

Family Devotions: 31 Essential Christian Beliefs and Values

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I developed this family devotional after the frustration of trying and failing at various family devotionals that we had bought, each featuring long readings, prescribed prayers, elaborate craft projects, stories from someone else's life... These are nice ideas but for us they were either too complicated or not focused enough on God's Word.

So I developed a very simple and very short approach to family devotions. We read just one Bible verse (or sometimes a few verses or a short Bible story) that's tied to a crucial principle for life with Jesus Christ. This is like an easy to use Catechism for Evangelical Christian families because it introduces the most important components of faith in Jesus Christ and discipleship to him. We used this family devotional and two others I developed¹ as part of our family dinners when our three children were ages six to ten and we continued doing this into their teenage years.

Here are a few of the ideas that have helped us to implement our family devotions:

1. When we initiated our nightly family devotions we briefly shared with our kids, from our hearts, the importance of God's Word to our souls and to our family. (As parents we agreed that this was one of the things – there aren't many of them! – that we insisted our kids participate in.)
2. We do our devotional during dinner after each family member has already had a turn to share his or her "peak and pit" (high and low point) of the day.
3. Kids' attention spans are short so we keep the devotionals short if they're antsy or in a hurry. Even if the kids don't get much out of the lesson they're getting something important by the value we're placing as a family on God's Word.
4. We try to get the kids to talk as much as possible. Usually one of the kids reads the verse. Then Kristi or I ask basic questions like "What does this verse mean?" or "How have you experienced this today?" Usually, we invite the youngest child to answer first and then the older kids to teach the younger ones.
5. When Kristi or I offer our thoughts on what the verse means to us we use simple language and try to use a brief example from our lives or our kids' lives.
6. We take turns who says the prayer at the end of our discussion. It focuses on asking God to help us to apply that day's Bible verse and lesson in our lives.
7. Don't worry about missing a day here and there! (Or if it takes longer than one year to get through the devotional.) Just move on to the next verse for that date of the month. The 365 verses are grouped into 31 principles, promises or disciplines, one for each date of the month. So on the 1st day of a month read a verse from the list of verses on the page marked "Day 1" and then check it off.
8. Put the printed pages of your devotional in a three-ring binder with the name of your family on the cover and let the kids mark it up with pictures, doodles, and check marks of verses that have been read. This is fun to look back on!

¹ I also developed "God's Promises for Our Family" and "Spiritual Disciplines for Apprentices to Jesus." The later includes abstract concepts that need to be put in simpler terms for children.

HOW TO BELIEVE IN GOD

Believe in God the Father

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.” (Deuteronomy 6:4)

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... And God said, ‘Let there be light... God saw all that he made, and it was very good. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing.’ (Genesis 1:1, 3a, 31, 2:2a)

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth...’ So God created man in his own image... male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1:26)

“Moses said to God, ‘Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, “The God of your fathers has sent me to you,” and they ask me, “What is his name?” Then what shall I tell them?’ God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: “I am has sent me to you.”’” (Exodus 3:13-14)

“Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name... ‘The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished...’” (Exodus 34:5-7)

“You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you.” (Psalm 86:5)

“‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.’” (Isaiah 55:8-9)

“I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?” (Jeremiah 32:27)

“And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered [by God.]” (Matthew 10:30)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31b)

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1)

Believe in God the Son - Jesus

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” (John 14:6)

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.” (Isaiah 9:2a, 6-7a)

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1:18)

“Jesus wept.” (John 11:35)

“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” (Matthew 9:35-36)

“‘You are not yet fifty years old,’ the Jews said to him, ‘and you have seen Abraham!’ ‘I tell you the truth,’ Jesus answered, ‘before Abraham was born, I am!’ At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.” (John 8:57-59)

“Jesus said... ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.’” (John 11:25)

“Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” (Matthew 19:13-14)

“Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane... Then he said to (Peter, James, & John), ‘My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.’ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.’ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping.” (Matthew 26:36, 38-40a)

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living... and last of all he appeared to me...” (1 Corinthians 15:3-6, 8)

“[Jesus] said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation... After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.’” (Mark 16:19)

Believe in God the Holy Spirit

“If Christ is in you... the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you.” (Romans 8:10a, 11a)

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.’” (Mark 1:9-11)

“Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of the water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to the spirit... You must be born again.’” (John 3:5-7)

“Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me... streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit.” (John 7:37-39)

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth.” (John 14:16, 17a)

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” (John 14:26)

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires, but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.” (Romans 8:5)

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:22-23a, 25)

“Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.” (Ephesians 1:13b-14a)

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit... Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” [The gifts of the Spirit are Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous power, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation.] (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7)

“The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.” (Romans 8:26-27)

WHAT TO BELIEVE ABOUT GOD

Respect God as Holy (Fear, Reverence)

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” (Isaiah 6:3)

“The Lord saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.” (Genesis 6:5-6)

“Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear... He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him.” (Isaiah 59:2, 16)

“Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days... Turn from evil and do good... The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; the face of the LORD is against those who do evil...” (Psalm 34:11,12,14-16a)

“Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his footstool; he is holy.” (Psalm 99:5)

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” (Proverbs 9:10)

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name.” (Matthew 6:9)

“As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. ‘Good teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ‘Why do you call me good?’ Jesus answered. ‘No one is good--except God alone.’” (Mark 10:17-18)

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.” (Hebrews 1:3a)

Trust God as Loving

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

“The Lord is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.” (Psalm 145:17)

“[The Lord] tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart.” (Isaiah 40:11a)

“This is what the Lord says... `I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.” (Jeremiah 31:2a,3b)

“The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zephaniah 3:17)

“While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and `sinners' came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, `Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and “sinners”?’ On hearing this, Jesus said, `It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.’” (Matthew 9:10-12)

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him... But the father said to his servants, `Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’” (Luke 15:20,22-24)

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39)

“No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us... God is love.” (1 John 4:12, 16b)

“We love because he first loved us.” (1 John 4:19)

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.” (James 1:17)

WHAT TO BELIEVE ABOUT YOURSELF

Appreciate Your Goodness (God created and saved)

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful... fill the earth and subdue it... God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.’ (Genesis 1:27, 28, 31)

“For the Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance. In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye.” (Deuteronomy 32:9,10)

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.” (Psalm 139:13-14a)

“I no longer call you servants... Instead, I have called you friends...” (John 15:15)

“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” (Romans 8:15-16)

“And we, who... reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with every-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18)

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

“God... has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and... to be adopted...” (Ephesians 1:3b-4)

“He has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by its evil desires.” (2 Peter 1:4)

“You, dear children, are from God... The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world... The evil one cannot harm [you].” (1 John 4:4, 5:18b)

Repent of Your Badness (Sinful Nature and Sinful Choices)

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“Now the serpent was more crafty... He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, “You must not eat from any tree in the garden”? ...You will not surely die...’ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God.” (Genesis 3:1, 4, 6-8)

“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)

“‘The time has come,’ [Jesus] said. ‘The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!’” (Mark 1:15)

“This, then, is how you should pray... Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (Matthew 6:9a,13)

“Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

“For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body you will live.” (Romans 8:13)

“It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.” (Romans 9:16)

“Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” (James 1:14-15)

“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

“For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit... The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God... Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature.” (Galatians 5:17a, 19-21, 24a)

“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires... and to put on the new self, created to like God in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 4:22-24a)

HOW TO KNOW AND EXPERIENCE GOD

Have Faith/Trust

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8,9)

“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Matthew 17:21)

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20)

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” (Romans 10:9-10)

“We live by faith, not by sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

“Consider Abraham: ‘He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham... So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.” (Galatians 3:6,7,9)

“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

“All these people [Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob] were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.” (Hebrews 11:13)

“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead... I will show you my faith by what I do.” (James 2:17, 18b)

“No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.” (1 John 2:23)

Confess Your Sins

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves... If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:8,9)

“But if they will confess their sins and the sins of their fathers--their treachery against me and their hostility toward me... I will remember my covenant...” (Leviticus 2:40,42a)

“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long... Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity... and you forgave the guilt of my sin.” (Psalm 32:3,5)

“Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.” (Psalm 51:4)

“Search me, O God, and know my heart and test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23-24)

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (Matthew 5:8)

“While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’” (Matthew 26:26-28)

“Those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them--do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” (Luke 13:4-5)

“Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.” (Romans 3:20)

“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (Romans 6:4)

“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.” (James 2:10)

“Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)

Forgive as God Forgave You

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” (Colossians 3:13)

“Then Joseph said to his brothers... ‘I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.’” (Genesis 45:4-5)

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” (Matthew 5:7)

“This, then, is how you should pray... Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” (Matthew 6:9a,12)

“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” (Matthew 6:14-15)

“Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.’” (Matthew 18:21,22)

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants... A man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt... Then the master called the servant in... ‘Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” (Matthew 18:23,25-30,32a,33-35)

“We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.” (Acts 15:11)

“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8)

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Corinthians 13:14)

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate with one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:31-32)

Worship God

“Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.” (Psalm 100:2)

“You shall have no other gods before me.” (#1-Exodus 20:3)

“O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise.” (Psalm 8:1-2a)

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.” (Psalm 19:1-2)

“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.” (Psalm 42:1)

“One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.” (Psalm 27:4)

“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.” (Psalm 95:6)

“I will sing of your love and justice; to you, O Lord, I will sing praise.” (Psalm 101:1)

“Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant.” (Psalm 135:3)

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled... Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (Matthew 5:6,8)

“An expert in the law, tested (Jesus) with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-39)

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.” (Romans 12:1)

Read (study, memorize, meditate on) the Bible**“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” (Psalm 119:105)**

“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” (Psalm 1:1-2)

“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord... are more precious than gold... they are sweeter than honey...” (Psalm 19:7,10)

“Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.” (Psalm 119:24)

“Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.” (Psalm 119:89)

“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”’ (Matthew 4:1-4)

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them... Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:17,19)

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16)

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in the mirror and after looking at himself. Goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it – he will be blessed in what he does.” (James 1:23-25)

Pray**“Pray continually.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)**

“Hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief.” (Psalm 143:1)

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6)

“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words... For your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” (Matthew 6:7-8)

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one, for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” (Matthew 6:9-13)

“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.” (Matthew 21:22)

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” (Mark 1:35)

“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: ‘In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, “Grant me justice against my adversary.” For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, “Even though I don’t fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually wear me out with her coming!”’ And the Lord said, ‘Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?’” (Luke 18:1-8)

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Luke 18:10-14)

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” (Ephesians 6:18a)

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” (Colossians 4:2)

“Pray continually.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

“Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.” (3 John 1:2)

“Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray.” (James 5:13a)

Go to Church

“In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” (Romans 12:5)

“How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young-- a place near your altar, O Lord Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.” (Psalm 84:1-4)

“‘But what about you?’ [Jesus] asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.’” (Matthew 16:15-18)

“Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. ‘It is written,’ he said to them, ‘“My house will be called a house of prayer,” but you are making it a “den of robbers.”’ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.” (Matthew 21:12-14)

“[Jesus] went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.” (Luke 4:16)

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... They gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together... praising God.” (Acts 2:42, 45b, 46a, 47a)

“Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’ ...There should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.” (1 Corinthians 12:14,15,21)

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.” (1 Corinthians 12:27-28)

“You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.” (Ephesians 2:19-21)

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the ore as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:25)

“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.” (James 5:14,15)

Enjoy God Now

“Taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Psalm 34:8)

“You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” (Psalm 16:11)

“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” (Psalm 23:6)

“Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:4)

“So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 8:15)

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:7,9-11)

“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.” (John 16:24)

“I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 6:2b)

“You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.” (Galatians 5:4-5)

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ...The Lord is near.” (Philippians 4:4,5b)

“And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

“There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest...” (Hebrews 4:9-11a)

Be Thankful / Don't Complain

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.” (Psalm 100:4)

“Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.” (Psalm 95:2)

“Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.” (Psalm 107:1) – This phrase is repeated 12 times in the Psalms.

“At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws.” (Psalm 119:62)

“As [Jesus] was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’ When he saw them, he said, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him--and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’ Then he said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’” (Luke 17:12-19)

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?” (1 Corinthians 10:16)

“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15)

“Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ephesians 5:19b,20)

“I thank my God every time I remember you.” (Philippians 1:3)

“Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.” (Philippians 2:14-15)

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.” (Philippians 4:8)

“Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Help Others

“Whoever is kind to the needy honors God.” (Proverbs 14:31)

“Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.” (Psalm 82:3)

“An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.” (Proverbs 12:25)

“He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.” (Proverbs 19:17)

“You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world...” (Matthew 5:13a, 14a)

“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets... to be honored by men... Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” (Matthew 6:2-4)

“[Jesus] will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’” (Matthew 25:32-36,40)

“The Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35)

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” (1 Peter 3:15)

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” (James 1:27)

“If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” (1 John 3:17)

“If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.” (1 John 4:20)

Trust God in Difficulty

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.” (James 1:2-3)

“Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him.” (Job 13:15)

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” (Psalm 23:4)

“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Psalm 34:17,18)

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.” (Psalm 46:1,2)

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11-12)

“Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, ‘Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!’ He replied, ‘You of little faith, why are you so afraid?’ Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.” (Matthew 8:24-26)

“Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus... They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. ‘Hail, king of the Jews!’ they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again... Then they led him away to crucify him.” (Matthew 27:27-31)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

“For a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” (1 Peter 6b,7)

“Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons.” (Hebrews 12:7)

“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them... He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’” (Revelation 21:2-4)

HOW TO LIVE THE GOOD LIFE THAT GOD INTENDS FOR YOU

Depend on God Alone in Everything

“You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath.” (#2-Exodus 20:4)

“Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, ‘Come to bed with me!’ But he refused... One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, ‘Come to bed with me!’ But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.” (Genesis 39:6b-8a,12)

“Let no one be found among you... who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who practices these things is detestable to the Lord.” (Deuteronomy 18:10-12a)

“When you sit to dine with a ruler, note well what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony. Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive.” (Proverbs 23:1-3)

“Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.” (Proverbs 23:20-21)

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” (Matthew 6:24)

“For the foolishness of man is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of man is stronger than man's strength.” (1 Corinthians 1:25)

“‘Everything is permissible for me’ – but not everything is beneficial. ‘Everything is permissible for me’ – but I will not be mastered by anything.” (1 Corinthians 6:12)

“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18)

“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” (Philippians 3:7-8)

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.” (1 Peter 3:3,4)

“Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22)

Honor and Obey Your Parents

“Honor your father and mother’ – which is the first commandment with a promise - `that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’” (Ephesians 6:2-3, #5-Exodus 20:12)

“Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.” (Proverbs 19:18)

“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.” (Proverbs 22:15)

“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.” (Colossians 3:20)

“Jesus replied, `And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, “Honor your father and mother” and “Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.” But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,” he is not to “honor his father” with it.” (Matthew 15:3-6)

“When [Mary and Joseph] did not find [their boy Jesus], they went back to Jerusalem to look for him... After three days they found him in the temple courts... Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them... And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:45,46,51,52)

“When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, `Dear woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, `Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.” (John 19:26,27)

“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.” (Romans 13:1-2)

“This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.” (Romans 13:6-7)

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.” (Colossians 3:22)

“There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves... disobedient to their parents, ungrateful... not lovers of the good... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God... Have nothing to do with them.” (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

“If you are not disciplined... then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it... God disciplines us for our good... No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:7b-11)

Trust God / Don't Worry

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

“The Lord is my light and my salvation-- whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life-- of whom shall I be afraid? For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.” (Psalm 27:1,5)

“You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.” (Psalm 32:7)

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)

“This, then, is how you should pray... Give us today our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:9a,11)

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:26, 34)

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 6:28-30)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

“But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.” (Luke 21:14,15)

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

“No one can snatch [you] out of my Father's hand.” (John 10:29)

“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment.” (1 John 4:18)

Be Sexually Pure / Don't Cultivate Lust

“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.” (Hebrews 13:4)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28, #7-Exodus 20:14)

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24)

“The lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double edged sword... Her steps lead straight to the grave... Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house.” (Proverbs 5:3,4,5b,8)

“Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.” (Song of Songs 2:7, 3:5, 8:4)

“I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.” (Matthew 5:32)

“God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.” (Romans 1:26-27)

“Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9b-10)

“Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body... Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit... Therefore honor God with your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:18, 19b, 20b)

“Since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each women her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.” (1 Corinthians 7:2-3)

“But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.” (Ephesians 5:3)

“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust (learn to live with his own wife, learn to acquire a wife) like the heathen who do not know God.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5)

Be Peaceful / Don't Lose Your Temper

“In your anger do not sin’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. ” (Ephesians 4:26-27)

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.” (Matthew 5:21-22, #6-Exodus 20:13)

“Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me.” (Psalm 35:1)

“You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made... When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” –Abortion is murder. (Psalm 139:13b, 14a, 15b-16)

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

“If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24)

“Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court.” (Matthew 5:25)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:43-45)

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” (Matthew 18:15-17)

“Do not repay evil for evil... If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’” (Romans 12:17-20)

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.” (James 1:19b-20)

“Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.” (1 Peter 3:9)

Use God-honoring Language

“Let your conversation be always full of grace...” (Colossians 4:6a)

“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.” (#3-Exodus 20:7)

“It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. Do not let your mouth lead you into sin” (Ecclesiastes 5:5, 6a)

“Anyone who says ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.” (Matthew 5:22b)

“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.” (Matthew 12:35-36)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29)

“Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.” (Ephesians 5:4)

“It is shameful to even mention what the disobedient do in secret.” (Ephesians 5:12) – bad movies

“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.” (Ephesians 5:19a)

“Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead he must be kind to everyone.” (2 Timothy 23-24a)

“When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.” (James 3:3-6)

“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.” (James 3:9-10)

Be Humble / Don't Be Self-Critical or Stuck-Up

“Your right hand sustains me; you stoop down to make me great.” (Psalm 18:35)

“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!” (Psalm 8:3-6,9)

“Before his downfall a man’s heart is proud, but humility comes before honor.” (Proverbs 18:12)

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven... Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:3,5)

“At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: ‘I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven...’” (Matthew 18:1-4)

“He asked them, ‘What were you arguing about on the road?’ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, ‘If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.’” (Mark 9:33-35)

“[Jesus] got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him... ‘Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.’” (John 13:4-5,14)

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” (Romans 12:3)

“If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else.” (Galatians 6:3-4)

“But ‘Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.’ For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.” (2 Corinthians 10:17-18)

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who being in very nature God... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant.” (Philippians 2:3-6a, 7b)

“I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.” (1 Timothy 1:16)

Make Good Friends / Don't Be Corrupted by Bad Company

“He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.” (Proverbs 13:20)

“Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself... Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. ‘Don’t be afraid,’ he said. ‘My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you...’ The two of them made a covenant before the Lord.” (1 Samuel 18:1b, 23:16-18a)

“But Ruth replied [to Naomi, her mother-in-law], ‘Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.’” (Ruth 1:16)

“A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.” (Proverbs 12:26)

“A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.” (Proverbs 16:28)

“A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for adversity.” (Proverbs 17:17)

“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.” (Proverbs 18:22)

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18:24)

“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered.” (Proverbs 22:24)

“This is my lover, this is my friend.” (Solomon’s wife said about Solomon, Song of Solomon 5:16b)

“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15)

“When [Saul] came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas [which means son of encouragement] took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.” (Acts 9:26-28)

Manage Money God's Way / Don't Be Greedy

"Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow." (Proverbs 13:11)

"You shall not steal." (#8. Exodus 20:15)

"Of what use is money in the hand of a fool, since he has no desire to get wisdom?" (Proverbs 17:16)

"Whoever loves money never has enough money. This is meaningless." (Ecclesiastes 5:10)

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:19-21)

"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown... The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

(Matthew 13:4-8, 22-23)

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap." (Luke 6:38)

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." (1 Timothy 6:17)

Do Your Work in God's Strength

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.” (Colossians 3:23-24)

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.” (#4-Exodus 20:8-10a)

“Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. How long will you lie there, you sluggard? ...A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-- and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.” (Proverbs 6:7-11)

“He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored.” (Proverbs 13:18)

“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.” (Proverbs 22:29)

“My heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the sun... A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in his work. This... is from the hand of God.” (Ecclesiastes 2:20,24)

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” (Jeremiah 29:11)

“Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’” (Matthew 19:26)

“It will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!’” (Matthew 25:14-15, 19-21)

“Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58b)

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)

“I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:13)

Be Honest / Don't Lie

"The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful." (Proverbs 12:22)

"You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor." (#9-Exodus 20:16)

"The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out." (Proverbs 10:9) – Don't cheat

"The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity." (Proverbs 11:3)

"A fortune made by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor and a deadly snare." (Proverbs 21:6)

"These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this.' Declares the Lord." (Zechariah 8:16-17)

"Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)

"Each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body." (Ephesians 4:25)

Be Content / Don't Envy

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" (Hebrews 13:5)

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house... wife... servant... ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor." (#10-Exodus 20:17)

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." (Philippians 4:12)

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into a temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction." (1 Timothy 6:6-9)

2nd COMING OF CHRIST

Be Ready for Jesus to Come Back

“Come, O Lord!” (1 Corinthians 16:22b)

“For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man... They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.” (Matthew 24:27, 30b-31)

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

“For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, ‘Peace and safety,’ destruction will come on them suddenly.” (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3a)

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” (Matthew 24:42)