

Adultery

1. Adultery is out of the heart.

Matt. 15:19. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

2. No adulterers go to heaven.

1 Cor. 6:9–10. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

3. God will judge the adulterer.

Heb. 13:4. Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

4. Adultery can be avoided.

Prov. 4:23. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

Prov. 4:13–27. (*Stay far from the path of evil.*)

Prov. 6:27–28. (*Don't play with fire.*) Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared?

5. Shun adultery.

Prov. 6:20–35.

6. The adulteress' snare leads to misery.

Prov. 7:1–27.

7. The adulteress' snare is a deep pit.

Prov. 22:14. The mouth of an immoral woman is a deep pit; He who is abhorred by the Lord will fall there.

8. David fed the flame.

2 Sam. 11:2–3. Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

9. David was depressed before he confessed his sins.

Ps. 32:3–5.

10. Nathan called David to repent of his adultery.

2 Sam. 12:1–14. (*The prophet Nathan spoke to David in a parable after he had sinned with Bathsheba.*)

11. David confessed his adultery, and God graciously forgave him.

Ps. 32; Ps. 51. (*David pleaded for God's forgiveness and expressed his joy after being forgiven.*)

12. God forgives the sin of adultery and frees the sinner from it.

1 Cor. 6:11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

13. Looking on a woman lustfully is adultery; spiritual surgery is needed.

Matt. 5:27–30. “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

14. Beware of seductive women.

Prov. 23:26–28. My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways. For a harlot is a deep pit, And a seductress is a narrow well. She also lies in wait as for a victim, And increases the unfaithful among men.

15. Stolen water is sweet, but ...

Prov. 9:17–18. “Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of hell.

16. Keep the seventh commandment.

Exod. 20:14. “You shall not commit adultery.”

17. Anyone who marries a wrongfully divorced person commits adultery.

Matt. 5:31–32. “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”

18. Anyone who divorces his or her spouse for any reason other than adultery and marries another commits adultery.

Matt. 19:9. “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

Rom. 7:2–3. For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

Alcohol, Drug Abuse

1. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor. 6:15. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!

1 Cor. 6:19–20. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

2. Jesus warns against the abuse of alcohol.

Luke 21:34. "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly."

3. Wine is a mocker, beer a brawler.

Prov. 20:1. Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

4. Don't love wine.

Prov. 21:17. He who loves pleasure will be a poor man; He who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

5. Heavy drinking brings misery.

Prov. 23:29–35.

6. Consider the sad picture of a drunkard. (The Bible tells it like it is!)

Prov. 23:32–35.

7. God's wrath was upon Israel for its sin of drunkenness.

Isa. 28:1–4.

8. Isaiah gives us a vivid picture of a drunk losing his moral judgment.

Isa. 28:7–8. But they also have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine, They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filth; No place is clean.

9. Paul gives us a timely warning and instruction.

Eph. 5:15–18. See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.

10. Drunkenness breaks down morals.

Gen. 9:20–23. *(the example of Noah)*

Gen. 19:30–38. *(the example of Lot)*

11. No drunkard shall enter heaven.

1 Cor. 6:9–10. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

12. One can be saved from drunkenness and set free.

1 Cor. 6:11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

13. Don't associate with drunkards.

1 Cor. 5:11. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

14. Be wise! Don't join those who abuse alcohol.

Prov. 23:19–20. Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way. Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;

Anger

1. Anger is not in itself sinful.

Ps. 7:11. *(God is angry with the wicked.)*

1 Kings 11:9. *(God was angry with Solomon.)*

2 Kings 17:18. *(God was angry with Israel.)*

Mark 3:5. *(Jesus was angry with the Pharisees.)*

2. Be slow to become angry.

Prov. 14:17. A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated.

Prov. 14:29. He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

James 1:19–20. So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

3. Love covers a multitude of sins and overlooks many offenses.

Prov. 10:12. Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

Prov. 12:16. A fool's wrath is known at once, But a prudent man covers shame.

Prov. 17:9. He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates friends.

Prov. 19:11. The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.

1 Peter 4:8. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

4. Seek the way of love.

1 Cor. 13:4–5. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;

5. Cain's anger turned into hate and murder.

Gen. 4:3–8.

6. Hot words stir up strife.

Prov. 15:1. A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

7. A hot-tempered man creates dissension.

Prov. 15:18. A wrathful man stirs up strife, But he who is slow to anger allays contention.

8. Do not associate with a hot-tempered man.

Prov. 22:24–25. Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go, Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul.

9. Control yourself.

Prov. 25:28. Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.

Prov. 29:22. An angry man stirs up strife, And a furious man abounds in transgression.

Prov. 30:33. For as the churning of milk produces butter, And wringing the nose produces blood, So the forcing of wrath produces strife.

10. Fits of rage belong to your sinful nature, the way of sin.

Gal. 5:19–21.

11. Good news! Through the Spirit you can overcome the sin of a hot temper.

Gal. 5:22–25.

12. Handle anger in a godly way. Do not let the sun go down on your anger.

Eph. 4:26. "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

Assurance

1. Job had assurance.

Job 19:25–27. For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

2. The Spirit testifies with our spirit.

Rom. 8:16–17. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

3. We know that we live in him; we know and rely on the love God has for us.

1 John 4:13–16. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

4. You may know that you have eternal life.

1 John 5:13. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

5. Paul had assurance of eternal life.

2 Tim. 1:12. For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

6. Now we are the children of God, and we shall be like him.

1 John 3:1–3. Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

7. A Christian has a living hope through Christ's resurrection.

1 Peter 1:3–5. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Bitterness, Resentment, Hate

1. Put away bitterness.

Eph. 4:31. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

2. Quit biting and devouring each other.

Gal. 5:15. But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

3. Bitterness belongs to the sinful nature.

Gal. 5:19. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness.

4. Let no bitter root grow.

Heb. 12:15. Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

5. Joseph's brothers allowed bitterness to grow into hatred and murder in the heart.

Gen. 37.

6. Cain's anger turned to bitterness, hatred, and murder.

Gen. 4:3–8.

7. Hatred is forbidden.

Lev. 19:17. 'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.'

8. One who hates lives in darkness.

1 John 2:9–11. He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

9. The way of a malicious man is deceitful.

Prov. 26:24–26. He who hates, disguises it with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself; When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart; Though his hatred is covered by deceit, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

10. Hatred is murder.

1 John 3:11–20.

1 John 3:15. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Blame Shifting

1. Adam and Eve tried to shift blame.

Gen. 3:12–13. Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

2. Some try to blame God.

Prov. 19:3. The foolishness of a man twists his way, And his heart frets against the Lord.

3. Do not judge others while you fail to acknowledge your own sin.

Matt. 7:1–5. “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”



Change

1. A true Christian can change, for God makes it possible through a spiritual renewal.

2 Cor. 5:17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Ezek. 36:25–27. “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”

2. Believers are children of God, born again by the Spirit of God.

John 1:13 ... Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Titus 3:4–6. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

3. Empowered by Christ, the vine, we can and must bear much fruit.

John 15:1–5. “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

4. God will enable you to change and you must.

Phil. 2:12–13. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

5. God calls you to put off old sinful ways and to put on new and godly ways.

Eph. 4:17–32. (*Do not live as unbelievers do, but live as children of light.*)

Eph. 4:22–24. That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

6. Paul gives us specific instructions on what must be done.

Eph. 5:1–21.

7. The Bible gives us rules for holy living.

Col. 3:1–17.

8. Put to death the misdeeds of the body.

Col. 3:5. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

9. Live by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 8:1–14.

Rom. 8:13–14. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

10. Train yourself toward godliness.

1 Tim. 4:7. But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.

11. Keep working at change; forget the things of the past and press on.

Phil. 3:12–14. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

12. Put much effort into living a godly life.

2 Peter 3:14. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

13. Use the whole armor of God.

Eph. 6:10–17.

Children

1. Children belong first to God and are his gift to us.

Ps. 127:3–5.

Ps. 127:3. Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward.

2. Children of believers belong to God and are in his covenant.

Gen. 17:7. “And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.”

Acts 2:39. “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

3. God delights in the praise and worship of children.

Ps. 8:2. Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

4. Jesus accepted the praise of children.

Matt. 21:15–16. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes. Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?’”

5. Jesus loves little children; of such is God's kingdom.

Matt. 19:13–15. Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.

6. David was comforted by the knowledge that his infant son went to heaven when he died, and that he would see him there.

2 Sam. 12:18–23.

2 Sam. 12:23. “But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”

Church, Community

1. The church is one.

Eph. 4:3–6. ... endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

2. The church is one body with many functions; each member has a purpose.

Rom. 12:4–8. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

3. Together, Christians constitute God's household, in which he lives by his Spirit.

Eph. 2:19–22. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

4. Keep the unity of believers; don't follow men, but Christ.

1 Cor. 1:10–17.

1 Cor. 1:11–13. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

5. Gifts of the Spirit differ. Each member must use his or her gifts to serve others.

Eph. 4:11–13. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

1 Cor. 12:1–11.

6. Each member of the body is necessary. We need one another.

1 Cor. 12:12–31.

7. Christ is the head of the church, his body.

Eph. 1:20–23.

Eph. 1:22–23. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Eph. 5:23. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

8. Christ loves the church.

Eph. 5:25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.

9. Attend worship services faithfully.

Heb. 10:25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

10. The psalmist longed for the house of God.

Ps. 84.

11. The meaning of the communion of the saints is beautifully taught in Paul's letter to Philemon.

The book of Philemon. (Paul writes the letter to his "dear friend and fellow worker" on behalf of Onesimus, urging Philemon to receive him back as a "dear brother.")

Phm. 10–12. I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart.

Comfort

1. The Lord is our shepherd, always leading us in the best way and protecting us.

Ps. 23.

2. As an eagle stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, so God cares for his own.

Deut. 32:10–12. “He found him in a desert land And in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings, So the Lord alone led him, And there was no foreign god with him.”

3. As a father cares for his children, so God cares for his own; his love is everlasting.

Ps. 103:8–18.

4. God always shelters those who put their trust in him.

Ps. 91:1–2. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.”

5. God knows us most intimately; he holds and guides us by his hand.

Ps. 139:1–12.

Ps. 139:1–3. O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways.

Ps. 139:9–10. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.

6. The wicked appear to prosper for a time, while the righteous suffer; but actually God is always leading us in the best way; he comforts us with his presence.

Ps. 73.

Ps. 73:23–24. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.

7. The sufferings of the present time are not worth comparing with the coming glory.

Rom. 8:18. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

8. God works all things together for our good.

Rom. 8:28. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

9. If God is for us, nothing can separate us from his love.

Rom. 8:31–39.

Rom. 8:31. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Rom. 8:38–39. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

10. Jesus, the good shepherd, died for his sheep; he knows, leads, and protects each one; he gives us eternal security.

John 10:11. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

John 10:14–15. “I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”

John 10:27–29. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”

11. God’s grace is sufficient for every need.

2 Cor. 9:8. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

12. Paul had a thorn in the flesh; God’s promise: My grace is sufficient for you.

2 Cor. 12:7–10.

2 Cor. 12:9. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Communication, Gossip, Lying

1. The psalmist has given us a model prayer for good speech.

Ps. 19:14. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

2. Commit yourself to speaking only what is right and true.

Prov. 8:6–8. Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, And from the opening of my lips will come right things; For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse is in them.

3. Do not speak harshly.

Eph. 4:29. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

4. Avoid harsh words.

Prov. 15:1. A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

5. Be quick to listen, slow to speak.

James 1:19. So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

6. Listen before you speak.

Prov. 18:13. He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

7. God forbids us to lie; he wants us to speak the truth.

Exod. 20:16. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Eph. 4:25. Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.”

8. The Lord detests lying.

Prov. 12:22. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

9. All lying is of the devil, the father of all lies.

John 8:44. “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”

10. Lying will be punished.

Prov. 19:9. A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies shall perish.

11. Do not hurt your neighbor by gossip or careless talk; control your tongue.

Prov. 11:11–13. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked. He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace. A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

Prov. 12:18. There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health.

Prov. 17:27–28. He who has knowledge spares his words, And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.

Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; When he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.

Prov. 29:19. A servant will not be corrected by mere words; For though he understands, he will not respond.

Prov. 21:23. Whoever guards his mouth and tongue Keeps his soul from troubles.

12. Tame the tongue; it can be very destructive.

James 3:1–12.

13. We must help stop gossip and strife.

Prov. 26:20. Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.

14. Be careful. Don't speak rashly.

Prov. 13:3. He who guards his mouth preserves his life, But he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

Conscience

1. Keep a clear conscience.

1 Peter 3:15–16. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

2. Keep a clear conscience before God and men.

Acts 24:16. “This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.”

3. Hold to the truths of the faith.

1 Tim. 3:9. Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

4. A conscience can be seared.

1 Tim. 4:2. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.

5. You can have a clear conscience and rest in the heart.

Prov. 3:21–26. My son, let them not depart from your eyes—Keep sound wisdom and discretion; So they will be life to your soul And grace to your neck. Then you will walk safely in your way, And your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet. Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes; For the Lord will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

6. Christ will give you a clear conscience.

Heb. 9:14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

7. A guilty conscience can be cleansed.

Heb. 10:22. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.



Contentment, Coveting

1. Godliness with contentment is great gain.

1 Tim. 6:6. Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

2. Learn contentment, for love of money brings misery.

1 Tim. 6:7–10. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

3. Keep free from love of money and be content.

Heb. 13:5. Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”[Deut. 31:6].

4. Paul learned contentment even in the most difficult circumstances of life.

Phil. 4:11–13. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

5. Contentment promotes peace.

Prov. 17:1. Better is a dry morsel with quietness, Than a house full of feasting with strife.

6. Life does not consist of what one possesses.

Luke 12:15. And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

7. The parable of the rich fool teaches that life is more than material riches.

Luke 12:16–21. *(The rich fool stored up things for himself but was not rich toward God, so his life was demanded of him.)*

8. Do not allow the deceitfulness of wealth to crowd out the word.

Mark 4:1–20. *(the parable of the sower)*

Mark 4:7, 18–20. “And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

9. Put covetousness to death.

Col. 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

10. Do not lay up earthly treasures, but heavenly treasures.

Matt. 6:19–21. “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

11. You can’t serve two masters at one time.

Matt. 6:24. “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

12. Seek first God’s kingdom.

Matt. 6:33. “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

13. Don’t seek status, as the disciples did.

Luke 9:46–48. Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, “Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.”

14. It’s better to have a simple lifestyle than to have wealth with a lot of conflict in the home.

Prov. 15:16–17. Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, Than great treasure with trouble. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred.

Death, Eternal Life

1. You can face death without fear.

Ps. 23:4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

2. The believer will dwell in God's house forever.

Ps. 23:6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

3. To live is Christ; to die is gain.

Phil. 1:21. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

4. Paul wanted both to remain here, and to go home to be with the Lord, which is far better.

Phil. 1:22–26.

Phil. 1:23. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

5. The death of the Lord's saints is precious.

Ps. 116:15. Precious in the sight of the Lord Is the death of His saints.

6. Those who die in the Lord are blessed.

Rev. 14:13. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

7. You can have comfort concerning those who have died and are asleep in Jesus.

1 Thess. 4:13–18.

8. Believers who have died are absent from the body, but at home with the Lord.

2 Cor. 5:1–8. (*our heavenly dwellings*)

2 Cor. 5:6–8. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

9. In life and death we are the Lord's.

Rom. 14:8. For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

10. Believers go to the Father's house to be with him.

John 14:1–4. "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."

11. Jesus comforted Mary and Martha after Lazarus died. He is the resurrection and the life.

John 11:17–26.

John 11:23–26. Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

12. The perishable will put on the imperishable; death will be swallowed up in victory.

1 Cor. 15:50–57. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

13. Believers are co-heirs with Christ.

Rom. 8:16–17. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

14. Nothing—not even death—can separate us from the love of God.

Decision-Making

1. Joshua called the Israelites to make a decision.

Josh. 24:14–27.

Josh. 24:14–15. “Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

2. Elijah called God’s people to stop wavering.

1 Kings 18:16–39.

1 Kings 18:21. And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

3. Today, if you hear his voice, don’t harden your hearts (a warning against unbelief and rebellion).

Heb. 3:7–11. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.’ So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”

4. Moses’ decision is a good example to follow.

Heb. 11:24–26. By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

5. Make a full commitment.

Rom. 12:1–2. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Depression

1. Cain's depression was due to guilt.

Gen. 4:6–7. So the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.”

2. David was very depressed until he confessed his sin of adultery.

Ps. 32:3–4. When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah

3. The way out of depression caused by guilt is confession and seeking God's forgiveness.

Ps. 32:1–2, 5.

4. Put your hope in God when you are downcast.

Ps. 42.

Ps. 42:5–6. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance. O my God, my soul is cast down within me; Therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, And from the heights of Hermon, From the Hill Mizar.

5. Words of comfort were given to the faithful of Israel as they became depressed while in Babylon.

They were called to put their faith into action in their dark hour.

Isa. 40.

6. We may experience some tough situations, but we can avoid deep depression.

2 Cor. 4:8–9. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.

2 Cor. 4:16–18. Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

7. Think of what Paul went through, without getting depressed, sustained by God's grace.

2 Cor. 11:23–28. Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

Example, Personal Witness

1. Be a godly example for others to follow.

1 Tim. 4:12. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

2. Pastors and elders are to be good examples for the flock.

1 Peter 5:2–4. Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

3. The apostle Paul set a godly example to teach others how a Christian ought to live.

1 Cor. 4:15–16. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

1 Cor. 11:1. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

2 Thess. 3:7–8. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.

4. Paul taught new Christians at Thessalonica by his godly example and so they soon became good examples for others.

1 Thess. 1:5–7. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

5. Jesus warns us never to set a bad example and cause others to sin.

Matt. 5:19. "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Matt. 18:6. "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Luke 17:1–3. Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him."

6. Don't ever put a stumbling block in another person's way.

Rom. 14:13. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.

7. One must be ready to give up that which is in itself indifferent rather than to cause another to sin.

Rom. 14:1–21.

Rom. 14:19–21. Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

1 Cor. 8:1–13. *(Paul deals with the matter of eating food sacrificed to idols.)*

1 Cor. 8:9–13. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Fear

1. Believers need not be slaves to fear.

Rom. 8:15. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”

2 Tim. 1:7. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2. You need not be afraid if God is your helper.

Heb. 13:5–6. Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” [Deut. 31:6; Ps. 118:6–7].

3. The Lord is the believer’s light; he need not fear.

Ps. 27:1. The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

4. Trust in God casts out fear.

Ps. 56:10–11. In God (I will praise His word), In the Lord (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

5. Do not fear those who can kill the body.

Matt. 10:28. “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

6. Don’t be afraid; God cares for sparrows, and he will surely care for you.

Matt. 10:29–30. “Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

7. Perfect love drives out fear.

1 John 4:18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.



Forgiving Others

1. We must forgive our debtors.

Matt. 6:12. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

2. Forgiving others is an absolute necessity.

Matt. 6:14–15. “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

3. Jesus says we must forgive often.

Matt. 18:21–22. Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.”

Luke 17:3–4. “Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

4. The parable of the unmerciful servant shows how sinful it is not to forgive; God sends judgment on this sin.

Matt. 18:23–25.

5. Put away bitterness and anger; forgive as God forgives.

Eph. 4:31–32. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

6. Be imitators of God.

Eph. 5:1–2. Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

7. The father of the prodigal son forgave him and accepted him as completely as if he had not sinned. This father represents God. Thus Jesus reveals how God treats repentant sinners.

Luke 15:20–24.

8. Jesus commands us to forgive others.

Mark 11:25. “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.”

9. Love keeps no record of wrongs.

1 Cor. 13:5 ... does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil.

10. Love covers (overlooks) a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”

11. Restore with gentleness one who has fallen into sin.

Gal. 6:1. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

12. Paul tells us we must forgive and restore one who has sinned against us.

2 Cor. 2:5–11.

13. Forgive a repentant sinner and affirm your love.

2 Cor. 2:7–8. So that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

14. When we forgive others, we outwit Satan.

2 Cor. 2:10–11. Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

15. Joseph forgave his brothers for selling him into slavery and treated them kindly.

Gen. 45.

Gen. 45:4–5. And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. “But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.”

Friendships

1. Bad company corrupts good morals.

1 Cor. 15:33. Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

2. Friends affect us for better or for worse.

Prov. 13:20. He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

3. A true friend favors us by a kind rebuke when it is needed.

Prov. 28:23. He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward Than he who flatters with the tongue.

4. Stay away from a foolish man.

Prov. 14:7. Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.

5. Don't make friends with a hot-tempered man.

Prov. 22:24. Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go.

6. A true friend is one who may hurt you at times for your good.

Prov. 27:6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

7. A godly friend can be of great help.

Prov. 27:9. Ointment and perfume delight the heart, And the sweetness of a man's friend gives delight by hearty counsel.

8. Jonathan and David had an ideal friendship.

1 Sam. 20.

1 Sam. 20:17. Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

1 Sam. 23:16. Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God.

9. Friendship with the world is hatred toward God.

James 4:4. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15–17. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Giving

1. Jesus heartily approved of the widow's small gift.

Luke 21:1–4. And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

2. The Lord wants us to give generously and cheerfully.

2 Cor. 8:1–9. *(the example of the Macedonian Christians)*

2 Cor. 8:1–5. Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

2 Cor. 8:11–12. But now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have. For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.

2 Cor. 9:6–7. But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

3. Those who are rich must give accordingly.

1 Tim. 6:17–19. Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

4. Each Christian must give as the Lord has blessed.

1 Cor. 16:1–2. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

5. Do not rob God of his tithes and offerings.

Mal. 3:7–10. "Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," Says the Lord of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?' Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it."

6. Seek first the kingdom of God.

Matt. 6:33. "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

7. Don't give to be seen of men.

Matt. 6:1–4. "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."

8. God requires us to be merciful and give to the poor.

Prov. 14:21. He who despises his neighbor sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.

Prov. 19:17. He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given.

Prov. 22:9. He who has a generous eye will be blessed, For he gives of his bread to the poor.

Matt. 5:7. Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

Gal. 6:9–10. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

9. To give to God's children is to give to Christ.

Matt. 24:34–46.

Matt. 25:35, 40. " 'For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' "

10. Be merciful and do good even to your enemies. Follow God's example.

Luke 6:27–36.

Luke 6:27–28. "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you."

11. Mere talk is not enough.

1 John 3:16–18. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

12. We see a good example in giving as King David, the leaders of Israel, and others gave willingly and liberally for the building of the house of God.

1 Chron. 29:1–9.

1 Chron. 29:3. *(David sets an example.)* "Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver:"

1 Chron. 29:6. Then the leaders of the fathers' houses, leaders of the tribes of Israel, the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the officers over the king's work, offered willingly.

1 Chron. 29:9. Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the Lord; and King David also rejoiced greatly.

13. A generous giver will be blessed, but one who fails to give will suffer for it.

Prov. 11:24–25. There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.

14. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Acts 20:35. "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

15. Put first things first. Don't put off giving until you have what you want.

Hag. 1.

Hag. 1:2–4. "Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: 'This people says, "The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." ' " Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?"

Homosexuality

1. God condemned Sodom and Gomorrah for their homosexuality. It is sin.

Gen. 18:20–21. And the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.”

2. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed on account of their unrepentant homosexuality.

Gen. 19.

Gen. 19:4–5. Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.”

Gen. 19:24–25. Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

3. The example of Sodom and Gomorrah is given as a warning for people of all ages. God holds homosexuals fully accountable for their sin.

2 Peter 2:4–10.

2 Peter 2:6–10. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.

Jude 6–7. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

4. God’s wrath is revealed against all of the godlessness and wickedness of men—including homosexuality.

Rom. 1:18–32.

5. Paul describes homosexuality as a wicked perversion of God’s gift.

Rom. 1:26–27. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

6. The wicked—including homosexuals—will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Cor. 6:9–10. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

7. There is hope for homosexuals—God forgives and cleanses persons of this sin.

1 Cor. 6:11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Hope

1. God has solutions to our problems.

1 Cor. 10:13. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

2. God's grace is sufficient for every need.

2 Cor. 9:8. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

3. God is able to do more than we ask or imagine.

Eph. 3:20. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

4. God is always faithful.

Lam. 3:32. Though He causes grief, Yet He will show compassion According to the multitude of His mercies.

5. Hope is an anchor for the soul.

Heb. 6:19–20. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

6. Put your hope in God.

Ps. 42.

Ps. 42:5. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.

7. Put your hope in a faithful and almighty God.

Ps. 146:3–10.

Ps. 146:5–6. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, Whose hope is in the Lord his God, Who made heaven and earth, The sea, and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever.

8. Hope produces endurance and perseverance.

1 Thess. 1:3. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father.

9. Believers have a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Imitating Jesus

1. Every Christian is predestined and called to become Christ-like.

Rom. 8:29–30. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

2. Christians are renewed in the image of God and are being transformed more and more into the likeness of Christ.

2 Cor. 3:18. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Col. 3:9–10. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.

Eph. 4:22–24. That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

3. We must imitate Jesus; we must walk as he walked.

1 John 2:6. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

4. Jesus calls us to become more like he is by imitating him.

John 13:2–11. (*Jesus purposely modeled for his disciples as he washed their feet.*)

John 13:12–15. So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”

5. Jesus tells us to imitate him in loving one another, so that we may become more Christ-like.

John 13:34–35. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 15:12. “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

Matt. 16:24. Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

6. Paul instructs us to imitate Jesus in order to be a blessing to others.

Rom. 15:1–3. We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

Eph. 5:1–2. Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

7. Christians are to have a humble, self-sacrificing attitude. In this we must imitate Jesus.

Phil. 2:3–8. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

1 John 3:16–18. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

8. When someone wrongs us, we must imitate Jesus and not retaliate or get revenge in any way. He set an example for us to follow.

1 Peter 2:18–23.

1 Peter 2:20–21. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

9. Paul imitated Jesus so that he could be a good example for other Christians.

1 Cor. 11:1. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

10. Thessalonian Christians soon became good models for others, partly by imitating Jesus and his disciples.

1 Thess. 1:6–7. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

11. Christ-like obedience is the way to a Christ-like enjoyment of divine love, and the way to have your joy made complete.

John 15:9–11. “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”

12. The hope (certainty) of one day seeing Jesus face to face and being perfectly conformed to his image should motivate us to seek to be pure, even as he is pure.

1 John 3:2–3. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

13. The risen Savior lives to God. We who have died and risen with Christ must do the same.

Rom. 6:10–14.

Rom. 6:10–12. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

Loving and Serving Others

1. Love one another in response to God's love for us.

1 John 4:9–21.

1 John 4:9–11. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:21. And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

2. Love one another deeply.

1 Peter 1:22. Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.

1 Peter 4:8. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”

3. Genuine love is serving others.

1 Peter 4:9–10. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

4. Love is absolutely essential; one is nothing without it.

1 Cor. 13:1–3.

5. Paul describes what love really is.

1 Cor. 13:4–7. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

6. To love is to be devoted to one another.

Rom. 12:9–10. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

7. By washing the disciples' feet, Jesus modeled for us, showing us how we must love one another.

John 13:2–17.

John 13:14–15. “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”

8. Jesus commands us to love others in the manner in which he loved us, to imitate him.

John 13:34. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”

9. Don't be self-centered, but look out for others; in this imitate Jesus.

Phil. 2:3–5. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

10. Jesus gave his all for us.

Phil. 2:6–8.

11. Do not seek honor and prestige but, like Jesus, be ready to serve others.

Matt. 20:20–28.

Matt. 20:26–28. “Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

12. Attending to the needs of others is doing it for Christ.

Matt. 25:34–40.

Matt. 25:35–36. ‘For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

Matt. 25:40. “And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”

13. Don't become weary in doing good.

Gal. 6:9. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

14. Do good to all, especially to members of God's family.

Gal. 6:10. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

15. Follow the golden rule.

Matt. 7:12. “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

16. Don't be self-centered, but please others.

Rom. 15:1–2. We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.

17. Imitate Jesus.

Rom. 15:3. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

18. Devote yourself to doing good.

Titus 3:14. And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

19. You can find your life by doing good.

Matt. 10:39. “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”

20. Love your enemies and those who persecute you.

Matt. 5:43–48. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

Rom. 12:20–21. Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

21. As members of Christ's body, we all need one another; each member must use his or her gifts to serve others.

1 Cor. 12:1–31.

1 Cor. 12:4–7. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

1 Peter. 4:10–11. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

22. True freedom is to serve one another in love.

Gal. 5:13–15. For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

1 Thess. 4:9–11. But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.

Loving God

1. The believer responds to God's love and favor.

Deut. 6:4–7. “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

2. Jesus calls us to love God above all else. He summarizes the Law as a matter of love.

Matt. 22:37–39. Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

3. Christ's love for us must compel us to love and serve him.

2 Cor. 5:14–15. For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

4. Hold fast to the Lord and out of love keep his commandments.

Josh. 22:5. “But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

5. To love Jesus is to obey his teaching.

John 14:23–24. Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.”

6. Solomon tells us to respond to God's favor by serving him from the heart.

1 Kings 8:56–61.

1 Kings 8:61. “Let your heart therefore be loyal to the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day.”

7. David's charge to his son Solomon, to serve God with wholehearted devotion, is good for all of us.

1 Chron. 28:9. “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.”

8. Motivated by love, reject partying and all sinful pleasures. Instead, put on Christ.

Rom. 13:13–14. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

9. God's love for us should move us to strive for purity.

2 Cor. 7:1. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Lust, Desires

1. Eve's sin began with lusting.

Gen. 3:6. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

2. Don't covet.

Exod. 20:17. "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

3. Don't think about how to gratify the sinful nature.

Rom. 13:14. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

4. Say no to ungodly passions.

Titus 2:11–12. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.

5. Those who fulfill evil desires are objects of God's wrath.

Eph. 2:3. Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

6. Christ came to save us from lust and evil desires.

Eph. 2:4–5. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).

7. Don't conform to evil desires, but be holy.

1 Peter 1:14–16. As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 2:11. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

8. Live by the Spirit to overcome the lusts of the flesh.

Gal. 5:16. I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

9. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires.

Rom. 8:5–8. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Marriage

1. Marriage was instituted and designed by God.

Gen. 2:18–25.

2. At the heart of marriage is companionship and intimacy, which both husband and wife must promote.

Gen. 2:18, 24. And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

3. The relationship between husband and wife is similar to that between Christ and the church.

Eph. 5:23. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Eph. 5:31–32. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

4. The husband is the head of the wife and the home.

Eph. 5:23. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

5. Husbands must love their wives as Christ loved the church.

Eph. 5:25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.

6. Husbands must exercise headship in love.

Eph. 5:25–33.

Col. 3:19. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

7. Husbands must treat their wives with respect and as equal heirs of God’s gifts.

1 Peter 3:7. Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

8. The husband must manage his own home well; he is the manager.

1 Tim. 3:4. One who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence

9. The husband and father is primarily responsible for training the children.

Eph. 6:4. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

See also TRAINING CHILDREN.

10. God’s design for the wife is that of a helper suitable for man.

Gen. 2:18. And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

11. Both husband and wife must seek to reflect the relationship between Christ and his church.

Eph. 5:25, 32.

12. A wife is to submit to her husband, as the church submits to Christ.

Eph. 5:22–24. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Col. 3:18. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

1 Peter 3:1–2. Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.

13. A woman is not to exercise authority over a man.

1 Tim. 2:11–14. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

14. The Bible gives a description of a wife of noble character, who uses her gifts faithfully.

Prov. 31:10–31.

Prov. 31:10–11. Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain.

15. The fear of the Lord is more important than physical beauty.

Prov. 31:30. Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.

1 Peter 3:3–4. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

16. Husbands and wives must not fight and destroy each other.

Gal. 5:15. But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

17. Both husband and wife must quickly pursue peace when trouble arises.

Matt. 5:23–24. “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

Rom. 12:18. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

18. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

Matt. 12:25. But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.

19. Keep loving those who are wayward.

2 Sam. 18:33. (*David never lost his love for his son Absalom, who tried to kill him. When he learned of his death, he wept.*) Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: “O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!”

Obedience

1. Marriage was instituted and designed by God.

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Overcoming Evil

1. Seek to communicate privately with the person who has wronged you.

Matt. 18:15. “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.”

2. If you can't get the matter settled, take one or two with you.

Matt. 18:16. “But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ ”

3. If that doesn't work, tell it to the church; seek help there.

Matt. 18:17. “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”

4. Bless those who persecute you.

Rom. 12:14. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

5. Paul tells how to overcome evil and how to react when someone wrongs you.

Rom. 12:17–21.

6. Do not seek revenge.

Rom. 12:17. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

Rom. 12:19. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

Prov. 20:22. Do not say, “I will recompense evil”; Wait for the Lord, and He will save you.

7. Pursue peace with everyone.

Rom. 12:18. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

8. Overcome evil with good.

Rom. 12:21. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

9. Imitate Jesus by suffering wrongfully, if need be; in no way should you try to get even.

1 Peter 2:18–23.

1 Peter 2:21. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

1 Peter 3:8–9. Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

10. Love your enemies and do good to them.

Matt. 5:43–47.

Rom. 12:20. Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”

11. Turn the other cheek; be kind to the person who has wronged you.

Matt. 5:38–42.

1 Thess. 5:15. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

12. Do not testify against your neighbor, nor seek revenge.

Prov. 24:28–29. Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, For would you deceive with your lips? Do not say, “I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.”

13. Moses gives a practical example of what to do after someone has wronged you.

Exod. 23:4–5. “If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.”

Overcoming Sin

1. The truth sets us free.

John 8:32. “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

2. By nature we are all slaves to sin, but Jesus sets us free.

John 8:34–36. Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

3. A believer can overcome sin because he is a new creature.

2 Cor. 5:17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

4. God has given us all we need for life and godliness.

2 Peter 1:3. As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.

5. God requires you to work out your salvation in every area of life.

Phil. 2:12. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

6. God enables you to do so; you need not go it on your own.

Phil. 2:13. For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

7. God is able to make all grace abound to you, to enable you to overcome any specific sin.

2 Cor. 9:8. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

8. We are being transformed more and more into the likeness of Jesus.

2 Cor. 3:18. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

9. You must keep working at breaking sinful habits and developing new and godly ways.

Eph. 4:22–24. That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Col. 3:9–10. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.

10. Like a runner in a race, keep pressing on until you have gained the victory.

Phil. 3:12–14.

11. Don't keep dwelling on past failures; nor should you get discouraged and give up after you have failed. Hang in there!

Phil. 3:13–14. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

12. Get rid of everything which might hinder you. Persevere!

Heb. 12:1. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

13. One who is saved by grace must no longer serve sin. Keep working at overcoming it, using your body to serve only the Lord.

Rom. 6:11–22. (*Romans 6 contains much good instruction concerning how a Christian must and can overcome sin through the grace and power of God.*)

14. Don't be mastered by any sin.

1 Cor. 6:12. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

15. Christ, dwelling in us, enables us to overcome sin.

Gal. 2:20. “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

16. Drunkards, homosexuals, idolaters, and others caught up in wickedness can overcome sin by God's power and grace.

1 Cor. 6:11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

17. Paul, Titus, and others were set free from the power of sin. God gave them victory through the Holy Spirit.

Titus 3:3–7.

Titus 3:5–6. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

18. Use the infallible Word of God.

2 Tim. 3:16–17. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

19. A true Christian will not live in sin.

1 John 3:6. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

1 John 3:9. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

20. Jude mentions three things that are necessary to remain faithful to God.

Jude 20–21. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Peace, Rest

1. Christ gives peace and rest to all who come to him in faith.

Matt. 11:28–30. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

2. Peace comes through justification by faith in Jesus.

Rom. 5:1. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Jesus gives us peace.

John 14:27. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

4. Jesus was punished for our sins so that we may have peace.

Isa. 53:5. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

5. The penitent woman, who wept at Jesus’ feet, found peace through him.

Luke 7:36–50.

Luke 7:48. Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

Luke 7:50. Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

6. Humble trust in the Lord gives peace.

Ps. 4:8. I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

7. God promises peace to his people.

Ps. 85:8. I will hear what God the Lord will speak, For He will speak peace To His people and to His saints; But let them not turn back to folly.

8. Peace is the result of being controlled by the Spirit.

Rom. 8:6. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

9. Peace is the fruit of the Spirit.

Gal. 5:22–23. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

10. God gives peace to those whose minds are fixed on him.

Isa. 26:3–4. You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, For in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength.

11. The peace of God comes through praying in faith.

Phil. 4:6–7. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

12. Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

Isa. 9:6. For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

13. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace.

Isa. 57:2. He shall enter into peace; They shall rest in their beds, Each one walking in his uprightness.

14. God revives, heals, and gives peace to those who are contrite.

Isa. 57:14–21.

Isa. 57:19–20. “I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near,” Says the Lord, “And I will heal him.” But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

15. There is no peace for the wicked.

Isa. 57:21. “There is no peace,” Says my God, “for the wicked.”

16. False prophets will say, “peace, peace,” when there is no peace.

Jer. 8:11–12. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ When there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; In the time of their punishment They shall be cast down,” says the Lord.

Persecution

Note: Suffering persecution is being maltreated by others because you are a true disciple of Christ. It includes being falsely accused, unjustly condemned or imprisoned, being ridiculed, scorned, rejected, or injured. Persecution is not suffering for doing wrong toward others or for disobeying rightful authority.

1. Why do people persecute Christians, even when they are doing good?

John 15:18–21. “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.”

2 Tim. 3:10–14. But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.

1 John 3:1. Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

2. Cain persecuted his brother Abel because his own works were evil, while Abel’s were righteous.

Gen. 4:2–7.

1 John 3:12–14. Not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

3. Do good to and pray for those who persecute you. Love your enemies.

Matt. 5:38–42. “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”

Matt. 5:43–48.

Matt. 5:43–45. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Rom. 12:14. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

4. Imitate Stephen, who prayed for his persecutors as they were stoning him.

Acts 7:60. Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

5. In dealing with your persecutors be wise and innocent.

Matt. 10:16. “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”

6. If and when you are falsely accused, trust God to lead you.

Matt. 10:17–20. “But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.”

7. One need not get depressed due to severe persecution. Paul testifies to that.

2 Cor. 4:8–9. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.

2 Cor. 11:23–29. (*Paul tells of the many things he suffered at the hands of his persecutors.*)

8. Those who suffer for the sake of Christ will be blessed and should count it an honor to do so.

1 Peter 4:12–16. Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

9. Never be ashamed to be identified with those who are being persecuted. Rather, suffer with them, if need be.

2 Tim. 1:8–9. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

10. Do not be ashamed of the gospel. Testify boldly and be ready to suffer persecution.

2 Tim. 2:3. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2 Tim. 2:8–10. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11. Do not be unsettled or let the devil lead you away from the faith through persecution.

1 Thess. 3:2–4. And sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

12. Jesus says that some do fall away when they are persecuted.

Matt. 13:1–9. (*the parable of the sower*)

Matt. 13:18–23. (*Jesus interprets the parable.*)

Matt. 13:20–21. “But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.”

13. Some compromise the gospel to avoid persecution. Don’t be like that.

Gal. 6:12. As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

14. Believers can keep God’s Word when they are persecuted. David did.

Ps. 119:51. The proud have me in great derision, Yet I do not turn aside from Your law.

Ps. 119:61. The cords of the wicked have bound me, But I have not forgotten Your law.

Ps. 119:69. The proud have forged a lie against me, But I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart.

15. If persecutors threaten you, obey God rather than man, as did Peter and John.

Acts 4:18–20. And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”

Acts 5:17–32. (*The apostles went on preaching the gospel.*)

Acts 5:29. But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

Acts 5:41–42. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

16. Paul and Silas sang hymns while they were imprisoned.

Acts 16:25. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

17. Paul was willing to die for the sake of Christ.

Acts 21:12–13.

Prayer

1. The Lord's Prayer is our model.

Matt. 6:9–13.

2. Pray "Our Father."

Matt. 6:9. "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name."

3. Pray for daily needs.

Matt. 6:11. Give us this day our daily bread.

4. Pray daily for the forgiveness of sins.

Matt. 6:12. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

5. We can approach God boldly through Jesus, our high priest, who understands our needs.

Heb. 4:14–16. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

6. Cast all your anxiety on the Lord.

1 Peter 5:6–7. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

7. Pray about everything instead of worrying.

Phil. 4:6–7. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8. Pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.

1 Thess. 5:17–18. Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

9. Pray in faith.

James 1:6. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

10. In time of sickness, pray.

James 5:14–16.

11. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful.

James 5:16. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

12. Dare to pray for great things, as did Elijah.

James 5:17–18. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

13. God hears and answers prayer; he is near to his children.

Ps. 34:15–18. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.

14. Pray and work, using the means available to you.

Neh. 4:9. Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

15. In all your ways acknowledge the Lord.

Prov. 3:5–6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

16. Seek the Lord while he may be found.

Isa. 55:6. Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.

17. Thank God for his grace and mercy, praise him, and keep seeking his mercy.

Ps. 105:1–4.

18. Praise and thank God for answered prayer.

Ps. 66:13–20.

Ps. 66:17–20. I cried to Him with my mouth, And He was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear. But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy from me!

19. Pray for the forgiveness of sins.

Ps. 32; Ps. 51.

Jer. 29:12–13. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Matt. 11:28–30. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Rom. 10:13. For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

1 John 1:7–9.

20. Call on the Lord in time of trouble.

Ps. 50:15. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me."

21. Because Jesus was tried, as we are, he is able to help us.

Heb. 2:18. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Heb. 3:1. Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.

22. God answers intercessory prayer.

Acts 12:1–17. (Peter was unjustly imprisoned. The church met for prayer. Peter was soon set free.)

Acts 12:5. Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

Acts 12:12. So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

Providence of God

1. God sovereignly works all things according to his will.

Eph. 1:11. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.

2. God's sovereign rule extends over all things.

Ps. 103:19. The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.

Acts 17:28. "For in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' "

Rom. 11:36. For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

3. God cares for the birds and the flowers and certainly will, then, care for his children.

Matt. 6:25-34.

Matt. 6:26. "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

Matt. 6:30. "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

4. God controls all the forces of nature and provides for all his creatures, especially his children.

Ps. 104; Ps. 145; Ps. 147.

5. God used ravens to care for Elijah.

1 Kings 17:1-6.

1 Kings 17:4-5. "And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan.

6. By sending his people manna from heaven each day, God revealed his faithfulness, power, and love.

Exod. 16.

7. God is the potter, we are the clay. Be submissive to him.

Jer. 18:1-10.

Jer. 18:5-6. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the Lord. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!"

Isa. 45:9-13.

Isa. 45:9-11. "Woe to him who strives with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth! Shall the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' Or shall your handiwork say, 'He has no hands'? Woe to him who says to his father, 'What are you begetting?' Or to the woman, 'What have you brought forth?' " Thus says the Lord, The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: "Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; And concerning the work of My hands, you command Me.

8. God uses wicked rulers to fulfill his purposes for his children.

Isa. 45:12-13. "I have made the earth, And created man on it. I—My hands—stretched out the heavens, And all their host I have commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, And I will direct all his ways; He shall build My city And let My exiles go free, Not for price nor reward," Says the Lord of hosts.

Ezra 7:1-10. (God moved King Artaxerxes to give Ezra what he asked for, because "the hand of the Lord his God was on him.")

Ezra 7:6. This Ezra came up from Babylon; and he was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given. The king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.

Ezra 7:10. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

9. God blesses those who by faith take refuge in him.

Ruth. (The whole Book of Ruth reveals this very beautifully.)

Ruth 2:12. "The Lord repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."

Ruth 2:20. (After Ruth had gleaned in Boaz's field, Naomi praised him.) Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives."

10. Not one of God's promises goes unfulfilled.

Josh. 23:14. "Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed."

11. God will also carry out his threats.

Josh. 23:15-16. "Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the Lord your God promised you, so the Lord will bring upon you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the Lord your God has given you. When you have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them, then the anger of the Lord will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you."

12. God used Gideon's small band to defeat Israel's enemies.

Judges 7:1-25.

Judges 7:2-3. And the Lord said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' Now therefore, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead.' " And twenty-two thousand of the people returned, and ten thousand remained.

13. God promises to go with those to whom he gives a difficult task.

Deut. 31:7-8. Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

14. Joseph acknowledged God's providence in being sold into slavery.

Gen. 45:1-14. (Joseph made himself known to his brothers.)

Gen. 45:4-8. And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. "But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

Gen. 50:15-21. (Joseph reassured his brothers of his forgiveness toward them.)

Gen. 50:19-21. Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

15. The Lord brings grief at times, but he also shows mercy.

Lam. 3:31-33. For the Lord will not cast off forever. Though He causes grief, Yet He will show compassion According to the multitude of His mercies. For He does not afflict willingly, Nor grieve the children of men.

16. God decrees and brings both hardship and good times.

Lam. 3:37-42. Who is he who speaks and it comes to pass, When the Lord has not commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High That woe and well-being proceed? Why should a living man complain, A man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search out and examine our ways, And turn back to the Lord; Let us lift our hearts and hands To God in heaven. We have transgressed and rebelled; You have not pardoned.

17. God faithfully cares for us as a shepherd cares for his sheep.

Psalms 23.

18. When we please the Lord, he makes even our enemies to be at peace with us. Prov. 16:7.

Repentance

1. Jesus calls sinners to repentance.

Luke 5:27–32. (*The Pharisees objected that Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus explained exactly why he did this.*)

Luke 5:31–32. Jesus answered and said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

2. Jesus calls needy sinners to repentance that leads to salvation.

Matt. 4:17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

3. Repentance must be from the heart, genuine.

Mark 7:20–23. And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

Jer. 4:3–4. For thus says the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: “Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings.”

Joel 2:12–13. “Now, therefore,” says the Lord, “Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

4. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation.

2 Cor. 7:8–11. (*Motivated by love, Paul led the Corinthian Christians to a godly sorrow, which brought repentance and salvation.*)

2 Cor. 7:10–11. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

5. There is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.

Luke 15. (*Jesus taught this in the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son.*)

Luke 15:7. “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”

6. God calls sinners to seek him, to forsake their evil ways, and promises to forgive them.

Isa. 55:6–7. Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

7. God calls to repentance those who have set up idols in their hearts and practice evil.

Ezek. 14:1–11.

Ezek. 14:6. “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations.”’

8. When a wayward sinner repents and turns back to God, he will live.

Ezek. 18:21–22. “But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live.”

9. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

Ezek. 18:23. “Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord God, “and not that he should turn from his ways and live?”

10. The Lord urgently calls sinners to turn from their evil ways.

Ezek. 18:30–32. “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,” says the Lord God. “Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the Lord God. “Therefore turn and live!”

11. Jesus pronounced his judgment on those who refused to repent.

Matt. 11:20–24. Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

12. Out of his kindness, God keeps calling sinners to repentance.

Rom. 2:4. Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

13. If you stubbornly refuse to repent, God will punish you. If you do repent, he will forgive you and grant you eternal life.

Rom. 2:5–11.

Rom. 2:5–6. But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who “will render to each one according to his deeds”:

14. Calamity comes to those who do not give heed to God’s call to repentance.

Prov. 1:24–33.

Prov. 1:24–28. Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, Because you despised all my counsel, And would have none of my rebuke, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, When your terror comes like a storm, And your destruction comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. “Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.”

15. An adulterous woman repented and turned to Christ and was forgiven.

Luke 7:36–50.

Luke 7:37–38. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.

Luke 7:48–50. Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

16. God poured out his anger on unrepentant Israelites.

Isa. 42:23–25. Who among you will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come? Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the Lord, He against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in His ways, Nor were they obedient to His law. Therefore He has poured on him the fury of His anger And the strength of battle; It has set him on fire all around, Yet he did not know; And it burned him, Yet he did not take it to heart.

17. Return to the Lord and he will return to you.

Mal. 3:7. Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” Says the Lord of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’ ”

18. Those who mourn on account of their sin are blessed.

Matt. 5:4. Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

19. If and when God’s people turn from their wicked ways, he will forgive them.

2 Chron. 7:14. “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

Self-Centeredness

1. Love is not self-seeking.

1 Cor. 13:5. ... does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil.

2. Selfish ambition brings its bitter fruit.

James 3:14–16. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

3. Jesus condemned James and John for their self-seeking attitude, and he calls us all to humble service.

Matt. 20:20–28.

Matt. 20:26–28. “Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

4. Jesus calls us to self-denial.

Luke 9:23–25. Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?”

5. Don't be self-centered, but think of others.

1 Cor. 10:24. Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.

6. Follow Jesus' example by thinking of how to please others.

Rom. 15:2–3. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.”

Self-Control/ Self-Discipline

1. Lack of self-control brings misery.

Prov. 25:28. Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.

2. One who gives full vent to his anger acts like a fool; one who keeps himself under control is wise.

Prov. 29:11. A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

3. Every Christian can be self-controlled; it's a fruit of the Spirit.

Gal. 5:22–23. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

4. Self-discipline is a gift of God.

2 Tim. 1:7. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

5. We are commanded to be self-controlled.

1 Peter 1:13. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

6. One can and must develop self-control—put a lot of effort into it.

2 Peter 1:5–6. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness.

7. Both old and young alike must learn self-control.

Titus 2:2–6. That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded.

8. There is a time for everything. To be self-controlled is to do everything in its time.

Eccles. 3:1–8.

9. We can control our thinking.

2 Cor. 10:5. Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

10. Exercising self-control is walking in the light.

1 Thess. 5:4–8. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

11. Be self-controlled in your talking; control your tongue.

Prov. 20:19. He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

See also **COMMUNICATION**, for more on exercising self-control in talking.

12. Exercise self-control and say no to all ungodliness.

Titus 2:11–12. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.

13. Be motivated by Christ's redeeming love.

Titus 2:13–14 ... Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

14. Be neither wishy-washy, nor easily moved by others.

1 Cor. 15:58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Self-Pity

1. **Elijah yielded to self-pity for a time and fled to Horeb.**

1 Kings 19.

1 Kings 19:4–5. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat."

2. **God confronted Elijah.**

1 Kings 19:9. And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

3. **Listen to Elijah's self-pity.**

1 Kings 19:10. So he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

4. **God dealt with Elijah's problem.**

1 Kings 19:11–18.

5. **Asaph, the psalmist, also fell into the sin of self-pity for a time.**

Ps. 73.

6. **Listen to Asaph's self-pity.**

Ps. 73:13–14. Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.

7. **Asaph recovered from his self-pity.**

Ps. 73:15–28.

8. **The Lord directs us to a cure for self-pity.**

Ps. 37.

9. **Turn from self-pity.**

Prov. 15:13. A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

10. **Jonah became angry and was filled with self-pity, for which God rebuked him.**

Jonah 4:1–4.

Jonah 4:3–4. "Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!" Then the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

Sex Life

1. Sex is God-given.

Heb. 13:4. Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

2. Fulfill your duty to your spouse.

1 Cor. 7:3. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

3. Your body also belongs to your spouse.

1 Cor. 7:4. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

4. Refrain only by mutual consent; for refraining can lead to temptation.

1 Cor. 7:5. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

5. Find satisfaction in your spouse.

Prov. 5:18–20. Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.



Sexual Immorality

1. Looking on a woman lustfully is adulterous.

Matt. 5:27–28. “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

2. Spiritual surgery may be needed to avoid immorality.

Matt. 5:29–30. “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

3. Put to death sexual immorality.

Col. 3:5–7. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

4. You can overcome sins of sexual immorality.

Prov. 4:23. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

Prov. 4:24–27. (*practical instruction*)

5. Sexual sins come from the heart.

Matt. 15:19–20. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

6. Sexual immorality, including premarital sex (fornication), is described in detail as sin against God and your body, the temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor. 6:12–20.

7. The sexually immoral will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Cor. 6:9–10. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

8. God can cleanse you from the sin of sexual immorality.

1 Cor. 6:11. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

9. You can overcome sexual immorality through the Holy Spirit.

Gal. 5:16–18. I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

10. All immorality is forbidden. Walk as children of light. Be very careful how you live.

Eph. 5:3–17.

11. Jesus can set you free.

John 8:31–36.

12. Purify yourself out of reverence for God.

2 Cor. 7:1. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

13. Christians must no longer use parts of the body for sin; one can and must change.

Rom. 6:15–23.

14. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is a warning for all sexually immoral people.

2 Peter 2:4–10.

Jude 6–7. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

15. God wants all of us to avoid sexual immorality, including premarital sex, and to learn to control our own bodies.

1 Thess. 4:3–6. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.

Temptation

1. Looking on a woman lustfully is adulterous.

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Training Children

1. God requires parents to train their children in a God-centered way.

Deut. 6:6–7. “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

2. The father is primarily responsible for child training.

Eph. 6:4. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

3. The chief goal must be to train children in the fear of the Lord.

Eph. 6:4.

4. Do not exasperate them, be unfair to them, or abuse them.

Col. 3:21. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

5. The father must manage his family well and see that his children obey and respect him.

1 Tim. 3:4. One who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence

6. Love requires faithful discipline.

Prov. 13:24. He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

Prov. 22:15. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Prov. 23:13–14. Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.

Prov. 29:15. The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

Prov. 29:17. Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

7. Follow God's pattern, for he lovingly disciplines us, for our good.

Heb. 12:5–11.

8. The Lord condemned Eli for being an indulgent parent.

1 Sam. 3:1–18.

1 Sam. 3:13. “For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.”

9. Train a child in the way he should go.

Prov. 22:6. Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

10. Unless the Lord builds the house ...

Ps. 127:1–2. Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, To sit up late, To eat the bread of sorrows; For so He gives His beloved sleep.

11. Children are a heritage from the Lord.

Ps. 127:3. Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward.

Trust

1. Trust in the Lord.

Prov. 3:5–6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

2. Nothing is too hard for God.

Jer. 32:17, 26–27. ‘Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You. Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?”’

3. See the glory and power of God.

1 Chron. 29:10–13.

1 Chron. 29:11–12. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all.

4. The Lord is your shepherd.

Ps. 23.

5. The Lord is the believer’s light and his salvation.

Ps. 27. (See the entire psalm; notice especially vv. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14.)

Ps. 27:8. When You said, “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, Lord, I will seek.”

Ps. 27:13–14. I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!

6. The Lord is the believer’s refuge and strength.

Ps. 91:1–2. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.”

7. God’s purposes prevail.

Prov. 19:21. There are many plans in a man’s heart, Nevertheless the Lord’s counsel—that will stand.

8. A person’s steps are directed by God.

Prov. 20:24. A man’s steps are of the Lord; How then can a man understand his own way?

9. God sovereignly works out his plan.

Prov. 16:4, 7, 9, 33.

10. Lift your eyes to the hills.

Ps. 121. (See the entire psalm, which teaches so beautifully that the Lord is our helper, the one who watches over us and keeps us.)

11. Jesus calmed the storm and rebuked the disciples for their little faith.

Matt. 8:23–27.

12. Jesus rebuked Peter for his little faith.

Matt. 14:22–31. (Jesus walked on water; Peter tried and failed.)

Matt. 14:31. And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

13. God is faithful; his mercies are new every morning.

Lam. 3:22–24. Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!”

14. God is always faithful.

Lam. 3:32. Though He causes grief, Yet He will show compassion According to the multitude of His mercies.

15. Trust and delight in the Lord; wait patiently for him.

Ps. 37:1–7.

Ps. 37:3. Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

Ps. 37:4. Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Ps. 37:5–6. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

Ps. 37:7. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

16. Why are you downcast? Hope in God!

Ps. 42.

Ps. 42:5. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.

17. God is our refuge and strength.

Ps. 46.

18. God knows us intimately; he is always leading us.

Ps. 139:1–11.

Ps. 139:1–3. O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways.

19. God holds and guides us.

Ps. 73:23–24. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.

20. Be near to God, your refuge.

Ps. 73:28. But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, That I may declare all Your works.

21. God gives comfort to his people.

Isa. 40.

Isa. 40:11. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

Isa. 40:28–31. Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

22. Do not fear; you are the Lord’s child.

Isa. 43:1–3. But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place.”

23. Do not fear; the Lord is with you.

Isa. 41:10. ‘Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’

24. Call upon the Lord in the day of trouble.

Ps. 50:15. “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.”

25. Take refuge in the Lord.

Ps. 57:1. Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

26. Trust your heavenly Father to take care of you. Think of how God cares even for the birds and the flowers. You are of much more value than they.

Matt. 6:25–34.

27. God’s servant Joshua is given a difficult task. The Lord counsels him to be strong and courageous.

Josh. 1:1–9.

Josh. 1:9. “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Work, Laziness

1. At the dawn of history God called man to work as his servant.

Gen. 2:15. Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

2. Be a workman approved of God.

2 Tim. 2:15. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

3. Do everything to the glory of God; perform your work in a way that glorifies him.

1 Cor. 10:31. Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Col. 3:17. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

4. An industrious housewife and mother pleases the Lord and delights her husband.

Prov. 31:10–31.

5. Christians must work in order to give to others; never steal.

Eph. 4:28. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

6. Be a faithful worker so that you will be a good witness to outsiders and not be dependent on others.

1 Thess. 4:11–12. ... that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.

7. Be on guard against idleness.

2 Thess. 2:6–15.

2 Thess. 3:7–10. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

8. Earn your own bread.

2 Thess. 3:12. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

9. The ant provides a lesson for lazy, careless people.

Prov. 6:6–11. Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, Provides her supplies in the summer, And gathers her food in the harvest. How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep—So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

10. It's a disgrace to be lazy.

Prov. 10:5. He who gathers in summer is a wise son; He who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.

11. One who chases fantasies lacks judgment.

Prov. 12:11. He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, But he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.

12. Mere talk leads to poverty.

Prov. 14:23. In all labor there is profit, But idle chatter leads only to poverty.

13. The way of the sluggard is hard.

Prov. 15:19. The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, But the way of the upright is a highway.

14. The shiftless man goes hungry.

Prov. 19:15. Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, And an idle person will suffer hunger.

15. Being lazy has its sad results.

Prov. 20:4. The lazy man will not plow because of winter; He will beg during harvest and have nothing.

16. Do not love sleep.

Prov. 20:13. Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty; Open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with bread.

17. A shiftless sluggard will come to poverty.

Prov. 24:30–34. I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down. When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction: A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest; So shall your poverty come like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

18. The sluggard finds excuses not to work; he rationalizes his behavior.

Prov. 26:13–16. The lazy man says, "There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!" As a door turns on its hinges, So does the lazy man on his bed. The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; It wearies him to bring it back to his mouth. The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can answer sensibly.

19. The sleep of a laborer is sweet.

Eccles. 5:12. The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, Whether he eats little or much; But the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep.

20. In the parable of the talents Jesus teaches us to serve him faithfully with the talents he gives to us.

Matt. 25:14–30.

21. One who fails to provide for his family denies the faith.

1 Tim. 5:8. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

22. We must learn to work so that we may provide for daily necessities and live productive lives.

Titus 3:14. And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

Worry, Anxiety

1. Jesus instructs us not to worry about tomorrow; about food, clothing, etc.

Matt. 6:25–34.

Matt. 6:25. “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

Matt. 6:26, 28. “Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;”

2. Take one day at a time, and don't borrow trouble.

Matt. 6:34. “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

3. Don't be anxious, but pray.

Phil. 4:6–7. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

4. Cast all your anxiety on the Lord.

1 Peter 5:6–7. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

5. You can discover the secret of tranquillity.

Ps. 37:3–7.

Ps. 37:3. Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

Ps. 37:4. Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Ps. 37:5. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

Ps. 37:7. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

6. Anxiety weighs a person down.

Prov. 12:25. Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

Prov. 14:30. A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones.

Prov. 17:22. A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.

