁵He stayed there until the death of Herod; *this happened* so that what had been spoken by the Lord through ⁱthe prophet would be fulfilled: “OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON.”

HEROD SLAUGHTERS BABIES

¹⁶Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by ^jthe magi, he became very enraged, and sent *men* and killed all the boys who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi. ¹⁷Then what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

¹⁸ ¹⁴“A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, WEEPING AND GREAT MOURNING, RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN; AND SHE REFUSED TO BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY WERE NO MORE.”

¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord ^k“appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said, ²⁰“Get up, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” ²¹So Joseph got up, took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Then after being ^mwarned ⁿby *God* in a dream, he left for the regions of Galilee, ²³and came and settled in a city called

2:1^a Mic 5:2; Luke 2:4-72:2¹ Jer 23:5; 30:92:5² John 7:422:6³ Mic 5:2; John 7:422:7⁴ Num 24:172:11⁵ Matt 14:332:12⁶ Job 33:15, 16;

Matt 1:20

2:13⁷ Matt 2:12, 192:15⁸ Hos 11:1; Num 24:82:16⁹ Matt 2:12:18¹⁰ Jer 31:152:19¹¹ Matt 1:20;

2:12, 13, 22

2:22¹² Matt 2:12, 13, 19

2:1^a A caste of educated men specializing in astronomy, astrology, and natural science 2:5² i.e., Micah 2:15³ i.e., Hosea

sins, give us victory over our sins, and give us an eternal home free from sin. That truth is what Christmas is all about. If you miss that, you’ve missed the point.

2:1–2 According to legend, there were three **magi**—perhaps from Babylonia or Persia. But while we know they brought three specific gifts, we don’t know how many men there were. Moreover, these wise men weren’t present at the nativity. By the time they arrived, Joseph and Mary were living in a house (see 2:11). Jesus was a toddler when the magi saw him.

2:3 **Herod** the Great wasn’t a Jew, but an Idu-means whom the Romans had made a ruler of the Jews.

2:4–6 Sadly, while these leaders clearly knew the Scriptures, they never pursued the Savior

(see John 5:39–40). They didn’t act on what they studied.

2:8 Herod had ulterior motives. He wasn’t about to let anyone take away his kingdom.

2:11 These men had traveled an incredible distance for perhaps as long as two years to worship this King, but they knew he was worth the journey. How much are you willing to be inconvenienced to worship the King of kings? How badly do you want him?

2:12–13 Since they had faithfully sought the Savior, the magi received inside information (2:12). Joseph also—since he had obeyed the Lord’s word (1:24–25)—received further help regarding the next steps he should take (2:13). When you obey God’s revelation, you get further divine illumination.

2:14–15 In his prophecy, Hosea was talking about Israel, whom God called his “son” and delivered from “Egypt” (see Hos 11:1), but Matthew understood that Israel was a type of God’s Son who was yet to come. A *type* is a historical person, institution, or event that prefigures a future corresponding reality. Thus, as God called his son Israel out of **EGYPT**, so he would call his true **SON** out (Matt 2:15).

2:16–18 As Israel wept in Jeremiah’s day for their children in exile (see Jer 31:15–16), so they wept again in Matthew’s day for their children who were persecuted in connection to Jesus.

2:23 That Jesus would be called a **Nazarene** is not found in the Old Testament. So likely Matthew was thinking of statements like Isaiah 53:3: “He was despised . . . by men” (see also Ps 22:6; Is 49:7), because Nazareth

2:23^a Luke 1:26; 2:39
 3:1^a John 1:6-8, 19-28
 3:2^c Matt 4:17
 3:3^a Luke 1:17, 76
^fIs 40:3
 3:4² Kin 1:8; Zech 13:4
 3:5^a Mark 1:5
 3:6^a Matt 3:11, 13-16;
 Mark 1:5
 3:7^a Matt 16:1ff
^hMatt 22:23
 3:8^a Luke 3:8; Eph 5:8, 9
 3:9^a Luke 3:8; 16:24
 3:10^a Luke 3:9
 3:11^a Mark 1:4, 8;
 Luke 3:16
 3:12^a Is 30:24; 41:16

^aNazareth. *This happened* so that what was spoken through the prophets would be fulfilled: "He will be called a Nazarene."

THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

3 Now ^hin those days John the Baptist ^acame, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ²"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³For this is the ^oone referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said,

"^eTHE VOICE OF ONE CALLING 'OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, 'PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'"

⁴Now John himself had ^aa garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵At that time Jerusalem ^ewas going out to him, and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan; ⁶and they were being "baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

⁷But when he saw many of the 'Pharisees and 'Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸"Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance; ⁹and do not assume that you can say to yourselves, "We have Abraham *as our father*"; for I tell you that God is able, from these stones, to raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰And the ^aaxe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"As for me, ⁱI baptize you ²with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His ^owinnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly

Questions & Answers

Q The reality of Satan's counter-kingdom and his counter-agenda means that we as believers are engaged in a spiritual battle against Satan and his demons. What do we need to do to be successful in that battle?

A Paul makes it clear that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph 6:12). Christians are engaged in spiritual conflict that takes place in the spiritual realm. And spiritual battles demand spiritual weapons. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 that our job is to use spiritual weapons to change the thinking that precedes actions. So we are seeking to change the mind. Our goal is to use God's Word to shape our thoughts and the thoughts of others to bring them in alignment with God's perspective.

Spiritual alignment gives us authority for our activity in the spiritual realm. When Jesus was battling Satan, the first thing he did was quote Scripture (see Matt 4:4). He started with the Word of God because it carries weight. Satan is allergic to Scripture. One of the reasons why we lose so many spiritual battles is because we turn to Scripture last, not first. Using Scripture while implementing it through our actions gains us the authority for victory in the spiritual realm.

FOR THE NEXT Q&A, SEE PAGE 1086.

3:3¹ Or out, Prepare in the wilderness the way 3:11² The Gr here can be translated in, with, or by

was viewed as a despised community from which no good thing could come (see John 1:46).

3:1 The wilderness (then and now) is a barren place of preparation and development for what God is planning to do.

3:2 Repentance is essential for experiencing the presence and grace of God. It involves changing the mind in order to reverse direction. It is the inner resolve and determination to turn from sin and turn to God.

3:4 John's austere lifestyle, odd wardrobe, and confrontational preaching were reminiscent of another of God's messengers: Elijah (see, e.g., 2 Kin 1:3-17).

3:6 By **confessing their sins** and being **baptized**, the people were making a public declaration

that they had changed their minds and agreed with what God said about their sins.

3:7 Why did John accept other people but not this group? Because, although they were okay with listening to his message, they wanted their lives left alone. Like some people today, they didn't mind attending a church service as long as it didn't affect how they were running their own affairs. They wanted information, but not transformation.

3:8 Genuine **repentance** is confirmed by actions. When I travel, I tell the airline agent, "I'm Tony Evans, and I have a reservation." The agent then asks, "Can I see your proof of identification?" They don't want mere communication that I am who I claim to be; they want authentication. Therefore, they want

to see something that verifies what I affirm. Similarly, shouting, "Hallelujah! Amen! Praise the Lord!" is fine but insufficient. Repentance shows up in your hands and feet, not just in your lips. Without the **fruit**, the visible proof of true heart repentance, judgment is coming (3:10).

3:11 John's declaration corresponds to the promise of the prophets (see Ezek 36:27; Joel 2:28), the confirmation of Jesus (see John 14:16-17; 15:26; Acts 1:4-5), and the fulfillment in the early church (see Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-45).

3:12 A farmer would winnow grain by tossing it in the air. The wind would blow away the **chaff**—the useless husks—while the **wheat** would fall to be gathered up.

clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

13^aThen Jesus *arrived from Galilee at the Jordan, *coming* to John to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have *the* need to be baptized by You, and *yet* You are coming to me?" 15 But Jesus, answering, said to him, "Allow *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us ^bto fulfill all righteousness." Then he *allowed Him. 16 After He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and ^che saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and settling on Him, 17 and behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

4^aThen Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had ^bfasted for forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And ^cthe tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the "Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written: "MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD."

5 Then the devil *took Him along into 'the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and he *said to Him,

"If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written:

"HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS ORDERS CONCERNING YOU";

and

'ON *THEIR* HANDS THEY WILL LIFT YOU UP, SO THAT YOU DO NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'

7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written: 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

8^aAgain, the devil *took Him along to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus *said to him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" 11 Then the devil *left Him; and behold, "angels came and *began* to serve Him.

JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY

12 Now when Jesus heard that ^aJohn had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth, He came and ^bsettled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. 14 *This happened* so that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled:

15 "THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI,
BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE
'GENTILES—

3:13^aJohn 1:31-34
3:15^bPs 40:7, 8; John 4:34
3:16^cMark 1:10; Luke 3:22
3:17^aPs 2:7; Is 42:1
4:1^aMark 1:12, 13;
Luke 4:1-13
4:2^aEx 34:28; 1 Kin 19:8
4:3^a1 Thess 3:5
"Matt 14:33
4:4^aDeut 8:3
4:5^aNeh 11:1, 18; Dan 9:24

4:6^aPs 91:11, 12
4:7^aDeut 6:16
4:8^aMatt 16:26;
1 John 2:15-17
4:9^a1 Cor 10:20f
4:10^aDeut 6:13; 10:20
4:11^aMatt 26:53;
Luke 22:43
4:12^aMatt 14:3; Mark 1:14
4:13^aMatt 11:23; Mark 1:21
4:15^aIs 9:1

4:15^aLit *nations*, usually non-Jewish

3:13-15 Since John's message was about repentance, he considered it inappropriate and inconceivable that he would baptize the Messiah, because Jesus had nothing to repent of. But in his substitutionary death on the cross, Jesus would bear the transgressions of sinners and credit them with his perfect righteousness (see 2 Cor 5:21). As his ministry began, then, he intended to identify with sinful humanity on whose behalf he would perfectly fulfill all the demands of God's law. This baptism would also identify Jesus with John and affirm his kingdom message.

3:16-17 Note that all three members of the Trinity appear here, working simultaneously. The Father and the Spirit publicly endorsed the Son for his kingdom mission.

4:1 Notice that the temptation of the Son was God's idea: **Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness.** This tells us God was not on the defensive in this matter. He was on the offensive, demonstrating the superiority of his Son over Satan.

Why did God test his Son this way? The Bible describes Jesus as the "second man" or

"last Adam" (1 Cor 15:45, 47). The first Adam was tested in the garden, gave in to Satan, and got the human race kicked into the wilderness. The last Adam went into the wilderness to defeat Satan so that he can escort us back to the garden.

4:2 To *fast* is to refuse to address a physical craving to fulfill a greater spiritual need. It prioritizes feeding the spirit with prayer and fellowship with God over feeding the stomach.

4:3 Clearly the devil had been watching Jesus go without food. He knows what you're up to, too, and directs his temptations accordingly.

4:4 If Jesus, the living Word, needed to use the written Word (Deut 8:3 in this case) to deal with the enemy of the Word, how much more do you? He gave you the Bible so you could wield it like a sword (see Eph 6:17).

4:5-6 Challenging Jesus to jump to his death doesn't sound like much of a temptation. But notice that the devil supported his appeal by quoting (4:6) God's promise of angelic protection in Psalm 91:11-12. Jesus, then, had

an opportunity to demonstrate undeniably that he was the Messiah. The problem was that doing so ignored God's plan. It would bypass the cross.

The devil knows the Bible, and he uses it. If he can't convince you to act independently of God, he'll work through your religion.

4:7 Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16: **You SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.** In other words, he knew we are never to use disobedience to back God into a corner in order to force him to fulfill his plan.

4:8-9 Satan wants us to bow to him. He'll make intriguing offers to get us to do so, but they're never worth the price.

4:10 If you're a Christian, you have no obligation to the devil, and you have Jesus's delegated authority against Satan. "Resist the devil [with the Word and in obedience to God], and he will flee from you [as he fled from Christ]" (James 4:7).

4:11 When the fallen angel left, faithful angels came and fulfilled their rightful role: serving Christ and giving him the worship he deserves.

4:16^a Is 9:2; 60:1-3
 4:17^a Mark 1:14, 15
 4:18^c Luke 5:2-11;
 John 1:40-42
 4:21^a Matt 10:2; 20:20
 4:23^a Matt 9:35; 13:54

4:24^a Mark 7:26; Luke 2:2
 4:25^c Mark 3:7, 8;
 Luke 6:17
 5:1^a Matt ch 5-7;
 Luke 6:20-49
 5:2^a Matt 13:35; Acts 8:35
 5:3^a Luke 6:20-23
 5:4^a Is 61:2; John 16:20
 5:5^a Ps 37:11
 5:6^a Is 55:1, 2; John 4:14
 5:7^a Prov 11:17;
 Matt 6:14, 15
 5:8^a Ps 24:4
 5:9^a Matt 5:45; Luke 6:35

16 ^aTHE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED.”

17^bFrom that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

THE FIRST DISCIPLES

18 Now as *Jesus* was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He ^asaid to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of people.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. 21 Going on from there He saw two other brothers, ^bJames the son of Zebedee, and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets; and He called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

MINISTRY IN GALILEE

23 Jesus was going about in all of Galilee, ^cteaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people.

24 And the news about Him spread ^fthroughout Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and severe pain, demon-possessed, people with epilepsy, and people who were paralyzed; and He healed them. 25 Large crowds ^gfollowed Him from Galilee and *the Decapolis*, and Jerusalem, and Judea, and *from beyond the Jordan*.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT; THE BEATITUDES

5 ^hNow when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. 2 And ⁱHe opened His mouth and *began* to teach them, saying,

3 ^j“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 ^k“Blessed are ^kthose who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 ^l“Blessed are ^lthe ^lgentle, for they will inherit the earth.

6 ^m“Blessed are ^mthose who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

7 ⁿ“Blessed are ⁿthe merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 ^o“Blessed are ^othe pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 ^p“Blessed are the peacemakers, for ^pthey will be called sons of God.

5:5ⁱ Or *humble, meek*

4:17 Jesus preached in continuity with the kingdom message of John: **Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand** (see 3:2).

4:19 There’s an important principle here. If you’re not fishing, you’re not following. If your Christian life does not involve evangelizing the lost, you’re not functioning like the disciple Jesus intends you to be. Not every believer is called to a full-time Christian vocation, but every believer is called to be a full-time Christian.

4:23 These actions are the hallmarks of Jesus’s ministry. **Teaching** involves clearly articulating the content of the message. **Proclaiming the gospel** includes calling for a response to what is taught. **Healing** consists of a visible demonstration of the power of the message.

5:1-2 Matthew 5-7, delivered on a **mountain**, is known as the Sermon on the Mount. It’s Jesus’s kingdom manifesto. The first few verses of it are known as the Beatitudes (5:3-10); they set forth the character of kingdom men and women. We could call the Beatitudes antibiotics from God’s pharmacy that can aid life transformation. They are a reminder that Jesus is primarily concerned with what’s happening on your inside, which should be the basis of what you’re showing on the outside.

5:3 To be **poor in spirit** is to be conscious of one’s continual dependence on God. King-

dom people recognize their own inadequacy and insufficiency apart from him.

God’s **kingdom** refers to God’s rule. If you’re “poor in spirit,” you will get to see God’s heavenly rule in your earthly life. Only by being desperately dependent on God can you become what He created you to be.

5:4 **Blessed are those who mourn** refers to being saddened by the things that sadden God. God grieves over the sin and wretchedness of the world (see Gen 6:5-6). Sin and its consequences surround us, tempting us to become numb. Instead, we must pray that God would give us the emotions of his heart, so that we can experience the encouraging, strengthening comfort of God.

5:5 Some translations render **the gentle** as “the meek.” It’s important to understand that meekness does not mean weakness. Consider, for example, the process of breaking a horse. The idea is not to break the horse of its strength or speed; rather, the goal is to break the horse of its self-will. As long as you remain independent and “wild,” you will never maximize God’s intention for you. To be meek is to learn to submit your will to God’s.

5:6 Far too many of God’s children are spiritually malnourished—not because they don’t eat, but because they eat the wrong things. Donuts taste good, but they have

no nutritional value. You can’t have a donut-level spiritual diet and then wonder why you don’t experience God’s blessings. To hunger **for righteousness** is to apply the righteous standard of God to your life. You need to be hungry for that which pleases God. If you train your appetite in this way you will be **satisfied**—you’ll be filled with divine contentment.

5:7 There’s a blessing for those who are **merciful** (that is, who exercise pity rather than just condemnation), because you can bank on the fact that a time is coming when you’ll need **mercy**.

5:8 Purity of **heart** involves being authentic before God, so come clean with him about the good, the bad, and the ugly, and you’ll see him operating powerfully in your life.

5:9 To be a **peacemaker** is to be a mediator and resolve conflicts between estranged parties. You make peace by identifying the truth, addressing the sin, and constructing a bridge between those who are at odds with one another. Peacemaking can be difficult work. But, if we persevere in it, we **will be called sons of God** because we will resemble our heavenly Daddy. He sent *the Son of God* to be our Mediator, bridging the gap created by our sin and granting us peace with him.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ MATTHEW 5:13–16

- What does it look like to let your light “shine before people”?
- When were you recently tempted to put your lamp under a basket? What happened?
- Where do you see evidence of deterioration and decay in today’s society?
- In what ways does your church intentionally engage and influence your broader community?
- What steps can you take to live more like salt and light in your everyday life?

¹⁰“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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

HOPE WORDS

You will rarely see what God is willing to do in secret until he sees what you are willing to do in public.

DISCIPLES AND THE WORLD

¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for

anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by people.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵nor do *people* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

¹⁷“Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished! ¹⁹Therefore, whoever nullifies one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰“For I say to you that unless your righteousness far surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ MATTHEW 5:23–24

- How do these verses contribute to your understanding of reconciliation?

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

²¹“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be answerable to the court.’ ²²But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever

5:10 ¹Pet 3:14
5:11 ¹Pet 4:14
5:12 ²Chr 36:16;
Matt 23:37
5:13 ³Mark 9:50;
Luke 14:34f

5:14 ⁵Prov 4:18; John 8:12
5:15 ³Mark 4:21; Luke 8:16
5:16 ¹Pet 2:12
5:17 ⁶Matt 7:12
5:18 ⁷Matt 24:35;
Luke 16:17
5:19 ⁸Matt 11:11
5:20 ⁹Luke 18:11, 12
5:21 ¹Ex 20:13; Deut 5:17
5:22 ⁴Deut 16:18;
2 Chr 19:5f

Video
Devotional
“HUMPTY
DUMPTY”



The solutions to our culture’s chaos do not come from the government; they come from the church.

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5:10 To be **persecuted for the sake of righteousness** is to be mistreated because you display the kingdom characteristics described in 5:3–9. Some people won’t like you for doing so. Persecution may take a variety of forms and come from a variety of sources (your family, an employer, the culture, the government). But in receiving it you’ll be in the company of a class of people (see Heb 11) of whom the world is not worthy (Heb 11:38).

5:11–12 Notice that the persecution that brings blessing is directly tied to Jesus. **When people insult you** and tell lies about you **because of him, you are blessed** (5:11). Since essentially the same thing happened to the Old Testament **prophets**, you’re in good company. But how can you **rejoice** in the midst of the mess? You can remember that **your reward in heaven** is great (5:12), because “the sufferings of this present time are not

worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom 8:18).

5:13 Christians are to be **salt** in this decaying world. But if you become too mixed up with the world and allow its values to affect you, you will lose your uniqueness as a Christian and your ability to make a kingdom difference.

5:14 In Scripture, the world is pictured as a dark place that requires illumination (see John 1:4–5; 3:19). Jesus is “the Light of the world” (John 8:12), so he expects his followers to be lights too. We are not to be secret agent saints.

5:15–16 Are you a light among your acquaintances? Are you a light at work and at the gym? Are you a light in your culture and in your community? To hide a light is contradictory to its purpose. You must shine so that people **may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven** (5:16). A good work is a righ-

teous and biblically authorized action that is beneficial to others and for which God gets the credit.

5:17 The Law or the Prophets is a way of referring to the Old Testament, which was intended to point to Christ. He, in fact, is the theme of the Old Testament Scriptures (see Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39–40). In order to provide us with righteousness, making us acceptable before God, he had to live a life of complete obedience to God’s law.

5:20 Unless, as a disciple of Jesus, you are committed to growing in righteousness, the heavenly kingdom will not be expressed in your earthly history. **The scribes and Pharisees** were concerned only with external righteousness.

5:21–22 God not only considers our actions but also our thoughts and words. He’s concerned with the motives of the heart.

5:23^a Matt 5:24
 5:24^a Rom 12:17, 18
 5:25^c Prov 25:8f;
 Luke 12:58
 5:26^c Luke 12:59
 5:27^a Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18
 5:28^a 2 Sam 11:2-5;
 Job 31:1
 5:29^c Matt 18:9; Mark 9:47
 5:30^a Matt 18:8;
 Mark 9:43
 5:31^a Deut 24:1, 3; Jer 3:1
 5:32^a Matt 19:9;
 Mark 10:11f
 5:33^a Lev 19:12; Num 30:2
 5:34^a James 5:12
^aIs 66:1
 5:35^a Is 66:1
^aPs 48:2
 5:37^a 1 John 3:12f
 5:38^a Ex 21:24; Lev 24:20

says to his brother, "You good-for-nothing,¹ shall be answerable to² the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the³ fiery hell. ²³ Therefore, if you are^a presenting your offering at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be^b reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. ²⁵ "Come to good terms with your accuser quickly, while you are with him on the way *to court*, so that your accuser will not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will not be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I say to you, ^oyou will not come out of there until you have paid up the last⁴ quadrans.

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, ^{1c}"YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY";²⁸ but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman^f with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ Now ^gif your right eye is causing you to sin, tear it out and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your *body*, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And ^hif your right hand is causing you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your *body*, than for your whole body to go into hell.

³¹ "Now it was said, ^{1d}"WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY IS TO GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE";³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³ "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ^{1e}"YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.' ³⁴ But I say to you, ^{1f}take no oath at all, neither by heaven, for it is ^{1g}the throne of God, ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is the^{1h} footstool of His feet, nor by Jerusalem, for it is ¹ⁱTHE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. ³⁶ Nor

KINGDOM LIVING
 FAMILY
 God, Our Heavenly Father

Statistics tell us that more than half the couples that get married today will also get divorced. For the African American community, figures are even more sobering. More than seventy percent of our children will grow up in broken homes, usually without a father.

God created us to be a part of a family. We as believers are his children—members of his family—and our home is not broken. You and I are loved unconditionally. God's love for us is eternal. It does not change and will not fade. Regardless of whether you're married, single, divorced, or widowed, God is your heavenly Father, and he has promised never to leave you. This truth should add a tremendous amount of security to your life, especially when you live devoted to him and not to yourself.

Tragically, when couples put their own interests ahead of their vows to God and their love for one another, something is bound to give. And when marriages fall apart, deep feelings of resentment and sorrow flourish. When people don't feel loved, their hearts can be filled with sadness that often leads to anger and hurtful behaviors. How can you help? It all begins with unconditional love—God's love poured into you and poured out to those around you.

FOR THE NEXT FAMILY
 KINGDOM LIVING LESSON SEE PAGE 1374.

shall you take an oath by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷ But make sure your statement is, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of ^{1j}evil *origin*.

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, ^{1k}"EYE FOR EYE, and TOOTH FOR TOOTH.'³⁹ But I say to you, do not show opposition against

5:22¹ Or *you empty-head*; Gr *Raka (Raca)* from Aramaic *reqa* ² Lit *the Sanhedrin*; i.e., Jewish High Court ³ Lit *Gehenna of fire* 5:26^a A small Roman copper coin, worth about 1/64 of a laborer's daily wage

5:23–24 In order to have a healthy vertical relationship—intimacy and fellowship with God—you must maintain your horizontal relationships with others. Make peace with your brother inasmuch as it depends on you. 5:27–30 Sexual purity involves more than avoiding a physical act. It involves the heart, too. Pornography is a huge stumbling block to moral purity and a clear example of the kind of sin that Jesus warned against (5:28). Jesus calls not for physical mutilation (again,

sin is a matter of the heart), but for a radical approach to avoiding sin. 5:32 The Jewish religious leaders had varying understandings of divorce. Some thought one could divorce for any reason. But marriage vows are to be viewed as sacred and permanent. 5:33–37 Jesus didn't deny the legitimacy of all oath taking. We find oaths in the Old Testament, such as when covenant relationships were established. So Jesus was warning

against careless, profane, and flippant uses of vows in everyday speech. An oath shouldn't be used to convince someone of the truthfulness of what you're saying; that might only be a cover-up for deception. 5:38–42 The Old Testament principle of an **EYE FOR EYE, and TOOTH FOR TOOTH** (5:38; see Lev 24:20) was intended to keep justice fair and limited. Punishment was to be in proportion to the crime. But Jesus wanted his followers to develop a spirit of servanthood that would

an evil person; but ^awhoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other toward him also. ⁴⁰And if anyone wants to sue you and take your ^ttunic, let him have your ^ccloak also. ⁴¹Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴²^bGive to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR**’^b and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I say to you, ^elove your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may prove yourselves to be ^fsons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the evil and the good*, and sends rain on *the righteous and the unrighteous*. ⁴⁶For ^gif you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors, do they not do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers *and sisters*, what more are you doing *than others*? Even the Gentiles, do they not do the same? ⁴⁸Therefore ^hyou shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

CHARITABLE GIVING TO THE POOR AND PRAYER

6 “Take care not to practice your righteousness in the sight of people, ⁱto be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

²“So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, so that they ^jwill be praised by people. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ³But when you give to the

poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your charitable giving will be in secret; and ^kyour Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you.

⁵“And when you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to ^lstand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they will be seen by people. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ⁶But as for you, when you pray, ^mgo into your inner room, close your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you.

⁷“And when you are praying, do not use thoughtless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their ⁿmany words. ⁸So do not be like them; for ^oyour Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ MATTHEW 6:9-13

- What do you like best about Jesus's prayer? Why?
- How does this prayer compare to the way you normally pray?
- How will you intentionally submit to God's will this week?

THE LORD'S PRAYER

⁹^{ap}Pray, then, in this way:

‘Our Father, who is in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

¹⁰ ‘Your kingdom come.

^oYour will be done,
 On earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ “Give us this day our daily bread.

5:40 ^aA long shirt worn next to the skin ^bOr outer garment

extend beyond what's required and even apply to those who mistreat them. As Paul says, it means not repaying “evil for evil . . . but overcoming [ing] evil with good” (Rom 12:17, 21). **5:43-45** To **love your enemies** (5:44) is to reflect the character of **your Father who is in heaven** (5:45). There are certain blessings that he gives to all people. **He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good** (5:45). You don't have to be a Christian to feel the sunshine and to breathe.

5:48 To **be perfect** as God is **perfect** does not mean that he gives to all people. **He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good** (5:45). You don't have to be a Christian to feel the sunshine and to breathe. **5:48** To **be perfect** as God is **perfect** does not mean that he gives to all people. **He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good** (5:45). You don't have to be a Christian to feel the sunshine and to breathe. **6:2-6** For the filming of old western movies, they would create a town that appeared to be full of buildings, but each structure was

a façade. A building might look like a saloon from the front, but there was nothing on the other side of its door. Similarly, **hypocrites** (6:2) are play actors, giving an external appearance of spirituality without an accompanying internal reality.

If, like a hypocrite, you **give** for the applause of people, that's all the **reward** you're going to get. But give and pray **in secret**, and **your Father will reward you** (6:3-6).

6:9 Prayer is designed to be a relational communication with God, not merely a formal or verbal one. Prayer is only as effective as our level of intimacy with the Lord. Some people have had bad fathers and say they can't relate to God as Father, but we are not to measure our heavenly Father by the standard of our earthly ones. Rather, we are to measure our earthly fathers by the standard of our **Father . . . in heaven**—who is perfect. He is the ultimate definition of what a father is. Notice

also that he is **our** Father (so you're not the only kid in the family). To honor God as **hallowed** or holy is to treat him as unique—in a class by himself. He is the Creator of all and the only one deserving of worship.

6:10 Jesus calls his disciples to make a pledge of allegiance to the **kingdom** of God—to God's rule over his creation. When Olympic athletes are awarded gold medals, they don't get to choose the song they hear at the award ceremony. The song played is the national anthem of the winner's country. Similarly, you are called to march to *God's* tune.

God's **will** is what God wants—when, where, and how he wants it. Those who are part of God's family are to follow God's rules. He's sovereign, and he'll accomplish his purposes with you or without you. The question is, will you get to take part in it?

6:11 Just as the Israelites relied on God to provide manna regularly in the wilderness,

5:39 ¹ Cor 6:7
5:42 ² Deut 15:7-11;
Luke 6:34f
5:43 ³ Lev 19:18
⁴ Deut 23:3-6
5:44 ⁴ Luke 6:27f; 23:34
5:45 ⁵ Matt 5:9; Luke 6:35
5:46 ⁵ Luke 6:32
5:48 ⁶ Lev 19:2; Deut 18:13
6:1 ¹ Matt 6:5, 16; 23:5
6:2 ² Matt 6:5, 16; 23:5
6:4 ⁴ Jer 17:10; Matt 6:6, 18
6:5 ⁵ Mark 11:25;
Luke 18:11, 13
6:6 ⁶ Is 26:20;
Matt 26:36-39
6:7 ⁷ 1 Kin 18:26f
6:8 ⁸ Ps 38:9; 69:17-19
6:9 ⁹ Luke 11:2-4
6:10 ¹⁰ Matt 26:42;
Luke 22:42
6:11 ¹¹ Prov 30:8; Is 33:16

6:12^c Ex 34:7; Ps 32:1
 6:13^b John 17:15;
 1 Cor 10:13
 6:14^c Matt 7:2; Mark 11:25f
 6:15^c Matt 18:35
 6:16^c 1s 58:5
 6:17^c Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam 12:20
 6:18^c Matt 6:4, 6
 6:19^a Prov 23:4; Matt 19:21
 6:20^a Matt 19:21;
 Luke 12:33
 6:21ⁱ Luke 12:34
 6:22^a Luke 11:34, 35
 6:23^a Matt 20:15;
 Mark 7:22
 6:24^a 1 Kin 18:21;
 Luke 16:13
 6:25^a Luke 12:22-31
 6:26^a Job 35:11; 38:41
 6:27^a Matt 6:25, 28, 31, 34;
 Luke 10:41
 6:28^a Matt 6:25, 27, 31, 34;
 Luke 10:41
 6:29^a 1 Kin 10:4-7;
 2 Chr 9:4-6, 20-22
 6:30^a James 1:10, 11
ⁱ Matt 8:26; 14:31
 6:31^a Matt 6:25, 27, 28, 34;
 Luke 10:41
 6:32^a Matt 6:8; Phil 4:19
 6:33^a Matt 19:28;
 Mark 10:29f

12 'And ^aforgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but ^adeliver us from evil. [^fFor Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]]

14 'For if you forgive *other* people for their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But ^oif you do not forgive *other* people, then your Father will not forgive your offenses.

FASTING; THE TRUE TREASURE; WEALTH

16 "Now ^ewhenever you fast, do not make a gloomy face as the hypocrites *do*, for they distort their faces so that they will be noticed by people when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ¹⁷ But as for you, when you fast, ^aanoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that your fasting will not be noticed by people but by your Father who is in secret; and your ^cFather who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you.

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves ^ttreasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; ²¹ for ^hwhere your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then, if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if ^hyour eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other,

or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and ²wealth.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ MATTHEW 6:25-34

- What are the main benefits or desirable things mentioned in these verses?
- What do these verses teach about anxiety?
- What are the main causes of anxiety in your life?
- Identify one change you'll make this week to place God and his kingdom first in your life.

THE CURE FOR ANXIETY

25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather *crops* into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more important than they? ²⁷ And which of you by ^wworrying can add a single day to his life's span? ²⁸ And why are you ^wworried about clothing? Notice how the lilies of the field grow; they do not labor nor do they spin *thread for cloth*, ²⁹ yet I say to you that not even ^sSolomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the ^ggrass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? ³¹ You of little faith! ³¹ Do not ^wworry then, saying, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear for clothing?' ³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for ^hyour heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and ^aall these things will be provided to you.

6:13^b This clause not found in early mss 6:24^c Gr *mamonas*, for Aramaic *mamon* (mammon); i.e., wealth etc. personified as an object of worship

so you are to live your life in dependence on God—one day at a time.

6:12 **Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors** relates to sins. When God forgives, he no longer credits sin to your account. And as we have been forgiven by God, so we are to forgive the sins others commit against us.

6:13 Satan is smarter than we are and has centuries of experience ruining human lives. So ask God to keep you from getting into situations that detour you from the kingdom road.

6:14-15 Don't miss that God's forgiveness is conditioned on your forgiveness of others. Jesus isn't talking about salvation here, but about our fellowship with God after we're saved, as a part of our discipleship. To **forgive**

is not to hold a grudge, not to seek retribution. Since we all need forgiveness regularly, we must not withhold it.

6:16 If your goal in fasting is for other people to celebrate how spiritual you look, then their approval will be your only **reward**.

6:24 Few things can distract us as effectively as becoming slaves to **wealth**. Having money is not the problem, though. The danger is when money has *you* and becomes more important to you than spiritual things. God must have your devotion if you are to receive his kingdom direction.

6:25-30 For many of us, the admonition not to **worry about . . . life** (6:25) sounds just as impossible to obey as "Don't breathe." Worry and anxiety over life are commonplace. But to this Jesus said in effect, "When was the

last time you saw a bird with an ulcer?" **Birds** don't worry about where they're going to get their next meals, yet the **heavenly Father feeds them** (6:26). Flowers don't agonize over looking pretty, but **not even Solomon in all his glory** could match the beauty in the fields of God's creation (6:28-29). If God gives this kind of attention to birds and flowers, won't he do much more for you (6:30)? Trust him.

6:33 How do you know if you're seeking to put God's kingdom first? Ask yourself this question: When I need guidance to make decisions, where do I go first? For many Christians, God is like a spare tire. He's the One they run to when all else fails. So, do you seek God's perspective first (through his Word and godly counsel), or do you seek the world's perspective? Kingdom

KINGDOM LIVING
KINGDOM

Seeking First the Kingdom

God's kingdom is lived out from the perspective of heaven, not earth. That's why Jesus said, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you" (Matt 6:33). Far too many Christians, though, think they can mix a little of God with a lot of the world. They're willing to follow several isolated fragments of what they find in God's Word—going to church for fellowship, giving money when it's convenient, not stealing, and so on—but they're not willing to submit to God's comprehensive plan and purpose for their lives. They're not willing to be part of his kingdom agenda.

That's a big problem. Because when you bring the world into the Word, you're asking God, the King, to bless something that's contrary to his kingdom. He won't do that. In the end, your efforts to keep hold of only a little piece of God actually prevent you from experiencing any

part of God because you can't operate in two kingdoms at once.

If you lose sight of the kingdom, God's perspective gets lost and you start focusing on the tangible and temporal things in life. When that happens, your judgment begins to be skewed and your decisions become shortsighted. Rather than living out your destiny and purpose, you may end up with wasted time, effort, energy, and emotions.

But when God's kingdom is prioritized, you get to see heaven both rule and overrule in your life. You will witness God trump circumstances and people that you thought had the last word because only God has the last word. You'll get to experience him at a whole new level as you experience him as King.

FOR THE NEXT KINGDOM
KINGDOM LIVING LESSON SEE PAGE 1109.

6:34^a Matt 6:25, 27, 28, 31;
Luke 10:41
7:1^a Rom 14:10, 13
7:2^c Mark 4:24; Luke 6:38
7:3^d Rom 2:1
7:4^e Luke 6:42

7:6^f Matt 15:26
7:7^g Luke 11:9-13
7:11^h Ps 84:11; Is 63:7

³⁴ "So do not ^aworry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

⁶ "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

JUDGING OTHERS

7 ^aDo not judge, so that you will not be judged. ²For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and ^bby your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. ³Why do you ^clook at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and look, the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye!

PRAYER AND THE GOLDEN RULE

⁷ ^aAsk, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ⁹Or what person is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? ¹¹So if you, *despite* being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, ¹²how much more

Christians appeal to God's view and his righteous standards first. Do this, and **all these things will be provided to you**. Align yourself with his agenda, and your heavenly Daddy will take responsibility for meeting your needs.

6:34 Focusing on living for God's kingdom today is the antidote for **worry**.

7:1 To illegitimately **judge** is to create your own standard of what is acceptable and measure everyone against it, hypocritically critiquing others. Not surprisingly, people who do this typically find no problems with their own behavior. That's because when a sinner creates a standard, he becomes the standard. When my son was eleven years old, he wanted to show me how he could dunk a basketball in the gym. The problem was that

he had asked a janitor to lower the rim so he could dunk it. Those who hypocritically judge others use a standard, but it isn't God's. It's been lowered.

7:3-5 Imagine straining to see a nearly invisible splinter while being oblivious to a board protruding from your eyeball! Instead of being judgmental toward others, allow God's standard to be applied to your own life. If you're honest, you'll discover that you fall short. When you've addressed your own sin, you'll be more understanding, compassionate, and righteous in your assessments and better able to help a brother or sister address his or her own sin.

7:6 There are numerous places in the Bible in which God instructs his people to make judgment calls. Here is one of them: **Do**

not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before pigs. These are references to those who despise spiritual things, but you can't obey this command unless you can discern who the "dogs" and "pigs" are.

The difference between judgmentalism and doing what Jesus calls us to do here is the standard used. When you sinfully judge, you use your own standard and condemn others. When you obey Jesus's words, you use wisdom, refusing to give what is precious in God's sight to those who refuse to value spiritual things.

7:7-8 Prayer is an earthly request for heavenly intervention. There are three answers to prayer: yes, no, or wait. If you haven't heard yes or no, then you keep asking.

7:12 *Luke 6:31
 *Matt 22:40
 7:13 *Luke 13:24

7:15 *Matt 24:11, 24;
 Mark 13:22
 7:16 *Matt 7:20; 12:33
 7:17 *Matt 12:33, 35
 7:19 *Matt 3:10; Luke 3:9
 7:20 *Matt 7:16; 12:33
 7:21 *Luke 6:46
 7:22 *Matt 25:11f;
 Luke 13:25ff
 7:23 *Ps 6:8; Matt 25:41
 7:24 *Matt 16:18;
 James 1:22-25
 7:28 *Matt 13:54; 22:33

Questions & Answers

Q Why does Jesus's command to "seek first [God's] kingdom" (Matt 6:33) accompany his teaching on worry? How does worry impact our ability to seek God first?

A Worry is one of the great distractions of life, and it is more than mere concern. Concern involves controlling how much time and attention you give to an issue. Worry occurs when the issue controls you. And when the issues in our lives are controlling us, then the kingdom goes to the back of the line in terms of our priorities, because we've given our worries too much clout.

Legitimate concern is necessary. But we must control what we think about, how much we think about it, and how we allow it to influence us. When the kingdom is pushed to the background because an issue in your life has assumed control, then that issue has become an idol and a god, thus hindering the true God from meeting the need that is causing you to worry.

FOR THE NEXT Q&A, SEE PAGE 1115.

will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

¹² "In everything, ^atherefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for ^bthis is the Law and the Prophets.

THE NARROW AND WIDE GATES

¹³ "^cEnter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow

and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

A TREE AND ITS FRUIT

¹⁵ "Beware of the ^bfalse prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will ^cknow them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷ So ^eevery good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ ^eEvery tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ So then, you will know them ^bby their fruits.

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; ^fLEAVE ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS

²⁴ "Therefore, ^eeveryone who hears these words of Mine, and acts on them, will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and its collapse was great."

²⁸ When Jesus had finished these words, ^mthe crowds were amazed at His teaching;

7:12 Within this verse is the Golden Rule. In short, it means to love others: to practice the "one another" of Scripture (e.g., John 15:12; Gal 6:2; Eph 4:32; 1 Thess 5:11).

7:13-14 The **broad** way that many people follow, seeking to have a relationship with God, is called religion (7:13). *Religion* is man's attempt to make himself acceptable to a holy God. But the **narrow** gate that **leads to life** is Jesus; he makes us acceptable. **Few** find this road because few are willing to accept God's way to obtain eternal life (7:14). The only legitimate way to a relationship with God is *his* way: through his Son and his cross.

7:15-18 The lesson here is that you need to examine the evidence of a teacher's life and ministry. Is that person's teaching and

doctrine consistent with God's Word? Does his or her lifestyle display holiness and love for the Lord? If either answer is no, don't be deceived.

7:21-23 Someone can call Jesus, **Lord, Lord**, and have a ministry that *appears* to be authentic (7:21-22). Nevertheless, a lack of good fruit will expose them. The King of kings will thus respond, **LEAVE ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS** (7:23). False teachers will experience his judgment. Participation in Jesus's millennial kingdom is directly related to obedience to his teaching (7:21). The absence of practical righteousness will exclude people from participation in the millennial kingdom. This righteousness is something the disciples were encouraged to pursue (6:33).

7:24-27 I once had a crack in a wall of my house. No matter how many times I had it fixed, the crack came back. Finally, I learned the problem wasn't with the wall; the problem was a shifting foundation. Many of us have "cracks" in our lives—emotional, relational, financial—but we address the symptoms and not the source of the problem. If you want stability in your personal life, your family, your ministry, and your community, you need the strong, sturdy foundation of God's Word—which includes both knowledge of the Bible and applying it to life. Wisdom is the ability and willingness to apply spiritual truth to life's circumstances. Foolishness is unwillingness to do so.

²⁹ for He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

JESUS CLEANSES A MAN WITH LEPROSY

8 When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him. ² And a man with leprosy came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." ³ Jesus reached out with His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ And Jesus *said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

THE CENTURION'S FAITH

⁵ And ^owhen Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, begging Him, ⁶ and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, terribly tormented." ⁷ Jesus *said to him, "I will come and heal him." ⁸ But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." ¹⁰ Now when Jesus heard *this*, He was amazed and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. ¹¹ And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; ¹² but the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness; in that place

there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." ¹³ And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW AND MANY OTHERS HEALED

¹⁴ ^kWhen Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ And He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him. ¹⁶ Now when evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. ¹⁷ *This happened* so that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled: "HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR ILLNESSES AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES."

DISCIPLESHIP TESTED

¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to depart to the other side of the sea. ¹⁹ Then a scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." ²⁰ And Jesus *said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ²¹ And another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus *said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

JESUS CALMS THE STORM

²³ When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴ And behold, a violent storm developed on the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. ²⁵ And they

8:2 * Mark 1:40-44; Luke 5:12-14
8:3 * Matt 11:5; Luke 4:27
8:4 * Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14
8:5 * Luke 7:1-10
8:6 * Matt 4:24
8:9 * Mark 1:27; Luke 9:1
8:11 * Is 49:12; 59:19
8:12 * Matt 13:38
* Matt 22:13

8:13 * Matt 9:22, 29
8:14 * Mark 1:29-34; Luke 4:38-41
8:16 * Matt 4:24
* Matt 4:23
8:17 * Is 53:4
8:18 * Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22
8:19 * Luke 9:57-60
8:20 * Dan 7:13; Matt 9:6
8:22 * Matt 9:9; Mark 2:14
8:23 * Mark 4:36-41; Luke 8:22-25

8:2 ¹i.e., leprosy or a serious, unspecified skin disease, and so throughout the ch; see Lev 13 8:11 ¹i.e., to dine

8:2 There's nothing wrong with seeking a doctor's help when you're sick. The problem is in neglecting to seek God's help and treating the doctor as if he's a god.

8:8-9 This Roman officer understood how authority works. He had men under his command, and he didn't need to be present for his soldiers to obey his orders—any more than he needed Caesar to visit him personally to get him to jump. A subordinate only needs to know that a superior has issued an order (8:9). The centurion knew that Jesus possessed authority to heal. Therefore, he trusted that Jesus didn't have to be physically present but only say the word (8:8).

8:10 What made the centurion's faith so great was his total confidence in Jesus's word. Great faith comes when we truly understand the greatness of the object of our faith.

8:12 The sons of the kingdom refers to unregenerate Jews. Unfaithful believers will lose rewards in Jesus's millennial kingdom rule while faithful believers will be rewarded with rich inheritance. Outer darkness and weeping and gnashing of teeth are pictures of profound regret due to loss of rewards at the judgment seat of Christ because of their unfaithfulness. The context determines whether this phrase is referring to believers (see 25:29-30) or to unbelievers (see 13:47-50).

8:15 Notice what this woman did as soon as she got up from her sickbed. Likewise, when the Lord ministers to you, it should be reflected in your service to him.

8:16-17 The point here is that Jesus's healing ministry validated prophecy regarding the Messiah. A day is coming when, because of his

death on the cross, sickness, pain, and death will be abolished forever (see Is 53:5; Rev 21:4). 8:20 In other words, he asked the would-be disciple, "Are you sure you understand what you're getting yourself into? Will you follow me when there's no Hilton, no Holiday Inn?" Are you committed to Jesus, even when times are hard?

8:21-22 The man's request (8:21) was another way of saying he wanted to receive his inheritance before he committed himself to discipleship. Once his father died and left him sufficient funds, he'd be all in. But Jesus permitted no postponement: Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead (8:22)—that is, let those who are spiritually dead worry about such things. Are you willing to risk discipleship even when it doesn't fit with your economic plans?

8:25^a Matt 8:2; 9:18
 8:26^a Matt 6:30; 14:31
 8:28^c Mark 5:1-17;
 Luke 8:26-37
 8:29^d Judg 11:12;
 2 Sam 16:10
 8:33^a Matt 4:24
 8:34^f Amos 7:12;
 Acts 16:39
 9:1^c Matt 4:13; Mark 5:21
 9:2^a Mark 2:3-12;
 Luke 5:18-26
 9:3ⁱ Mark 3:28, 29
 9:4ⁱ Matt 12:25; Luke 6:8
 9:5^a Matt 9:2, 6;
 Mark 2:5, 9
 9:6ⁱ Matt 8:20; John 5:27
 9:8^a Matt 5:16; 15:31
 9:9^a Mark 2:14-22;
 Luke 5:27-38
 9:11^a Matt 11:19; Mark 2:16
 9:12^a Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31
 9:13^a Hos 6:6
 9:14^a Luke 18:12

came to *Him* and woke Him, saying, “^aSave us, Lord; we are perishing!” ²⁶ He ^{*}said to them, “Why are you afraid, ^byou men of little faith?” Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. ²⁷ The men were amazed, and said, “What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

JESUS SENDS DEMONS INTO PIGS

²⁸ ^c And when He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men confronted Him as they were coming out of the tombs. *They were* so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way. ²⁹ And they cried out, saying, “^dWhat business do You have with us, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” ³⁰ Now there was a herd of many pigs feeding at a distance from them. ³¹ And the demons begged Him, saying, “If You *are going to* cast us out, send us into the herd of pigs.” ³² And He said to them, “Go!” And they came out and went into the pigs; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. ³³ And the herdsmen ran away, and went to the city and reported everything, including what had happened to the ^edemon-possessed men. ³⁴ And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, ^fthey pleaded with Him to leave their region.

A PARALYZED MAN HEALED

9 Getting into a boat, *Jesus* crossed over the *Sea of Galilee* and came to ^gHis own city. ² ^a And they brought to Him a paralyzed man lying on a stretcher. And seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man who was paralyzed, “Take courage, son; your sins are

forgiven.” ³ And some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is ‘blaspheming!’” ⁴ And Jesus, ‘perceiving their thoughts,’ said, “Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk?’ ⁶ But so that you may know that ‘the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins’—then He ^{*}said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, pick up your stretcher and go home.” ⁷ And he got up and went home. ⁸ But when the crowds saw *this*, they were awestruck, and they ^hglorified God, who had given such authority to men.

MATTHEW CALLED

⁹ ^a As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew sitting in the tax collector’s office; and He ^{*}said to him, “Follow Me!” And he got up and followed Him.

¹⁰ Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining *at the table* in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and *began* dining with Jesus and His disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw *this*, they said to His disciples, “^oWhy is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?” ¹² But when *Jesus* heard *this*, He said, “*It is not* ⁱthose who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Now go and learn what this means: ‘I DESIRE COMPASSION, RATHER THAN SACRIFICE,’ for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

THE QUESTION ABOUT FASTING

¹⁴ Then the disciples of John ^{*}came to Him, asking, “Why do we and ⁿthe Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?” ¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, “The attendants of the groom cannot mourn as long as the groom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the groom is taken away from

8:27 That the disciples were **amazed** at Jesus’s lordship over creation suggests they hadn’t fully known who was in the boat with them. The storms and trials of life are designed to give you a bigger view of God and a more precise understanding of who Jesus is, too. The size of your faith is ultimately tied to the size of your God.

8:29 Demons clearly know that a day of judgment is coming. But they refuse to live in light of it. People do that too (see Rom 1:32).

8:33–34 Did the local Gentile population rejoice that two men had been miraculously set free of their oppression? No. Jesus was responsible for a negative impact on their livelihood. So, sadly, financial loss took priority over spiritual gain.

9:1 Jesus’s **own city** was Capernaum (see 4:13).

9:2 By his words, Jesus affirmed his own deity and did what only God could do.

9:5–7 Clearly it was **easier** to claim to be able to forgive sins than to actually heal, but in order to demonstrate his **authority** in the spiritual realm (**to forgive sins**), Jesus also demonstrated his authority in the physical realm (to heal lame legs).

9:9 **Matthew** was also known as Levi (see Mark 2:14). He was a Jewish tax collector and was thus considered a traitor since it was his job to collect taxes from his own people on behalf of the Roman Empire. Moreover, tax collectors would stick their own surcharge onto the tax so that they could make a nice profit off of their fellow Jews.

9:10 Matthew had found grace and refused to keep it to himself because he knew others needed the same. That’s why he threw a party at his **house** and invited other **tax collectors and sinners** to it.

9:11 **The Pharisees** couldn’t conceive of upstanding, religious Jews socializing and eating **with the tax collectors and sinners**. Tragically, many modern believers turn all their focus inward to their Christian club and forget the reason Jesus came to earth: to invite new members into the family. When was the last time you connected a sinner to the Savior?

9:13 By quoting Hosea 6:6, Jesus essentially told the Pharisees to go back and study their Bibles: **I desire compassion, rather than sacrifice**. The Pharisees offered plenty of religious sacrifices, but their hearts weren’t merciful. Similarly, if your praise and worship isn’t making you more compassionate toward the lost, you’ve missed the point of church.

9:15 The kingdom of God had come near because the King of the kingdom—the Messiah—had arrived. A time for fasting would

them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. ¹⁷Nor do *people* put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.”

MIRACLES OF HEALING

¹⁸“While He was saying these things to them, behold, a *synagogue* official came and bowed down before Him, and said, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will become alive again.” ¹⁹Jesus got up *from the table* and *began* to accompany him, along with His disciples.

²⁰And behold, a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years came up behind Him, and touched ⁸the border of His cloak; ²¹for she was saying to herself, “If I only ⁶touch His cloak, I will get well.” ²²But Jesus, turning and seeing her, said, “Daughter, take courage; ⁹your faith has made you well.” And at once the woman was made well.

²³When Jesus came into the official’s house and saw ⁵the flute players and the crowd in noisy disorder, ²⁴He said, “Leave; for the girl ⁷has not died, but is asleep.” And they *began* laughing at Him. ²⁵But ⁴“when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and ²took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶And ¹this news spread throughout that land.

²⁷As Jesus went on from there, two men who were blind followed Him, crying out, “Have mercy on us, ‘Son of David!’”

²⁸And after He entered the house, the men who were blind came up to Him, and Jesus ³said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They ²said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” ²⁹Then He touched their eyes, saying, “It shall be done for you ⁴according to your faith.” ³⁰And their eyes were opened. And Jesus ¹sternly warned them, saying,

“See that no one knows *about this!*” ³¹But they went out and ²spread the news about Him throughout that land.

³²And as they were going out, behold, ¹a demon-possessed man who was unable to speak was brought to Him. ³³And after the demon was cast out, the man who was *previously* unable to speak talked; and the crowds were amazed, *and were* saying, ²“Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.” ³⁴But the Pharisees were saying, “He ¹casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.”

³⁵Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, ⁹teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness.

³⁶Seeing the crowds, He felt compassion for them, ⁸because they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then He ⁵said to His disciples, ⁴“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES; INSTRUCTIONS FOR SERVICE

10 Jesus ¹summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every sickness.

²Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew; and James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; ⁴Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁵Simon the Zealot, and ⁶Judas Iscariot, the one who also betrayed Him.

⁷These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, “Do not go on a road to Gentiles, and do not enter a city of ¹Samaritans; ⁶but rather go to ²the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷And as you go, preach, saying, ⁸“The kingdom of heaven

9:18* Mark 5:22-43;
Luke 8:41-56
9:20* Num 15:38;
Deut 22:12
9:21* Matt 14:36;
Mark 3:10
9:22* Matt 9:29; 15:28
9:23* 2 Chr 35:25; Jer 9:17
9:24* John 11:13;
Acts 20:10
9:25* Acts 9:40
* Mark 9:27
9:26* Matt 4:24; 9:31
9:27* Matt 1:1; 12:23
9:29* Matt 8:13; 9:22
9:30* Matt 8:4

9:31* Matt 4:24; 9:26
9:32* Matt 12:22, 24
9:33* Mark 2:12
9:34* Matt 12:24;
Mark 3:22
9:35* Matt 4:23; Mark 1:14
9:36* Num 27:17;
Ezek 34:5
9:37* Luke 10:2
10:1* Mark 3:13-15; 6:7
10:2* Mark 3:16-19;
Luke 6:14-16
10:3* John 1:43ff
* John 11:16
10:4* Matt 26:14;
Luke 22:3
10:5* 2 Kin 17:24ff;
Luke 9:52
10:6* Matt 15:24
10:7** Matt 3:2

come later when the **groom** (King Jesus) was taken from them. As sure as you don’t grieve at a **wedding** feast, you don’t fast at a celebration.

9:22 According to Leviticus 15:25–27, the woman’s flow of blood would’ve made her and anything she touched ceremonially unclean. But instead of uncleanness flowing to Jesus through her touch, healing flowed to her.

9:27 The prophet Isaiah had much to say about the Messiah, God’s Servant, the King

who was to come. He would be a descendant of **David** (of “the stem of Jesse,” Is 11:1), and he would bring healing (see Is 42:6–7). These men, recognizing Jesus as the Messiah, knew what Jesus could do.

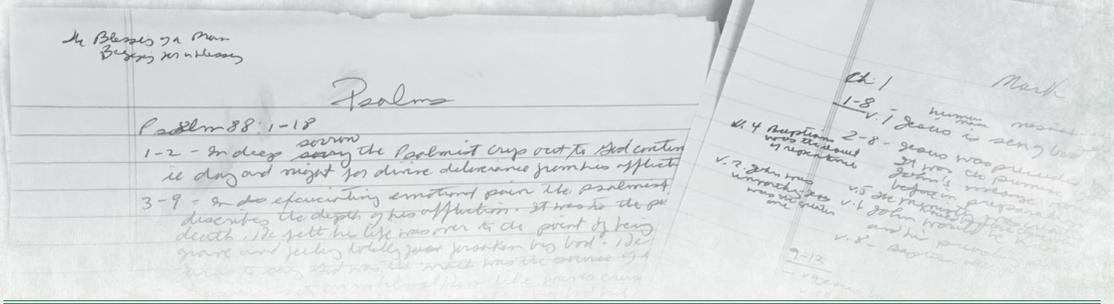
9:28–29 It’s not enough to have faith: that faith must be declared publicly.

9:33 When the Lord drove out the demon, **the man who was previously unable to speak** talked. This tells us that in the realm of God’s kingdom, Satan’s power is restrained; thus, you want to be living under God’s kingdom rule.

9:37–38 Jesus called his disciples—including us—to **plead** in prayer for the recruitment of kingdom-minded **workers** (9:38).

10:1–2 Jesus gave the Twelve, including Judas, **authority** and power to perform what he himself had been doing (10:1). They had been promoted from disciples to **apostles** (10:2).

10:4 Note that **Judas who betrayed him** was sent out too.
10:5–6 Later, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the message of Jesus would spread to **Gentiles** (see, e.g., Acts 1:8; 10:34–48; 11:1–18).



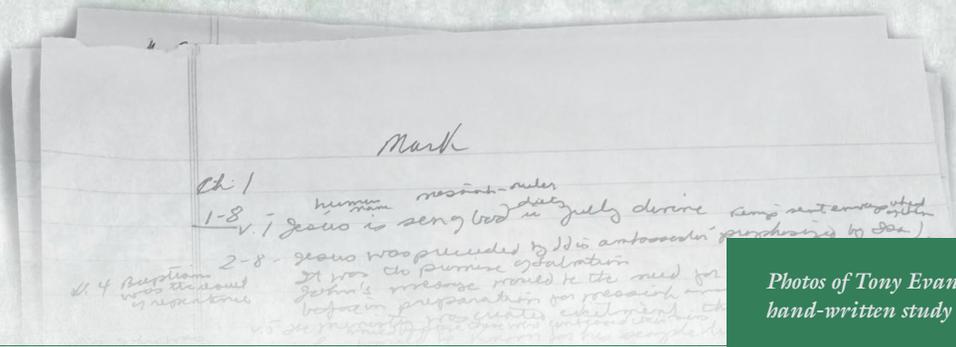
A NOTE FROM DR. TONY EVANS

This study Bible is based on a simple yet profound biblical worldview: the glory of God through the advancement of his kingdom. This is the unifying theme of Scripture, from Genesis through Revelation. The concept of God's kingdom is what ties all of the Bible together. When this central point of connectivity is lost to the reader, it is easy for Scripture to seem like a series of disconnected stories, events, personalities, and doctrines that do not strategically and thematically connect to one another.

The word *kingdom* means "rule" or "authority." When linked to God, it refers to the rule of God in both heaven and earth encompassing both eternity and time. It is therefore comprehensive in nature. This kingdom is composed of a ruler (God), subjects (angels and people), a realm (creation), and regulations (laws).

The Bible unfolds how God's kingdom operates in the affairs of the world and how God receives glory through his kingdom rule, even when that rule is being opposed by both angels and human beings. While God's kingdom rule takes various forms with varying laws through varying administrations (i.e., dispensations), it nonetheless maintains its central goal of bringing God glory whether through blessing or judgment.

The *kingdom agenda*, then, is the visible manifestation of the comprehensive rule of God over every area of life. God's kingdom agenda is carried out through four covenantal spheres: the individual, the family, the church, and the government (i.e., nations). A covenant is a divinely created relational bond through which God administers his kingdom program. It establishes a legal relationship in the spiritual realm that is to be lived out in the physical realm. To operate and function underneath the umbrella of God's kingdom covenants and guidelines is to position the specific covenantal relationship (i.e., individual, family, church, government) to experience God's greatest involvement and benefits within that covenantal sphere.



Conversely, to operate outside of and in opposition to God's kingdom covenant is to experience the negative consequences of not being aligned and covenantally covered.

This study Bible is designed to reflect this kingdom perspective. My goal is that it will serve as a valuable study resource for serious students of the Bible by combining exegesis, exposition, and exhortation that creates a relevant kingdom mindset.

As you use this study Bible, remember:

- i. Study the Scriptures with a view to meeting with God, not just learning about him.
- ii. Study the Scriptures by routinely asking, "What should I do in light of what I have learned?"
- iii. Study the Scriptures in their context in order to be accurate in your understanding of what the biblical authors are saying.
- iv. Study the Scriptures in prayer and in dependency on the Holy Spirit to open up your mind and heart to the meaning and contemporary relevancy and application of the text.
- v. Study the Scripture with a kingdom mindset, seeking to identify God's rule over every area of life.

While nothing can be added to or subtracted from God's inerrant Word, it is my sincere hope that the notes and features in this study Bible will aid you in your understanding and application of the Bible to your life. For additional exposition and application of the Scriptures, see also *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary: Advancing God's Kingdom Agenda*. Most importantly, it is my prayer that your reading, studying, and obedience to the written Word will lead you into a deeper, more intimate relationship with the living Word, Jesus Christ, as kingdom disciples as you live all of life under his kingdom rule.