

CHRISTIAN
STANDARD
BIBLE

THE
TONY EVANS
STUDY BIBLE



ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM AGENDA



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THE TONY EVANS STUDY BIBLE

The Tony Evans Study Bible includes extensive study notes and other ancillary resources carefully crafted and curated by Dr. Tony Evans as General Editor and adapted from his sermons, teachings, and writings. These features are strategically placed alongside the biblical text to explain God's Word in a fresh way. Applying these truths will empower readers to have transformed lives that then transfer the values of the kingdom of God to others.

FEATURES:

- Elegant design with 5 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



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ABOUT

DR. TONY EVANS

Dr. Tony Evans is the founder and senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, is the founder and president of The Urban Alternative, served as chaplain of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks and the NFL's Dallas Cowboys, and is the author of over 100 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 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 goal is to increase biblical literacy and to advance God's kingdom agenda. Dr. Tony Evans is married to Lois, his wife and ministry partner of over 50 years. They are the proud parents of four, grandparents of thirteen and great-grandparents of two.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
TONYEVANS.ORG



The CSB was created to help more people **READ** and **UNDERSTAND** the Word of God.



Accurate. Readable. Shareable.

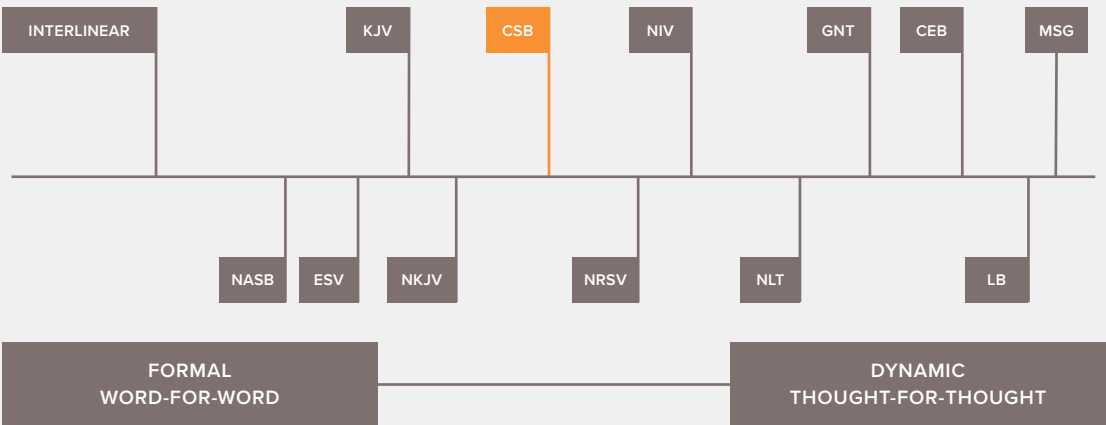
The Christian Standard Bible is a translation that combines accuracy and clarity for today’s readers. It’s a Bible you can teach from with confidence and a Bible you can share with your neighbor who is hearing God’s Word for the very first time.

Optimal Equivalence

The CSB was created using Optimal Equivalence, a translation philosophy that pursues both linguistic precision to the original languages and readability in contemporary English.

In the many places throughout Scripture where a word-for-word rendering is clearly understandable, a literal translation is used. When a word-for-word rendering might obscure the meaning for a modern audience, a more dynamic translation is used. This process assures that both the words and thoughts contained in the original text are conveyed as accurately as possible for today’s readers.

Bible Translation Continuum



Bible translations shown in the top half of the chart are the original translations directly from ancient languages to English. Versions shown below the line began with the English text of another Bible translation.



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.

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 would be sustainable.

what was emanating light for the first three days? God himself was (see Rev 22:5). On day four, God handed over that responsibility to celestial representatives, so that they would **provide light on the earth** (Gen 1:17) and **serve as signs** (1:14).

1:20-23 As he had populated the ground with plants (1:11-13), God made birds and fish (1:21). What is unique here is that he blesses them with a commission to **be fruitful . . . and fill the earth** (1:22). God created a habitable

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 this Trinitarian image of God. God created

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

citizens 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.

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.

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...

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 to in both the Old and the New Testaments (see Neh 8:1; Mark 12:26).

Assuming Mosaic authorship does not prevent us

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

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?

SIDE-MARGIN CROSS REFERENCES – Other Bible passages that are related to the text on which you are focusing.

- ^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 1:11 1Th 4:4

AVAILABLE

VIDEOS & SERMONS

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



Kingdom Agenda

WATCH



VIDEO

bhpublishinggroup.com/qr/te/67-01



New Testament Survey

WATCH



VIDEO

bhpublishinggroup.com/qr/te/67-06



Genesis Video Intro

WATCH



VIDEO

bhpublishinggroup.com/qr/te/01_00

Also available throughout are 35 audio sermons to aid with your study of God's Word.



bhpublishinggroup.com/qr/te/67-02

⁵And Cain and his offering. Cain was furious, and he looked dejected.
⁶"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you furious?' And why do you look dejected?" If you do what is right, won't you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

⁷Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁸Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's guardian?"

⁹Then he said, "What have you done? Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!" So now you are cursed, alienated from the ground that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood; you have shed it. "If you work the ground, it will never again give you its yield. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

¹⁰But Cain answered the Lord, "My punishment is too great to bear! Since you are banishing me today from the land of the earth, and I must hide from your presence and become a restless wanderer on the earth, whoever finds me will kill me."

¹¹Then the Lord replied to him, "In that case, whoever kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." And he placed a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. *Then Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

THE LINE OF CAIN

¹²Cain was intimate with his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain became the builder of a city, and he named the city Enoch after his son. *Tirad was born to Enoch, Irad fathered Methuselah, Methuselah fathered Lamech, *Lamech

took two wives for himself, one named Adah and the other named Zillah. *Adah bore Jubah; he was the father of the nomadic herdsmen. *Zillah's brother was named Jubah; he was the father of all who play the lyre and the flute. *Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. Tubal-cain's sister was Naamah.

¹³Lamech said to his wives: Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, pay attention to my words.

For I killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me.

¹⁴If Cain is to be avenged seven times over, then for Lamech it will be seventy-seven times.

¹⁵Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has given me another child" in place of Abel, since Cain killed him. *A son was born to Seth's wife, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord.

THE LINE OF SETH

¹⁶This is the document containing the family records of Adam. On the day that God created man, *he made him in the likeness of God; *he created them male and female. When they were created, he blessed them and called them

¹⁷Adam was 130 years old when he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. *Adam lived 830 years after he fathered Seth, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Seth's life lasted 912 years; then he died.

¹⁸Adam was 105 years old when he fathered Enosh. *Enosh lived 907 years; he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Enosh's life lasted 912 years; then he died.

¹⁹Enosh and his brother Seth. *Enosh was the first to write down the family history. *Enosh lived 907 years; he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Enosh's life lasted 912 years; then he died.

²⁰Enosh was 930 years old when he fathered Kenan. *Kenan lived 910 years; he fathered Kenan, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Kenan's life lasted 910 years; then he died.

²¹Kenan was 105 years old when he fathered Mahalalel. *Mahalalel lived 895 years; he fathered Mahalalel, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Mahalalel's life lasted 895 years; then he died.

²²Mahalalel was 182 years old when he fathered Jared. *Jared lived 162 years; he fathered Jared, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Jared's life lasted 162 years; then he died.

²³Jared was 162 years old when he fathered Enoch. *Enoch lived 130 years; he fathered Enoch, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Enoch's life lasted 130 years; then he died.

²⁴Enoch was 130 years old when he fathered Methuselah. *Methuselah lived 187 years; he fathered Methuselah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Methuselah's life lasted 187 years; then he died.

²⁵Methuselah was 187 years old when he fathered Lamech. *Lamech lived 182 years; he fathered Lamech, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Lamech's life lasted 182 years; then he died.

²⁶Lamech was 182 years old when he fathered Noah. *Noah lived 950 years; he fathered Noah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Noah's life lasted 950 years; then he died.

²⁷Noah was 950 years old when he fathered Shem. *Shem lived 600 years; he fathered Shem, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Shem's life lasted 600 years; then he died.

²⁸Shem was 600 years old when he fathered Arphaxad. *Arphaxad lived 350 years; he fathered Arphaxad, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Arphaxad's life lasted 350 years; then he died.

²⁹Arphaxad was 350 years old when he fathered Salameh. *Salameh lived 206 years; he fathered Salameh, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Salameh's life lasted 206 years; then he died.

³⁰Salameh was 206 years old when he fathered Eber. *Eber lived 134 years; he fathered Eber, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Eber's life lasted 134 years; then he died.

³¹Eber was 134 years old when he fathered Peleg. *Peleg lived 135 years; he fathered Peleg, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Peleg's life lasted 135 years; then he died.

³²Peleg was 135 years old when he fathered Reu. *Reu lived 130 years; he fathered Reu, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Reu's life lasted 130 years; then he died.

³³Reu was 130 years old when he fathered Serug. *Serug lived 130 years; he fathered Serug, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Serug's life lasted 130 years; then he died.

³⁴Serug was 130 years old when he fathered Nahor. *Nahor lived 142 years; he fathered Nahor, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Nahor's life lasted 142 years; then he died.

³⁵Nahor was 142 years old when he fathered Terah. *Terah lived 70 years; he fathered Terah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Terah's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

³⁶Terah was 70 years old when he fathered Abraham. *Abraham lived 175 years; he fathered Abraham, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Abraham's life lasted 175 years; then he died.

³⁷Abraham was 175 years old when he fathered Isaac. *Isaac lived 180 years; he fathered Isaac, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Isaac's life lasted 180 years; then he died.

³⁸Isaac was 180 years old when he fathered Jacob. *Jacob lived 147 years; he fathered Jacob, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Jacob's life lasted 147 years; then he died.

³⁹Jacob was 147 years old when he fathered Joseph. *Joseph lived 70 years; he fathered Joseph, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Joseph's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

⁴⁰Joseph was 70 years old when he fathered Benjamin. *Benjamin lived 73 years; he fathered Benjamin, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Benjamin's life lasted 73 years; then he died.

⁴¹Benjamin was 73 years old when he fathered Issachar. *Issachar lived 84 years; he fathered Issachar, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Issachar's life lasted 84 years; then he died.

⁴²Issachar was 84 years old when he fathered Zebulun. *Zebulun lived 70 years; he fathered Zebulun, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Zebulun's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

⁴³Zebulun was 70 years old when he fathered Naphtali. *Naphtali lived 78 years; he fathered Naphtali, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Naphtali's life lasted 78 years; then he died.

⁴⁴Naphtali was 78 years old when he fathered Gad. *Gad lived 75 years; he fathered Gad, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Gad's life lasted 75 years; then he died.

⁴⁵Gad was 75 years old when he fathered Asher. *Asher lived 88 years; he fathered Asher, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Asher's life lasted 88 years; then he died.

⁴⁶Asher was 88 years old when he fathered Simeon. *Simeon lived 108 years; he fathered Simeon, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Simeon's life lasted 108 years; then he died.

⁴⁷Simeon was 108 years old when he fathered Levi. *Levi lived 137 years; he fathered Levi, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Levi's life lasted 137 years; then he died.

⁴⁸Levi was 137 years old when he fathered Judah. *Judah lived 146 years; he fathered Judah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Judah's life lasted 146 years; then he died.

⁴⁹Judah was 146 years old when he fathered Issachar. *Issachar lived 84 years; he fathered Issachar, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Issachar's life lasted 84 years; then he died.

⁵⁰Issachar was 84 years old when he fathered Zebulun. *Zebulun lived 70 years; he fathered Zebulun, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Zebulun's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

⁵¹Zebulun was 70 years old when he fathered Naphtali. *Naphtali lived 78 years; he fathered Naphtali, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Naphtali's life lasted 78 years; then he died.

⁵²Naphtali was 78 years old when he fathered Gad. *Gad lived 75 years; he fathered Gad, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Gad's life lasted 75 years; then he died.

⁵³Gad was 75 years old when he fathered Asher. *Asher lived 88 years; he fathered Asher, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Asher's life lasted 88 years; then he died.

⁵⁴Asher was 88 years old when he fathered Simeon. *Simeon lived 108 years; he fathered Simeon, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Simeon's life lasted 108 years; then he died.

⁵⁵Simeon was 108 years old when he fathered Levi. *Levi lived 137 years; he fathered Levi, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Levi's life lasted 137 years; then he died.

⁵⁶Levi was 137 years old when he fathered Judah. *Judah lived 146 years; he fathered Judah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Judah's life lasted 146 years; then he died.

⁵⁷Judah was 146 years old when he fathered Issachar. *Issachar lived 84 years; he fathered Issachar, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Issachar's life lasted 84 years; then he died.

⁵⁸Issachar was 84 years old when he fathered Zebulun. *Zebulun lived 70 years; he fathered Zebulun, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Zebulun's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

⁵⁹Zebulun was 70 years old when he fathered Naphtali. *Naphtali lived 78 years; he fathered Naphtali, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Naphtali's life lasted 78 years; then he died.

⁶⁰Naphtali was 78 years old when he fathered Gad. *Gad lived 75 years; he fathered Gad, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Gad's life lasted 75 years; then he died.

⁶¹Gad was 75 years old when he fathered Asher. *Asher lived 88 years; he fathered Asher, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Asher's life lasted 88 years; then he died.

⁶²Asher was 88 years old when he fathered Simeon. *Simeon lived 108 years; he fathered Simeon, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Simeon's life lasted 108 years; then he died.

⁶³Simeon was 108 years old when he fathered Levi. *Levi lived 137 years; he fathered Levi, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Levi's life lasted 137 years; then he died.

⁶⁴Levi was 137 years old when he fathered Judah. *Judah lived 146 years; he fathered Judah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Judah's life lasted 146 years; then he died.

⁶⁵Judah was 146 years old when he fathered Issachar. *Issachar lived 84 years; he fathered Issachar, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Issachar's life lasted 84 years; then he died.

⁶⁶Issachar was 84 years old when he fathered Zebulun. *Zebulun lived 70 years; he fathered Zebulun, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Zebulun's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

⁶⁷Zebulun was 70 years old when he fathered Naphtali. *Naphtali lived 78 years; he fathered Naphtali, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Naphtali's life lasted 78 years; then he died.

⁶⁸Naphtali was 78 years old when he fathered Gad. *Gad lived 75 years; he fathered Gad, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Gad's life lasted 75 years; then he died.

⁶⁹Gad was 75 years old when he fathered Asher. *Asher lived 88 years; he fathered Asher, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Asher's life lasted 88 years; then he died.

⁷⁰Asher was 88 years old when he fathered Simeon. *Simeon lived 108 years; he fathered Simeon, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Simeon's life lasted 108 years; then he died.

⁷¹Simeon was 108 years old when he fathered Levi. *Levi lived 137 years; he fathered Levi, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Levi's life lasted 137 years; then he died.

⁷²Levi was 137 years old when he fathered Judah. *Judah lived 146 years; he fathered Judah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Judah's life lasted 146 years; then he died.

⁷³Judah was 146 years old when he fathered Issachar. *Issachar lived 84 years; he fathered Issachar, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Issachar's life lasted 84 years; then he died.

⁷⁴Issachar was 84 years old when he fathered Zebulun. *Zebulun lived 70 years; he fathered Zebulun, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Zebulun's life lasted 70 years; then he died.

⁷⁵Zebulun was 70 years old when he fathered Naphtali. *Naphtali lived 78 years; he fathered Naphtali, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Naphtali's life lasted 78 years; then he died.

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⁷⁸Asher was 88 years old when he fathered Simeon. *Simeon lived 108 years; he fathered Simeon, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Simeon's life lasted 108 years; then he died.

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⁸⁰Levi was 137 years old when he fathered Judah. *Judah lived 146 years; he fathered Judah, and he fathered other sons and daughters. *Judah's life lasted 146 years; then he died.

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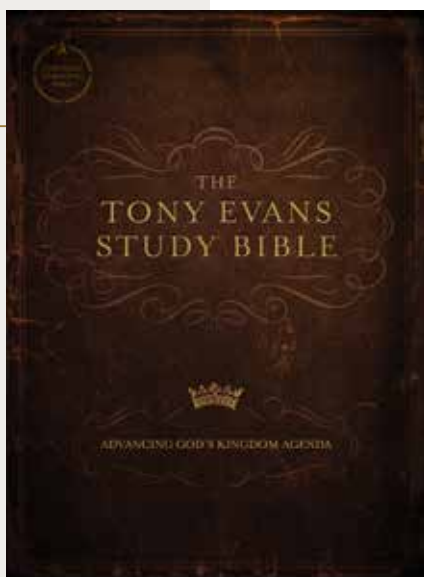
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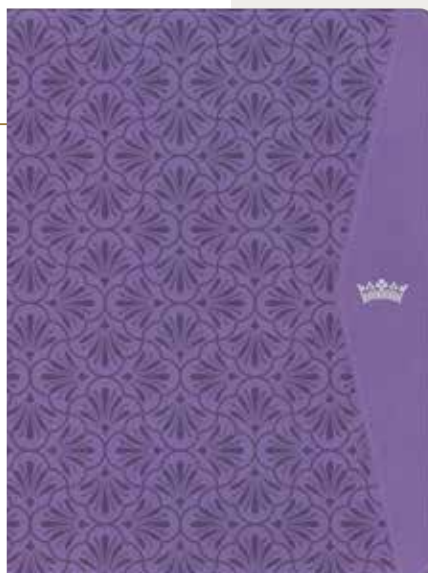
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MATTHEW

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 critical scholars today 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 CHRIST

I An^a account^b of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David,^c the Son of Abraham.^d

FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID

- 2 Abraham fathered^A Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob, Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers,^e
- 3 Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez fathered Hezron, Hezron fathered Aram,^f
- 4 Aram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon,
- 5 Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, Obed fathered Jesse,^g
- 6 and Jesse fathered King David.

FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

- David fathered Solomon^h by Uriah's wife,^h
- 7 Solomon fathered Rehoboam, Rehoboam fathered Abijah, Abijah fathered Asa,^c
 - 8 Asa^c fathered Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat fathered Joram,^d Joram fathered Uzziah,ⁱ
 - 9 Uzziah fathered Jotham, Jotham fathered Ahaz, Ahaz fathered Hezekiah, Hezekiah fathered Manasseh, Manasseh fathered Amon,^e Amon fathered Josiah,^j
 - 11 and Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.^k

FROM THE EXILE TO THE CHRIST

- 12 After the exile to Babylon Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel, Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel fathered Abiud, Abiud fathered Eliakim, Eliakim fathered Azor,^j
- 14 Azor fathered Zadok, Zadok fathered Achim, Achim fathered Eliud,
- 15 Eliud fathered Eleazar, Eleazar fathered Matthan, Matthan fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Mary, who gave birth to Jesus who is called the Christ.^m

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; and from David until the exile to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.ⁿ

THE NATIVITY OF THE CHRIST

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged^f to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit.^o ¹⁹ So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man,^p and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.^q

²⁰ But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in

^a 1:2 In vv. 2-16 either a son, as here, or a later descendant, as in v. 8 ^b 1:6 Other mss add *King* ^c 1:7,8 Other mss read *Asaph* ^d 1:8 = Jehoram ^e 1:10 Other mss read *Amos* ^f 1:18 Or *betrothed*

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; Isa 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 com-

plex, 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 (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 engagement 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.

her is from the Holy Spirit.^a ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus,^b because he will save his people from their sins.”^c

²²Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel,^a

which is translated “God is with us.”^d

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord’s angel had commanded him. He married her^e ²⁵but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son.^f And he named him Jesus.^f

WISE MEN VISIT THE KING

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem,^g ²saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?”^h For we saw his star at its risingⁱ and have come to worship him.”^c

³When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes^j of the people and asked them where the Christ would be born.

⁵“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they told him, “because this is what was written by the prophet:

⁶ And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”^{d,k}

⁷Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him.”^{e,l}

⁹After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was — the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him.^f Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.^m

¹²And being warnedⁿ in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

¹³After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to kill him.”^o ¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt. ¹⁵He stayed there until Herod’s death, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: **Out of Egypt I called my Son.**^{p,q}

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

¹⁶Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who

^a1:20 2Ch 1:1; Mt 13:49; 27:19; Jn 6:20; Rm 1:3
^b1:21 Lk 1:31; 2:21; Jn 10:25; 1Jn 2:12
^cLk 2:11; Jn 1:29; Ac 4:12; 5:31; 13:23,38–39
^d1:22–23 Is 7:14; Mt 21:1–4; Lk 24:44; Rm 1:2–4
^e1:24 Mt 1:6; 13:49; Lk 1:1; 19:32; Jd 5
^f1:25 Gn 4:1,17; Ex 13:2; Jdg 11:39; 15m 1:19; Lk 2:7,21
^g2:1 Gn 25:6; 1Kg 4:30; Lk 1:5; 2:4–7
^h2:2 Jr 23:5; 30:9; Zch 9:9; Mt 27:11; Lk 19:38; Jn 1:49
ⁱNm 24:17; Rv 22:16
^j2:4 Mt 16:21; 20:18; 21:15; 27:41; Lk 9:22
^k2:6 2Sm 5:2; Mc 5:2; Jn 7:42; 21:16
^l2:7–8 Mk 5:6; Lk 1:7; Ac 13:6; Rv 1:16
^m2:11 Ps 72:10; Is 60:6; Mt 1:18; 12:46; Mk 5:6
ⁿ2:12 Mt 27:19; Lk 2:26; Ac 10:22; Heb 8:5; 11:7
^o2:13 Mt 1:20; 13:49; Mk 11:18; Jms 4:7
^p2:15 Ex 4:22; Nm 24:8; Hs 11:1

^a1:23 Is 7:14 ^b1:25 Other mss read to her firstborn son ^c2:2 Or to pay him homage ^d2:6 Mc 5:2 ^e2:8 Or and pay him homage ^f2:11 Or they paid him homage ^g2:15 Hs 11:1

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 is 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 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 **wise men**—perhaps from Babylonia or Persia. But while we know they brought three specific gifts, we don’t know how many men there were. Moreover, the 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 wise men saw him.

2:3 *Herod* the Great wasn’t a Jew, but an Idumean 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 wise men 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

^a2:16 Is 59:7; Mk 10:34; Ac 13:6; 25:3; Rv 12:4
^b2:18 Gn 35:19; Jdg 4:5; Jr 31:15; Ac 8:2; 2Co 7:7
^c2:19 Mt 1:20; 13:49; Lk 1:11; Jd 5

^d2:22 Mt 17:22; Lk 1:5; Ac 27:29; Col 3:21; Heb 8:5
^e2:23 Mk 1:24; Lk 1:26; Jn 1:45-46

^f3:1-12 Mk 1:3-8; Lk 3:2-17; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

^g3:1 Jos 15:61; Jdg 1:16

^h3:2 Dn 2:44; Mt 4:17;

6:10; 10:7; Mk 1:15; Lk

10:9; 11:20; 21:31

ⁱ3:3 Is 40:3; Lk 1:17, 76;

Jn 1:23

^j3:5-6 Mt 23:37; Mk 1:5;

Lk 3:3; Jn 15:22; Ac 19:18

^k3:7 Mt 16:1; 22:23; 23:15;

Ac 4:1; 5:17; 23:6

^lMt 12:34; 23:33; Rm 5:9;

1Th 1:10

^m3:8 Mt 3:10; 12:33;

13:8, 26; 21:19, 34, 41, 43;

Mk 11:14

ⁿ3:9 Lk 3:8; Jn 8:33, 39; Ac

13:26; Rm 4:1

^o3:10 Mt 7:19; Lk 13:7, 9;

Jn 15:2, 6

^p3:11 Mk 1:4, 8; Jn 1:26;

Ac 1:5

^qIs 4:4; Jn 1:33; Ac 2:3-4;

11:16; Ti 3:5

^r3:12 Is 30:24; Mt 13:30;

Mk 9:43, 48; Lk 3:17

^s3:13-17 Mk 1:9-11; Lk

3:21-22; Jn 1:31-34

were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men.^a ¹⁷Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

¹⁸ **A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping,^a and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.^{b,d}**

THE RETURN TO NAZARETH

¹⁹After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,^c ²⁰saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, because those who intended to kill the child are dead."²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother, and entered the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee.^d ²³Then he went and settled in a town called Nazareth to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.^e

THE HERALD OF THE CHRIST

3 In those days John the Baptist came,^f preaching in the wilderness of Judea^g ²and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!"^h ³For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

**A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
 Prepare the way for the Lord;
 make his paths straight!^{i,j}**

^a2:18 Other mss read *Ramah, lamentation, and weeping*. ^b2:18 Jr 31:15 ^c3:3 Is 40:3 ^d3:8 Lit *fruit worthy of* ^e3:11 Or *in* ^f3:11 Or *to carry*

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 and rejected by men" (see also Ps 22:6; Isa 49:7), because Nazareth 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 Kgs 1:3-17).

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

ration 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

⁴Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.⁵ Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him,⁶ and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.^j

⁷When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees^k coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"⁸ Therefore produce fruit^m consistent withⁿ repentance. ⁹And don't presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father."ⁿ For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones.¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.^o

¹¹"I baptize you with^e water for repentance,ⁿ but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove^f his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.^q ¹²His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out."^r

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him.^s ¹⁴But John tried to stop him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?"

¹⁵Jesus answered him, "Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all

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.

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

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 rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens" (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. So 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 1104.

righteousness." Then John allowed him to be baptized.

¹⁶ When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens^a suddenly opened for him,^a and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him.^b ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."^c

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

4 Then^d Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.^e ² After he had fasted forty days and forty nights,^f he was hungry. ³ Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."^g

⁴ He answered, "It is written: **Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"^{h,i}

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,^j ⁶ and 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 they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."^{c,k}

⁷ Jesus told him, "It is also written: **Do not test the Lord your God.**"^{d,l}

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."^e

^a 3:16 Mt 24:35; Lk 12:33; Ac 17:24; Eph 6:9; Rv 21:10
^b Is 11:2; Jn 1:32; Ac 7:56;
^c 2Pt 1:17
^d 3:17 Ps 2:7; Is 42:1; Lk 9:35; Jn 12:28
^e 4:1-11 Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-13
^f 4:1 Jos 15:61; Jdg 1:16; Jn 1:6-7; Jms 1:14
^g 4:2 Ex 34:28; 1Kg 19:8; Jn 9:4
^h 4:3 Mk 3:11; 5:7; Lk 1:35; 4:41; Jn 1:34,49; Ac 9:20
ⁱ 4:4 Dt 8:3
^j 4:5 Neh 11:1,18; Dn 9:24; Mt 27:53
^k 4:6 Gn 16:7; Mt 13:49; Lk 1:11; Ac 5:19; Rv 14:6
^l Ps 91:11-12; 1Pt 2:8
^m 4:7 Dt 6:16; 1Sm 7:3; 1Ch 21:1

^a 3:16 Other mss omit for him ^b 4:4 Dt 8:3 ^c 4:6 Ps 91:11-12 ^d 4:7 Dt 6:16 ^e 4:9 Or and pay me homage

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 wil-

derness. 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 give up a physical craving to fulfill a greater spiritual need. It prioritizes feeding the spirit with prayer and fellowship with God to 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 he 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: **Do not test the Lord your God.** 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.

^a 4:10 Dt 6:13; 1Ch 21:1
^b 4:11 Mt 26:53; Lk 22:43;
 Heb 1:14
^c 4:12 Mt 14:3; Mk 1:14; Lk
 3:20; Jn 3:24
^d Lk 4:14; Jn 1:43; 2:11
^e 4:13 Mk 1:21; 2:1; Lk 4:23;
 Jn 2:12; 4:46
^f 4:15-16 Is 9:1-2; 42:7;
 Lk 2:32
^g 4:17 Mt 3:2; 5:3,10,19-20;
 7:21; 8:11; Mk 1:14
^h 4:18-22 Mk 1:16-20; Lk
 5:2-11; Jn 1:40-42
ⁱ 4:18 Mt 15:29; Mk 7:31; Lk
 5:1; Jn 6:1

^j 4:23-25 Mk 1:35-39; Lk
 4:42-44
^k 4:23 Mt 13:54; 24:14;
 Ac 10:38
^l 4:24 Lk 2:2; Ac 15:23;
 Gl 1:21
^m Mt 8:16; 9:32; Mk 5:15;
 Jn 10:21
ⁿ 4:25 Mk 3:7; 5:20; Lk 6:17
^o 5:1 Mk 3:13; Lk 9:28;
 Jn 6:3,15
^p 5:2 Ac 8:35; 10:34; 18:14
^q 5:3 Is 57:15; 66:2
^r Mt 19:14; 25:34; Mk
 10:14; Lk 6:20
^s 5:4 Is 61:2; Mt 11:29; 21:5;
 Jn 16:20; Rv 7:17
^t 5:5 Ps 37:11; Rm 4:13;
 Rv 21:7

¹⁰ Then Jesus told him, "Go away, ^aSatan! For it is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**" ^{b,a}

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him. ^b

MINISTRY IN GALILEE

¹² When he heard that John had been arrested, ^c he withdrew into Galilee. ^d ¹³ He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum ^e by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵ Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
 along the road by the sea,
 beyond the Jordan,
 Galilee of the Gentiles.

¹⁶ The people who live in darkness
 have seen a great light,
 and for those living in the land
 of the shadow of death,
 a light has dawned. ^{c,d,f}

¹⁷ From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven ^g has come near."

THE FIRST DISCIPLES

¹⁸ As ^h he was walking along the Sea of Galilee, ⁱ he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter), and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ "Follow me," he told them, "and I will make you fish for ^e people." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father, preparing their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

TEACHING, PREACHING, AND HEALING

²³ Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, ^j teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every ^f disease and sickness ^g among the people. ^k ²⁴ Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. ^l So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. ^m And he healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan. ⁿ

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

5 When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, ^o and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² Then ^h he began to teach them, saying: ^p

THE BEATITUDES

- ³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, ^q for the kingdom of heaven ⁱ is theirs.
- ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, ^s for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ Blessed are the humble, ^t for they will inherit the earth.

^a 4:10 Other mss read "Get behind me" ^b 4:10 Dt 6:13 ^c 4:16 Lit dawned on them ^d 4:15-16 Is 9:1-2 ^e 4:19 Or you fishers of ^f 4:23 Or every kind of ^g 4:23 Or physical ailment ^h 5:2 Lit Then opening his mouth

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]" (Jas 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.

4:17 Jesus preached in continuity with the kingdom message of John: **Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near** (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. **Preaching** 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. Kingdom 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 heav-

enly 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 humble** as "the meek." It's important to understand that meekness doesn't 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.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ MATTHEW 5:13-16

- What does it look like to “let your light shine before others”?
- When have you recently been 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?

- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,^a for they will be filled.
- 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.^b
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.^c
- 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.^d
- 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven^e is theirs.

11 “You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. 12 Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how

they persecuted^f the prophets who were before you.^g

BELIEVERS ARE SALT AND LIGHT

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty?^h It’s no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.ⁱ

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.

14 “You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden.^j 15 No one lights a lamp^k and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house.^k 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.^l

CHRIST FULFILLS THE LAW

17 “Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.^m 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away,

^a 5:6 Is 55:1-2; Jn 4:14; 6:48; 7:37
^b 5:7 Pr 11:17; Mt 18:33; Lk 6:36; 2Tm 1:16
^c 5:8 Ps 24:4; Heb 12:14;
^d 1Jn 3:2; Rv 22:4
^e 5:9 Mt 5:45; Lk 6:35; Rm 8:14; Jms 3:18; 1Jn 3:1
^f 5:10 Mt 19:14; 25:34; Mk 10:14; Lk 6:20; 22:29

^g 5:12 Mt 2:23; 2Tm 3:12
^h Mt 23:37; Ac 7:52; 1Th 2:15
ⁱ 5:13 Mk 9:50; Lk 14:34
^j 5:14 Pr 4:18; Jn 8:12;
^k Php 2:15
^l 5:15 Jn 5:35; Rv 21:23
^m Mk 4:21; Lk 8:16; 11:33
ⁿ 5:16 Mt 9:8; Jn 15:8; 1Pt 2:12
^o 5:17 Mt 7:12; Rm 3:31; 10:4; 13:8; Cl 3:24

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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^a 5:13 Or how can the earth be salted?

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 filled—you’ll be satisfied 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 Daddy. He sent the Son of God to be our Mediator, bridging the gap created by our sin and granting us peace with him.

5:10 To be persecuted because 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 they 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 is great in heaven (5:12), because “the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going 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. Let your light shine. You must shine so that people may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven (5:16). A good work is a righteous 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.

^a 5:18-19 Mt 11:11; 24:35; Lk 16:17; Jms 2:10
^b 5:21 Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17
^c Mt 19:18; 23:31,35; Mk 10:19; Lk 18:20; Rm 13:9; Jms 2:11
^d 5:22 Mt 18:9; Mk 9:43; Jms 3:6; 1Jn 3:15
^e 5:25 Pr 25:8; Lk 12:58

^f 5:27 Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18
^g 5:28 2Sm 11:2; Jb 31:1; Pr 6:25
^h 5:29 Mt 18:9; Mk 9:47
ⁱ Mt 10:28; 23:15,33; Lk 12:5
^j 5:31 Jr 3:1; Mt 19:7; Mk 10:4
^k Dt 24:1

^l 5:32 Mt 19:9; Mk 10:11; Lk 16:18; Rm 7:3; 1Co 7:11
^m 5:33 Lv 19:12; Nm 30:2; Dt 23:21; Mt 23:16
ⁿ 5:34-35 Ps 48:2; Is 66:1; Mt 23:22; Ac 7:49; Jms 5:12
^o 5:37 Mt 6:13; 13:19,38; Jn 17:15; 2Th 3:3
^p 5:38 Ex 21:24; Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21

not the smallest letter^a or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ^a ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

READ MATTHEW 5:23-24

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

MURDER BEGINS IN THE HEART

²¹“You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **Do not murder**,^b and whoever murders will be subject to judgment.^c

²²But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister^e will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults^g his brother or sister, will be subject to the court.^f Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire.^{f,d} ²³So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you,²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Reach a settlement quickly with your adversary while you’re on the way with him to the court, or your adversary will hand you over to the judge, and the judge to^e the officer, and you will be thrown into prison.^e ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny.^h

ADULTERY BEGINS IN THE HEART

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery**.^{i,j} ²⁸But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.^g ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin,^h gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

DIVORCE PRACTICES CENSURED

³¹“It was also said, **Whoever divorces^j his wife must give her a written notice of divorce**.^{k,m} ³²But I tell you, everyone who divorces his wife, except in a case of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.^j

TELL THE TRUTH

³³“Again, you have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **You must not break your oath, but you must keep your oaths to the Lord**.^{k,m} ³⁴But I tell you, don’t take an oath at all: either by heaven, because it is God’s throne;³⁵ or by the earth, because it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King.ⁿ ³⁶Do not swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷But let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything more than this is from the evil one.^o

GO THE SECOND MILE

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, **An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth**.^{l,p} ³⁹But

^a 5:18 Or not one iota; iota is the smallest letter of the Gk alphabet. ^b 5:21 Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17 ^c 5:22 Other mss add without a cause

^d 5:22 Lit Whoever says ‘Raca’; an Aramaic term of abuse that puts someone down, insulting one’s intelligence ^e 5:22 Lit Sanhedrin

^f 5:22 Lit the gehenna of fire ^g 5:25 Other mss read judge will hand you over to ^h 5:26 Lit quadrans, the smallest and least valuable Roman coin, worth 1/64 of a daily wage ⁱ 5:27 Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18 ^j 5:31 Dt 24:1 ^k 5:33 Lv 19:12; Nm 30:2; Dt 23:21 ^l 5:38 Ex 21:24; Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21

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.

5:23-24 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 adversary 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 oaths 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 an eye and a tooth for a 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 extend beyond what’s required and even apply to those who mis-

✠ 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 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 1400.

I tell you, don't resist^a an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.^{a 40} As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well.⁴¹ And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two.⁴² Give to the one

who asks you, and don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.^b

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor**^{b,c} and hate your enemy.^d But I tell you, love your enemies^c and pray for those who^b persecute you,^{d 45} so that you may be^e children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.^{e 46} For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary?^{f,g} Don't even the Gentiles^h do the same?⁴⁸ Be perfect,^g therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

HOW TO GIVE

6 "Be careful not to practice your righteousness^h in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father in heaven.² So whenever you give to the poor, don't sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be applauded by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.^{h 3} But when you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^{i,j}

HOW TO PRAY

⁵ "Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.^{i 6} But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^{j,k 7} When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since

^{a 5:39} Lk 6:29-30; Rm 12:17; 1Co 6:7; 1Pt 3:9

^{b 5:42} Dt 15:8; Lk 6:34

^{c 5:43} Lv 19:18; Dt 23:6;

Lk 10:29

^{d 5:44} Lk 6:27; 23:34; Ac

7:60; Rm 12:20; 1Co 4:12;

1Pt 2:23

^{e 5:45} Jb 25:3; Mt 5:9; Lk

6:35; Ac 14:17

^{f 5:47} Mt 5:37; Mk 6:51; Jn

10:10; Rm 3:1; 2Co 9:1

^{g 5:48} Gn 17:1; Lv 19:2;

Php 3:15; Col 4:12; Jms 1:4;

1Pt 1:15

^{h 6:1-2} Mt 23:5; Lk 6:24

^{i 6:4} Jr 17:10; Lk 14:14; Col

3:23-24; Heb 4:13

^{j 6:5} Mt 6:16; Mk 11:25; Lk

6:24; 18:11

^{k 6:6} 2Kg 4:33; Is 26:20;

Mt 6:18

^{a 5:39} Or don't set yourself against, or don't retaliate against ^{b 5:43} Lv 19:18 ^{c 5:44} Other mss add bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, ^{d 5:44} Other mss add mistreat you and ^{e 5:45} Or may become, or may show yourselves to be ^{f 5:47} Or doing that is superior; lit doing more ^{g 5:47} Other mss read tax collectors ^{h 6:1} Other mss read charitable giving ^{i 6:4} Other mss read will himself reward you openly ^{j 6:6} Other mss add openly

treat them. As Paul says, it means not repaying "evil for evil . . . but conquer[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 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 oxygen.

5:48 To be perfect as God is **perfect** does not mean to be sinless; rather, it means to love others—in the power of the Holy Spirit—by seeking their best interests as a reflection of God's character. Loving your neighbor doesn't require having warm and fuzzy feelings for him; it means seeking his well-being.

6:2-6 In 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).

^a 6:7 1Kg 18:26; Ec 5:2
^b 6:8 Mt 9:12; Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31; 9:11; 10:42; Ac 2:45
^c 6:9-13 Lk 11:1-13
^d 6:9 Lk 11:2; 1Co 7:14
^e 6:10 Ps 103:20; Mt 3:2; 4:17; 26:42; Lk 22:42; Ac 21:14
^f 6:11-12 Pr 30:8; Rm 4:4; Gl 5:3
^g 6:13 Mt 26:41; 1Co 10:13; 2Pt 2:9
^h Mt 5:37; Jn 17:15; 2Th 3:3; 2Tm 4:18
ⁱ 6:14 Mk 11:25; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13
^j 6:15-16 Is 58:5; Mt 18:35; Jms 2:13
^k 6:17 Ru 3:3; 2Sm 12:20; Dn 10:13
^l 6:19 Pr 23:4; Heb 13:5
^m 6:20 Mt 19:21; Lk 12:33; 18:22; 1Tm 6:19
ⁿ 6:23 Mt 4:16; 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; 27:45
^o 6:24 Lk 16:13; Gl 1:10; Jms 4:4
^p 6:25-33 Lk 12:22-31

they imagine they'll be heard for their many words.^a ⁸ Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.^b

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 "Therefore, you should pray like this:^c
 Our Father in heaven,
 your name be honored as holy.^d
¹⁰ Your kingdom come.
 Your will be done
 on earth as it is in heaven.^e
¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.^f
¹² And forgive us our debts,
 as we also have forgiven our debtors.^f
¹³ And do not bring us into^g temptation,^g
 but deliver us from the evil one.^h

¹⁴ "For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well.ⁱ ¹⁵ But if you don't forgive others,^o your Father will not forgive your offenses.

HOW TO FAST

¹⁶ "Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they make their faces unattractive^{e,j} so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,^k ¹⁸ so that

your fasting isn't obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^f

GOD AND POSSESSIONS

¹⁹ "Don't store up for yourselves treasures^g on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.^l ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,^m where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light within you is darkness, how deep is that darkness!ⁿ

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.^o

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 "Therefore I tell you:^p Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will

^a 6:11 Or our necessary bread, or our bread for tomorrow ^b 6:13 Or do not cause us to come into ^c 6:13 Or from evil; some later mss add For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. ^d 6:15 Other mss add their wrongdoing ^e 6:16 Or unrecognizable, or disfigured ^f 6:18 Other mss add openly ^g 6:19 Or valuables

6:9 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 **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 their 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, 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 to not 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 **money**. 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 your life** (6:25) sounds just as

✠ 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 the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for 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 1128.

^a 6:25 Lk 10:41; Php 4:6;
1Pt 5:7
^b 6:26 Jb 38:41; Ps 147:9;
Mt 10:29-31
^c 6:29-30 1Kg 10:4-7; Mt
8:26; 14:31; 16:8

^d 6:33 Mk 1:15; Ac 20:25
^e Mt 27:19; Lk 7:29;
23:41,47; Jn 5:30; 17:25;
Ac 3:14
^f 1Kg 3:13; Mt 19:28; Mk
10:29; Lk 18:29; 1Tm 4:8
^g 6:34 Mt 6:25; Lk 10:41;
Php 4:6; 1Pt 5:7
^h 7:1-5 Mk 4:24-25; Lk
6:37-42
ⁱ 7:2 Mk 4:24; Lk 6:38; Rm
2:1; 14:10; Jms 2:13

wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?^a ²⁶ Consider the birds of the sky. They don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they?^b ²⁷ Can any of you add one moment to his life span^c by worrying?²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don't labor or spin thread. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. ³⁰ If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won't he do much more for you — you of little faith?^c ³¹ So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will

we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God^{b,d} and his righteousness,^e and all these things will be provided for you.^f ³⁴ Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble^g of its own.

DO NOT JUDGE

7 "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged."^h ² For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use.ⁱ ³ Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but

^a 6:27 Or add a single cubit to his height ^b 6:33 Other mss omit of God

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 meal, and yet the **heavenly Father feeds them** (6:26). Flowers don't agonize over looking pretty, but **not even Solomon in all his splendor** 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 putting 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 Christians appeal to God's view and his righteous standards first. Do this, and **all these things will be provided for you.** Align yourself with his agenda, and your 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 cre-

ates 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 that 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 speck 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.

^a7:3 Lk 6:41; Jn 8:7-9
^b7:6 Pr 9:7-8; 23:9; Mt 15:26

^c7:7-11 Lk 11:9-13
^d7:7 Mt 18:22; Mk 11:24; Jn 14:13-14; 15:7; 16:24; Jms 1:5; 1Jn 3:22; 5:14

^e7:8 Pr 8:17; Is 55:6; Jr 29:12-13

^f7:11 Gn 6:5; 8:21

^g7:12 Mt 22:40; Lk 6:31; Rm 13:8; Gl 5:14

^h7:13-14 Lk 13:23-24

ⁱ7:13 Mt 26:8; Mk 14:4; Jn 17:12; Ac 8:20; Rm 9:22; Php 1:28

^j7:15 Mt 24:11,24; Mk 13:22; Lk 6:26; Ac 13:6; 2Pt 2:1

^kMt 9:36; 10:6,16; 12:11-12; 15:24; 18:12-13

^lMc 3:5; 2Tm 3:5

^mEzk 22:27; Jn 10:12; Ac 20:29

ⁿ7:16-21 Pr 11:30; Mt 12:33; Lk 6:43-44; Jn 4:36; Jms 3:12

^o7:16 Mt 13:7; Heb 6:8

^p7:19 Jr 11:19; Mt 3:10; Lk 3:9; 13:7; Jn 15:2; Jd 12

^q7:20 Mt 7:16; 12:33; Lk 6:44; Jms 3:12

^r7:21 Mt 3:2; 18:3; Mk 9:43

^sPs 143:10; Pr 16:9; Mt 12:50; Gl 1:4; Eph 1:9; 1Jn 2:17

^tHs 8:2; Mt 25:11; Lk 6:46; Rm 2:13; Jms 1:22

^u7:22 Mk 3:15; Rv 9:20; 18:2

^vNm 24:4; Mt 10:15; Lk 13:25; Jn 11:51; 1Co 13:2

Questions & Answers

Q Why does Jesus's command to "seek first the kingdom of God" (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 1134.

don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye?^a Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother's eye. ⁶Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs,^b or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

7:6 There are numerous places in the Bible in which God instructs his people to make judgment calls. Here is one of them: **Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss 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 Within this verse is the Golden Rule. In short, it means to love others: to practice the "one anothers" of Scripture (e.g., John 15:12; Gal 6:2; Eph 4:32; 1 Thess 5:11).

7:13-14 The **broad** road 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

ASK, SEARCH, KNOCK

⁷"Ask,^c and it will be given to you.^d Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door^e will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds,^e and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If you then, who are evil,^f know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him. ¹²Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.^g

ENTERING THE KINGDOM

¹³"Enter through the narrow gate.^h For the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction,ⁱ and there are many who go through it. ¹⁴How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

¹⁵"Be on your guard against false prophets^j who come to you in sheep's^k clothing^l but inwardly are ravaging wolves.^m ¹⁶You'll recognize them by their fruit.ⁿ Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles?^o ¹⁷In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.^p ²⁰So you'll recognize them by their fruit.^q

²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven,^r but only the one who does the will^s of my Father in heaven.^t ²²On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons^u in your name, and do many miracles in your name?'^v

^a7:7 Lit and it

(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, **Depart from me, you lawbreakers!** (7:23). False teachers will experience his judgment.

²³ Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. **Depart from me, you law-breakers!**' ^a ^b ^c

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS

²⁴ "Therefore,^b everyone who hears these words^c of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and pounded that house. Yet it didn't collapse, because its foundation was on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn't act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash."

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things,^d the crowds were astonished at his teaching,^e ²⁹ because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

A MAN CLEANSED

8 When he came down from the mountain, large crowds^f followed him. ² Right away^g a man with leprosy^c came up and knelt before him,^h saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

³ Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying, "I am willing; be made clean." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ Then Jesus told him, "See that you don't tell anyone;ⁱ but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."^j

A CENTURION'S FAITH

⁵ When he entered Capernaum,^k a centurion came to him, pleading with him,^l ⁶ "Lord,

my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible agony."

⁷ He said to him, "Am I to come and heal him?" ^d

⁸ "Lord," the centurion replied, "I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed."^g ⁹ For I too am a man under authority, having soldiers under my command.^e I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this!' and he does it."

¹⁰ Hearing this, Jesus was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith. ¹¹ I tell you that many will come from east and west to share the banquet^f with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."^m ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."ⁿ ¹³ Then Jesus told the centurion, "Go. As you have believed,^o let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that very moment.^o

HEALINGS AT CAPERNAUM

¹⁴ Jesus went into Peter's house^p and saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ So he touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and began to serve him. ¹⁶ When evening came, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed. He drove out the spirits^q with a word and healed all who were sick,^r ¹⁷ so that what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

He himself took our weaknesses and carried our diseases. ^{h,s}

^a 7:23 Ps 5:5; 6:8; Mt 25:12,41; Lk 13:25-27
^b 7:24-27 Lk 6:47-49; Jms 1:22-25
^c 7:24 Mt 12:36; Mk 4:14; Lk 6:47; 8:21; Jn 1:1; 2:22
^d 7:28 Mt 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1
^e Mt 13:54; 22:23; Mk 1:22; 6:2; 11:18; Lk 4:32; Jn 7:46
^f 8:1 Mt 5:1; Lk 3:7
^g 8:2-4 Mk 1:40-44; Lk 5:12-14
^h 8:2 Mt 9:18; 15:25; 18:26; 20:20; Jn 9:38; Ac 10:25
ⁱ 8:4 Mt 9:30; 17:9; Mk 5:43; 7:36; 8:30
^j Lv 14:3-4,10; Lk 5:14; 17:14
^k 8:5-13 Lk 7:1-10; Jn 4:46-54

^l 8:8 Ps 107:20; Lk 15:19,21
^m 8:11 Is 49:12; 59:19; Mk 1:11; Lk 13:29; Eph 3:6
ⁿ 8:12 Mt 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk 13:28
^o 8:13 Mt 9:22,29; Jn 4:53
^p 8:14-16 Mk 1:29-34; Lk 4:38-41
^q 8:16 Mk 3:15; 1Tim 4:1;
^r 1Jn 4:1
^s Mt 4:24; 8:33; Ac 19:12
^t 8:17 Is 53:4; Mt 1:22

^a 7:23 Lit *you who work lawlessness* ^b 7:23 Ps 6:8 ^c 8:2 Gk *lepros*; a term for various skin diseases, also in v. 3; see Lv 13-14 ^d 8:7 Or "I will come and heal him." ^e 8:9 Lit *under me* ^f 8:11 Lit *recline at the table* ^g 8:13 Or *that hour*; lit *very hour* ^h 8:17 Is 53:4

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.

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 Isa 53:5; Rev 21:4).

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

^a 8:18 Mt 14:22; Mk 4:35; Lk 8:22; Jn 6:15-17
^b 8:19-22 Lk 9:57-60
^c 8:20 Dn 7:14; Mt 9:6; 12:8; 13:41; Mk 8:31
^d 8:23-27 Mk 4:36-41; Lk 8:22-25; Jn 6:16-21
^e 8:23 Mt 10:1; 26:56; Mk 3:7; 16:20; Lk 6:13; Jn 12:16
^f 8:26 Ps 65:7; 89:9; 107:29; Mt 6:30; Lk 4:39
^g 8:27 Mk 1:27; Lk 5:9
^h 8:28-34 Mk 5:1-17; Lk 8:26-37
ⁱ 8:29 Jdg 11:12; 2Sm 16:10; Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34; Jn 2:4; Ac 8:7

18 When Jesus saw a large crowd^{a,d} around him, he gave the order to go to the other side of the sea. 19 A scribe approached him and said, ^b "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

20 Jesus told him, "Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man^c has no place to lay his head."

21 "Lord," another of his disciples said, "first let me go bury my father."

22 But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

WIND AND WAVES OBEY JESUS

^j 8:34 1Kg 17:18; Lk 5:8; Ac 16:39
^k 9:1 Mt 4:13; Mk 5:21
^l 9:2-8 Mk 2:3-12; Lk 5:18-26
^m 9:2 Mt 4:24; 8:10,13; 9:22; Lk 7:48; Jn 16:33
ⁿ 9:3 Mt 26:65; Jn 10:36
^o 9:4 Mt 12:25; Lk 6:8; 9:47; 11:17
^p 9:8 Mt 5:16; 15:31; Lk 7:16; 13:13; Jn 15:8; Ac 4:21
^q 9:9-17 Mk 2:14-22; Lk 5:27-38
^r 9:9 Mt 10:3; Mk 2:14; 3:18; Lk 6:15; Ac 1:13

23 As he got into the boat,^d his disciples^e followed him. 24 Suddenly, a violent storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves—but Jesus kept sleeping. 25 So the disciples came and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to die!"

26 He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea,^f and there was a great calm.

27 The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey^g him!"

DEMONS DRIVEN OUT BY JESUS

28 When he had come to the other side,^h to the region of the Gadarenes,ⁱ two demon-possessed men met him as they came out of the tombs. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. 29 Suddenly they shouted, "What do you have to do with us, ^c Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"^j

30 A long way off from them, a large herd of pigs was feeding. 31 "If you drive us out,"

the demons begged him, "send us into the herd of pigs."

32 "Go!" he told them. So when they had come out, they entered the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water. 33 Then the men who tended them fled. They went into the city and reported everything, especially what had happened to those who were demon-possessed. 34 At that, the whole town went out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.^j

THE SON OF MAN FORGIVES AND HEALS

9 So he got into a boat, crossed over, and came to his own town.^k 2 Just then^l some menⁿ brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, "Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven."^m

3 At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, "He's blaspheming!"ⁿ

4 Perceiving their thoughts,^o Jesus said, "Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts?² 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 told the paralytic, "Get up, take your stretcher, and go home."

7 So he got up and went home. 8 When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck^{f,g} and gave glory^p to God, who had given such authority to men.

THE CALL OF MATTHEW

9 As Jesus went on from there,^q he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the toll booth, and he said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him.^r

^a 8:18 Other mss read *saw large crowds*

^b 8:28 Other mss read *Gergesenes*

^c 8:29 Other mss add *Jesus*

^d 9:2 Lit *then they*

^e 9:4 Or *minds*

^f 9:8 Other mss read *amazed*

^g 9:8 Lit *afraid*

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?

8:27 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 Gentile herdsmen 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 town** 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.

¹⁰ While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples.^a ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"^b

¹² Now when he heard this, he said, "It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick."^c ¹³ Go and learn what this means: **I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**^d For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners."^e

A QUESTION ABOUT FASTING

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"^e

¹⁵ Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests^c be sad while the groom is with them? The time^d will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one patches an old garment with unshrunk cloth, because the patch pulls away from the garment and makes the tear worse. ¹⁷ And no one puts^e new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. No, they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

A GIRL RESTORED AND A WOMAN HEALED

¹⁸ As he was telling them these things,^f suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him, saying, "My daughter just died,^f but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."^g ¹⁹ So Jesus and his disciples got up and followed^h him.

²⁰ Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe,ⁱ ²¹ for she said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."^{g,j}

²² Jesus turned and saw her. "Have courage, daughter," he said. "Your faith has saved you."^{h,k} And the woman was made well from that moment.^l

²³ When Jesus came to the leader's house, he saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly.^l ²⁴ "Leave," he said, "because the girl is not dead but asleep."^m And they laughed at him. ²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up.ⁿ ²⁶ Then news of this spread throughout that whole area.^o

HEALING THE BLIND

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"^p

²⁸ When he entered the house, the blind men approached him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe^q that I can do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, "Let it be done for you according to your faith."³⁰ And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus warned them sternly, "Be sure that no one finds out."^r ³¹ But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that whole area.

DRIVING OUT A DEMON

³² Just as they were going out, a demon-possessed man who was unable to speak was brought to him.^s ³³ When the demon had been driven out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"

³⁴ But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons."^t

THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

³⁵ Jesus continued going around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their

^a 9:10 Mt 10:42; 28:19; Lk 14:26; Jn 8:31; 13:35; 15:8; Ac 6:1
^b 9:11 Mt 11:19; Lk 5:30; 15:2; Gl 2:15
^c 9:12 Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31
^d 9:13 Hs 6:6; Mc 6:6-8; Mt 12:7
^e 9:14 Mt 11:2; 14:12; 15:2; Lk 11:1; 18:12
^f 9:18-26 Mk 5:22-43; Lk 8:41-56
^g 9:18 Mt 8:2-3; Mk 5:23
^h 9:19 Lk 5:11; Jn 8:12
ⁱ 9:20 Lv 15:25; Nm 15:38; Dt 22:12; Mt 14:36; 23:5
^j 9:21 Mt 14:36; Mk 3:10; Lk 6:19

^k 9:22 Mt 15:28; Mk 10:52; Lk 7:50; 17:19; 18:42
^l 9:23 2Ch 35:25; Jr 9:17; 16:6; Ezk 24:17; Rv 18:22
^m 9:24 Jn 11:13; Ac 20:10
ⁿ 9:25 Mk 9:27; Ac 3:7; 9:40-41
^o 9:26 Mt 4:24; 9:31; 14:1; Mk 1:28; Lk 4:14
^p 9:27 Mt 1:1; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; Mk 10:47; Lk 18:38-39
^q 9:28 Mk 11:24; Jn 3:16; Ac 10:43; Rm 10:9; 1Pt 1:8-10
^r 9:29-30 Mt 8:4,13; 9:22; Mk 8:25; Jn 9:26
^s 9:32-34 Mt 12:22-24; Lk 11:14-15
^t 9:34 Mk 3:22; Jn 7:20

^a 9:13 Hs 6:6 ^b 9:13 Other mss add to repentance ^c 9:15 Lit the sons of the bridal chamber ^d 9:15 Lit days ^e 9:17 Lit And they do not put ^f 9:18 Lit daughter has now come to the end ^g 9:21 Or be saved ^h 9:22 Or has made you well ⁱ 9:22 Lit hour

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 tax collectors and sinners**. Tragically, many modern believers turn all of 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 mercy and not 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 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.

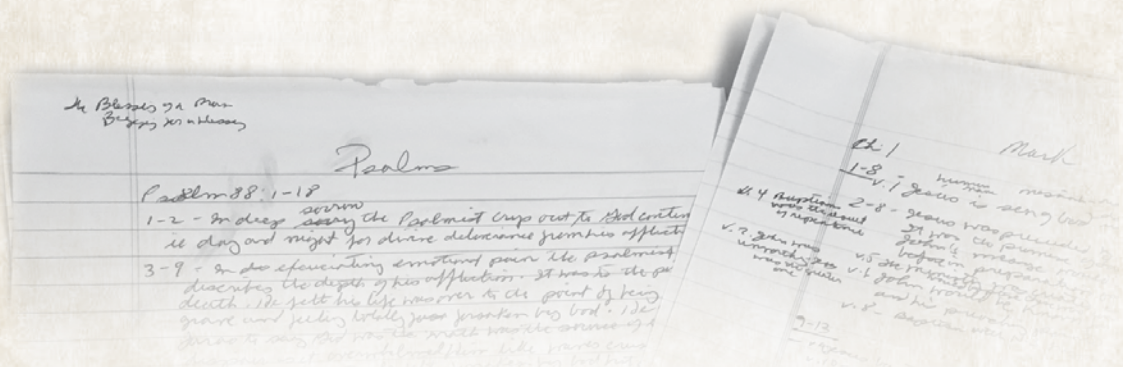
9:22 According to Leviticus 15:25-27, the woman's flow of blood would've made her and anything she touched ceremonially unclean.

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 "stump of Jesse," Isa 11:1), and he would bring healing (see Isa 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 had been mute** could speak. 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.



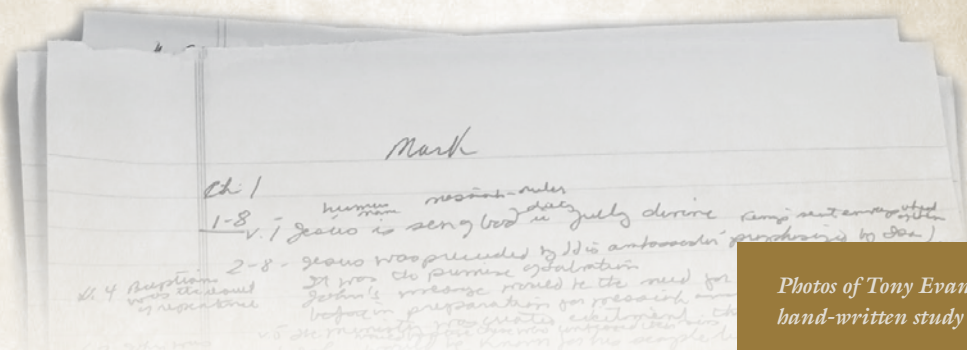
A NOTE FROM DR. TONY EVANS

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.