



HOLMAN[®]
BIBLES



Life Counsel Bible

Practical Wisdom for All of Life



Learn more at LifeCounselBible.com



Table of Contents

About the CSB Life Counsel Bible	2
What is Biblical Counseling?	3
<i>Ed Welch</i>	
Features	4
Available Editions	10
About the CSB	11
Sample from Book of Matthew	12





About the CSB Life Counsel Bible

The *CSB Life Counsel Bible*, developed in partnership with New Growth Press, brings together a list of expert contributors to equip readers to apply biblical principles and counsel to hundreds of everyday life issues in ways that are Christ-honoring, immensely practical, and pastorally helpful.

The *CSB Life Counsel Bible* is for anyone seeking to understand and apply gospel-centered wisdom for personal growth, holiness, and transformation on topics ranging from parenting boys and girls, learning how to thrive in suffering, understanding grief, anxiety, guilt, and stress—as well as learning practical biblical principles to navigate more complex mental health challenges.



CHRISTIAN
STANDARD
BIBLE™

HOLMAN®
BIBLES





What is Biblical Counseling?

Ed Welch

Biblical counseling is a hybrid of discipleship and biblical friendship.

Its occasion is when life seems painful, confusing, or unmanageable, and we turn to the Spirit and the Word for help. This anchors biblical counseling in the ancient tradition of pastoral care, which has now been dispersed to all God's people (Eph 4:11–13). Biblical counseling is not a trademarked school of thought. Instead, it rests in the public domain and grows as we all bring Scripture to the difficult details of life in a way that honors God and is exactly what our souls need.

Biblical counseling is built on a simple, enduring principle: *the triune God has spoken to us through the Scripture*, and “in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son” (Heb 1:2). God has revealed mysteries about us and about his ways that are essential for life, which we could not have discovered apart from his words. To be more specific, through biblical history, God's covenant promises, doctrine, law codes, poetry, songs, which were all reaching for Jesus, *God has revealed to us everything we need to know about him, about ourselves, and about the world around us* (see 2Pt 1:3). We have access to everything that Jesus had: “I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father” (Jn 15:15). This means, at least, that Scripture has more riches than we know.

Scripture Speaks with Great Depth

Scripture Speaks about How We Counsel

Scripture Speaks about Who Can Counsel

Adapted from “What Is Biblical Counseling Anyway?” by Edward T. Welch; Journal of Biblical Counseling 16:1 (1997): 2–6, a publication of the Christian Counseling & Educational Foundation (CCEF).



Book Introductions

Including “Circumstances of Writing,” “Structure,” “Contribution to the Bible,” and a special “Truth for Healing” section with an overview of key themes and truths related to healing from each book of the Bible.



Isaiah

Introduction

Circumstances of Writing

This book presents itself as the writing of one man, Isaiah the son of Amoz. The superscription, or title, to the book dates his prophetic activity as spanning the reigns of four kinds of Judah: Uzziah (783-742 BC). Not much is known about Isaiah apart from his prophecy.

Isaiah’s authorship of the whole book has been vehemently contested in the modern period. Many scholars have argued that the historical Isaiah could not have written Isaiah 40-66. For those who believe that God knows the future and can reveal it to his servants, it is not problematic that God through Isaiah predicted the rise of Babylon, its victory against Judah, the exile, and the return.

Truth for Healing

In Isaiah

Although Isaiah’s movement of judgement and salvation are aimed at Isaiah and the nations, the book also speaks to individuals. The Suffering Servant’s mission of redemption described and celebrated here (42:1-4; 49:1-7, 52:13-53:12) has been observed to cause a shift. Before chapter 53 the singular word “servant” occurs over twenty times, but its eleven uses in chapter 54-66 are all plural, suggesting that the Servant’s work would redeem not only a people but individuals who would serve God.





Features Continued

Contributors and Articles

More than 150 full-length articles on a wide range of topics and tough life issues from respected Christian counselors and scholars, including:

AMY BAKER *Social Anxiety: Being Comfortable in Your Own Skin*

ANDY FARMER *A Father's Guide to Raising Girls*

BARBARA JULIANI *Dealing with Your Rebellious Teenager: Help for Worried Parents*

BASYLE TCHIVIDJIAN *Child Abuse in the Church: Steps to Prevent and Respond*

BASYLE TCHIVIDJIAN AND JUSTIN HOLCOMB *Caring for Survivors of Sexual Abuse*

BOB KELLEMAN *Grief and Your Child: Sharing God's Comfort in Loss*

BRAD HAMBRICK *Building a Marriage to Last: Five Essential Habits for Couples*

BYRON PETERS *Caring for an Aging Parent: Honoring as You Serve*

C. JOHN MILLER *When Crisis Hits: Where to Turn When Life Falls Apart*

COOPER PINSON *Helping Students with Same-Sex Attraction (Part 1): Guidance for Parents and Youth Leaders • Helping Students with Same-Sex Attraction (Part 2): Some Practical Steps*

DAVE DEUEL (JONI&FRIENDS) *Is God Listening?*

DAVID POWLISON *Breaking the Addictive Cycle: Deadly Obsessions or Simple Pleasures • Breaking the Addictive Cycle: Practical Strategies for Change • Controlling Anger (Part 1): Responding Constructively When Life Goes Wrong*

Controlling Anger (Part 2): Practical Strategies for Change • Facing Death with Hope: Living for What Lasts • Grieving a Suicide: Help for the Aftershock • Healing After Abortion: God's Mercy is For You • Replacing Suicidal Thoughts with Hope • Dealing with Fatigue • Life Beyond Your Parents' Mistakes • Overcoming Anxiety • Child Abuse: Redeeming Your Story • Recovering from Child Abuse: Practical Strategies for Change • Renewing Marital Intimacy: Closing the Gap Between You and Your Spouse • Sexual Addiction: Freedom from Compulsive Behavior • Sexual Assault: Healing Steps for Victims • When Cancer Interrupts

DAVID WHITE *Can You Change If You're Gay? (Part 1): A Biblical View of Change • Can You Change If You're Gay? (Part 2): Practical Change in Daily Life • Raising Sexually Healthy Kids*

DEE BRESTIN *God's Design for Friendship*

DEEPAK REJU *Preparing for Fatherhood*

DIANE LANGBERG *Bringing Christ to Abused Women: Learning to See and Respond • The Spiritual Impact of Sexual Abuse*

EAMON WILSON *Opiate-Related Disorders: Part One • Opiate-Related Disorders: Part Two*

EDWARD WELCH *Bipolar Disorder: Understanding and Help for Extreme Mood Swings • Eating Disorders: The Quest for Thinness • Freedom from Addiction: Turning from Your Addictive Behavior*



Features Continued

Helping Children with Shame: Resting in God's Approval • Hope for the Depressed: Beyond a "Cheer-Up" Theology • Dealing with an Angry Spouse • What is Biblical Counseling?

ELIZABETH W. D. GROVES *Becoming a Widow: The Ache of Missing Your Other Half*

ELLEN DYKAS *Sex and the Single Girl: Smart Ways to Care for Your Heart • Why Marriage Is the Best Choice • Your Dating Relationship and Your Sexual Past: How Much to Share*

ELYSE FITZPATRICK *The Empty Nest: Finding Hope in a Mother's Changing Job Description*

GARRETT HIGBEE *Helping a Hurting Friend: Bringing the Hope of Christ in Hard Times*

HEATHER NELSON *Domestic Abuse: Help for Victims*

JAMES C. PETTY *When the Money Runs Out: Hope and Help for the Financially Stressed*

JAYNE V. CLARK *Healing Broken Relationships: What to Do When You've Been Hurt • Single and Lonely: Finding the Intimacy You Desire • Struggling Through Singleness: Help for the Journey*

JIM NEWHEISER *Financial Crisis: What to Do When the Bottom Drops Out • Dealing with Past Parental Hurt • How to Love Difficult Parents*

JOCELYN WALLACE *What Are Anxiety and Panic? • What Should You Do about Anxiety? • Helping Children with Body Image: Teaching Them to See What God Sees*

JOHN FREEMAN *The Gay Dilemma and Your Church: Reaching Out to Those Who Struggle*

JONI EARECKSON TADA *Diagnosed with Breast Cancer: Life after Shock • Stressed to the Max: Peace for Women Under Pressure*

JULIE LOWE *Helping Your Anxious Child: What to Do When Worries Get Big • Teens and Suicide: Recognizing the Signs and Sharing Hope*

JUSTIN HOLCOMB AND LINDSEY HOLCOMB *Children and Trauma (Part 1): The Effects of Trauma and Hope for Healing • Children and Trauma (Part 2): Helping Children Who Have Experienced Trauma*

JUSTIN S. HOLCOMB *What Do You Do for a Living?*

KATHY HOOPMANN *Autism and Your Child*

KEN TADA (JONI&FRIENDS) *For Better or Worse: When Disability Challenges Your Marriage*

LAUREN WHITMAN *Mom Guilt: Escaping Its Stranglehold*

LESLIE VERNICK *Forging a Strong Mother-Daughter Bond: Beyond Manipulation and Control • Self-Esteem: Looking Up Instead of Looking Inside*

MARTY MACHOWSKI *Leading Your Child to Christ • Help Your Children Live for God with Their Finances • Teaching Your Child About Money: Biblical Stewardship for Beginners*

MICHAEL R. EMLET *Angry Children: Understanding and Helping Your Child Regain Control • Autism Spectrum Disorder: Meeting the Challenges with Hope • Chronic Pain: Living by Faith When Your Body Hurts • Help for the Caregiver: Facing the Challenges with Understanding and Strength • Overeating*

PAUL DAVID TRIPP *Grief (Part 1): Finding Hope Again • Grief (Part 2): Practical Strategies • Helping Your Adopted Child: Understanding Your Child's Unique Identity • Peer Pressure*

PHILIP G. MONROE *When You Love an Addict: Facing the Facts • When You Love an Addict: Moving Forward*



Features Continued

R. NICHOLAS BLACK *Homosexuality and the Bible (Part 1): Outdated Advice or Words of Life? • Homosexuality and the Bible (Part 2): Commonly Disputed Passages • Homosexuality and the Bible (Part 3): The Broader Perspective of Scripture • Protective Parenting in an Internet World • What's Wrong with a Little Porn When You're Married • Your Gay Child Says, "I Do": Loving Well While Staying Faithful*

REBECCA OLSON (JONI&FRIENDS) *A New Normal*

RITA JAMISON *Parenting Your Child with ADHD*

ROB GREEN *A Father's Guide to Raising Boys • Can We Talk? The Art of Relationship Building • Preparing for Military Deployment • Reuniting after Military Deployment: Help for the Transition*

ROBERT D. JONES *Do I Need Counseling?: When and Where to Get Help • Freedom from Resentment: Stopping Hurts from Turning Bitter • Restoring Your Broken Marriage: Healing after Adultery • Single Parents: Daily Grace for the Hardest Job • When Trouble Shows Up: Seeing God's Transforming Love*

ROBERT SMITH *Alzheimer's Disease: Help for Families in Crisis • Authority Issues: When It's Hard Being Told What to Do • Fibromyalgia: God's Grace for Chronic Pain Sufferers*

SCOTT JAMES *When Your Child Is Sick: Nurturing Faith in Hard Times*

SHAUNA AMICK (JONI&FRIENDS) *My Baby Has a Disability*

STEPHANIE GREEN *Miscarriage*

STEPHEN VIARS *Leading with Integrity • Redeeming Your Guilty Past: Present Grace, Future Hope • Redeeming Your Innocent Past: Present Grace, Future Hope • Redeeming Your Painful Past: Present Grace, Future Hope*

• Your Special Needs Child: Help for Weary Parents

SUSAN LUTZ *How Do I Look? Important Questions in Every Girl's Life*

TIM GEIGER *Explaining LGBTQ+ Identity to Your Child (Part 1): Relevant Data and Biblical Guidance • Explaining LGBTQ+ Identity to Your Child (Part 2): Biblical Wisdom on LGBTQ+ Identity • Your Child Says, "I'm Gay"*

TIMOTHY S. LANE *Conflict: A Redemptive Opportunity • Family Feuds: How To Respond • Forgiving Others: Joining Wisdom and Love • Freedom from Guilt: Finding Release from Your Burdens • PTSD: Healing for Bad Memories • Sex Before Marriage: How Far is Too Far? • Temptation: Fighting the Urge*

TODD STRYD *Schizophrenia: A Compassionate Approach*

VICKI TIEDE *Your Husband Is Addicted to Porn: Healing after Betrayal*

VICTOR I. VIETH *A Godly Response to Institutional Abuse • What the Bible Says to Abuse Survivors and Those Who Hurt Them*

WILLIAM P. SMITH *How Do I Stop Losing It With My Kids? Getting to the Heart of Your Discipline Problems • How to Love Difficult People • How to Talk to Your Kid about Sex • What to Tell Your Kid about Sex • Moving from Fear to Faith • Obsessed with Your Phone? • Should We Get Married: How to Evaluate Your Relationship • Starting Over: How Not to Screw Up Your Next Relationship • When Bad Things Happen: Thoughtful Answers to Hard Questions • When Your Kid's in Trouble • Who Should I Date?*

WINSTON T. SMITH *Sabbath Rest: Trusting God with Your "To Do" List • Divorce Recovery (Part 1): Growing and Healing God's Way • Divorce Recovery (PART 2): Practical Strategies for Change • Help For Stepfamilies: Avoiding the Pitfalls and Learning to Love • Help! My Spouse Committed Adultery: First Steps for Dealing with Betrayal • Who Does the Dishes?*



Features Continued

Anxiety affects everyone—no one escapes. You might not feel all the unpleasant effects of extreme anxiety—the churning stomach, the fluttery feelings, the cold hands, the mental broken record—but the problem of worrying and obsessing is universal.

The Capacity for Anxiety Is God-Given.

Perhaps you wish you could get rid of your anxiety forever. But might the alternative be indifference to the world around you? Drugs, meditation techniques, or certain life philosophies can stop you from caring. But what would you be missing? Anxiety is a God-given capacity for knowing that something bad is going on in your world. There's a right kind of anxiety that leads us to express loving concern for others during their troubles and draws us to take refuge in God when we are in trouble (Ps 94:19; 2Co 11:28).

Overcoming Anxiety

David Powlison

John 17-18

Jesus Prays for All Believers

20 I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in me through their word.
21 May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe you sent me.
22 I have given them the glory you have given me, so that they may be one as we are one.
23 I am in them and you are in me, so that they may be made completely one, that the world may know you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me.
24 Father, I want those you have given to me to be with me where I am, so that they will see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the world's foundation.
25 Righteous Father, the world has not known you. However, I have known you, and they have known that you sent me.
26 I made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love you have loved me with may be in them and I may be in them."

Feelings or emotions are a powerful part of our lives. Have you ever been overwhelmed by shame? Exhausted by depression? Consumed with anger? Dominated by rejection? Devoured by bitterness? Most of us can say yes to at least a few of those negative emotions. But do we have to be controlled by our emotions?

Emotions Are Part of God's Good Creation

Feelings are a "very good" part of who we were created to be (Gn 1:31). We experience emotions because God does and we were created in his image. God grieves, rejoices, weeps, exults, is angry, and loves (see Gn 6:6; Is 62:5; 63:9; Jr 31:20; Hs 11:1-8; Eph 4:30).

Managing Your Emotions

Amy Baker

1 Peter 3

Undeserved Suffering

13 Who then will harm you if you are devoted to what is good?
14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear them or be intimidated.
15 but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.
16 Yet of this with gentleness and reverence, keeping a clear conscience, so that when you are accused, those who disparage your good conduct in Christ will be put to shame.
17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will than for doing evil.
18 For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God.



Features Continued

Word Studies

Over a hundred word studies focusing on key words from the Bible that are applicable to personal healing, growth, and counsel.

Callouts

Callout quotes placed near each article that provide truth, hope, and encouragement.

Cross References

A robust page-end cross reference system with over 25,000 cross references connecting Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

Topical Scripture Index, wide margins for notetaking, and more.



"When you use cohabitation to test the waters, you need to face a blunt assessment—you are operating from a focus on self."

eleos

Greek pronunciation	[EH leh ahss]
CSB translation	mercy
Uses in Matthew	3 (Lk, 6)
Uses in the NT	27
Focus passage	Matthew 9:13

Eleos is one of several NT words meaning *mercy*. Each of the three times that this word appears in Matthew, Jesus uses it to refer to principles established in the OT, where God clearly required that his people show *mercy*. Twice Jesus quotes Hs 6:6, "I desire *mercy* and

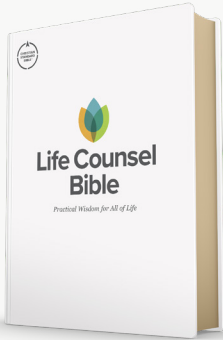


It is our hope that the features found throughout the Life Counsel Bible will not only show how to read the Bible for wisdom about various life topics, but also how to apply that wisdom in practical ways that lead to lasting life change.



Available Editions

LifeCounselBible.com



Hardcover

9781087773131

\$49.99

ePub

9781087785561

\$49.99



**Burnt Sienna
LeatherTouch**

9781087785578

\$69.99

INDEXED

9781087785585

\$79.99



**Apple Green
LeatherTouch**

9781087785615

\$69.99

INDEXED

9781087785622

\$79.99



**Slate Blue
LeatherTouch**

9781087785639

\$69.99

INDEXED

9781087785646

\$79.99



Genuine Leather

9781087785592

\$99.99

INDEXED

9781087785608

\$109.99

THE CSB WAS CREATED TO HELP MORE
PEOPLE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE
WORD OF GOD.



ACCURATE. READABLE. SHAREABLE.

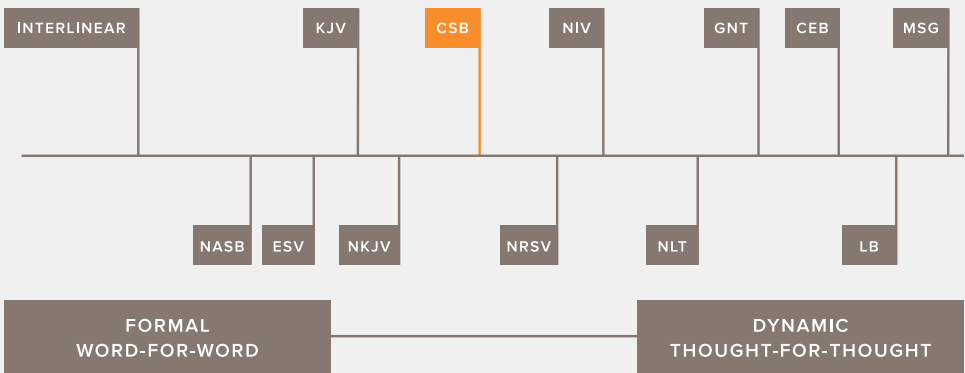
The Christian Standard Bible presents the truth of God’s Word with accuracy and clarity for today’s readers, equipping them for lifelong discipleship. It’s a Bible you can teach from with confidence and a Bible you can share with your neighbor who is hearing God’s Word for the very first time.

OPTIMAL EQUIVALENCE

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

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

BIBLE TRANSLATION CONTINUUM



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

LEARN MORE AT CSBIBLE.COM



Matthew

Introduction

Circumstances of Writing

None of the Gospel authors identify themselves as such in the text. The various titles were probably added in the late first or early second century, based on what was known or believed at the time. They appear in the earliest manuscripts available. Titles became necessary to distinguish one Gospel from another when the four Gospels began to circulate as a single collection. The early church unanimously affirmed that the Gospel of Matthew was authored by the apostle Matthew. It would require impressive evidence to overturn this early consensus. Many early church fathers (Papias, Irenaeus, Pantaeus, and Origen) acknowledged Matthew as the author. Papias also contended that Matthew first wrote in Hebrew, implying that this Gospel was later translated into Greek. Even if Papias was wrong about the original language of the Gospel of Matthew, this does not imply that he and other early church leaders were wrong to identify Matthew as the author of this Gospel.

Clues from the Gospel itself support its ascription to Matthew. First, both Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27 identify the tax collector whom Jesus called to be his disciple as "Levi." This Gospel, however, identifies Levi as "Matthew." Matthew, a Hebrew name meaning "gift of God," appears to be the apostolic name that Jesus gave to Levi after he chose to follow Christ, much like Simon was named "Peter" by Jesus after his confession of faith (Mt 16:18). The use of "Matthew" in this Gospel may be Matthew's personal touch, a self-reference that gives us a clue about authorship.

Determining the date of composition of Matthew's Gospel depends largely on the relationship of the Gospels to one another. Most scholars believe that Mark's Gospel was one of Matthew's sources. If this is correct, Matthew's Gospel must postdate Mark's. However, the date of Mark's Gospel is also shrouded

in mystery. Irenaeus (ca AD 180) seems to claim that Mark wrote his Gospel after Peter's death in the mid-60s. However, Clement of Alexandria, who wrote only twenty years after Irenaeus, claimed that Mark wrote his Gospel while Peter was still alive. Given the ambiguity of the historical evidence, a decision must be based on other factors.

The date of composition for Mark is best inferred from the date of Luke and Acts. The abrupt ending of Acts that left Paul under house arrest in Rome implies Acts was written before Paul's release. Since one of the major themes of Acts is the legality of Christianity in the Roman Empire, one would have expected Luke to mention Paul's release by the emperor if it had already occurred. This evidence dates Acts to the early 60s. Luke and Acts were two volumes of a single work, as the prologues to these books demonstrate. Luke was written before Acts. Given the amount of research that Luke invested in the book and the travel that eyewitness interviews probably required, a date in the late 50s is reasonable. If Luke used Mark in writing his own Gospel, as seems likely, by implication Mark was written some time before the late 50s, perhaps the early to mid-50s. Thus, despite Matthew's dependence on Mark, Matthew may have been written anytime after Mark was completed.

Contribution to the Bible

As the first book in the New Testament (NT), the Gospel of Matthew serves as a gateway between the two testaments. Of the NT books, and certainly of the four Gospels, Matthew has the strongest connections to the Old Testament (OT). Matthew gave us God's entire plan from Genesis to Revelation. Matthew looked back and referred to Hebrew prophecies about sixty times ("was fulfilled" and "so that what was spoken . . . might be fulfilled"). He also looked forward by dealing not only with the

Messiah's coming and his ministry, but also his future plan for his church and kingdom.

Structure

Matthew divided his Gospel into three major sections. He introduced new major sections with the words "from then on Jesus began to" (4:17; 16:21). These transitional statements divide the Gospel into the

introduction (1:1–4:16), body (4:17–16:20), and conclusion (16:21–28:20). Matthew also divided his Gospel into five major blocks of teaching, each of which concludes with a summary statement (8:1; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). Some scholars believe these five major discourses were meant to correspond to the five books of Moses and to confirm Jesus's identity as the new Moses.

Truth for Healing

in Matthew

According to Matthew 1:23, Jesus is *Immanuel*, meaning, "God is with us." Jesus is our *condescending* God. The verb *condescend* combines Latin words for "with" and "climb down." Merriam-Webster lists the meaning, "to come down to the level of one socially inferior." Jesus, of course, did more than that. He descended not only to the level of sinful humanity, but beyond that to death on a cross as a condemned criminal. He went to the very bottom, not just to sympathize with us but to forgive, heal, retrieve, and exalt us into his glorious kingdom (17:1–8). He came teaching and proclaiming the good news of that mission, and he validated it by "healing every [kind of] disease and sickness" (4:23). More than simply an agent of change, he came (see 9:35–37) full of the Father's heart of compassion (14:14) for the "distressed" (the stressed, weary, harassed, troubled) and "dejected"

(those who had been or felt thrown away, discarded, tackled, put down). He came for "sheep without a shepherd" (weak, vulnerable, frightened, in danger, lost, leaderless, abandoned, left to die). He came for the depressed, for those grieving and in pain, for the overlooked and invisible, for the mistreated, so that he might bring us into the kingdom of heaven (5:3–10). He came for the "weary and burdened" and promises rest for our souls. That rest comes to any who will accept Jesus's "easy" (comfortable, beneficial) yoke of apprenticeship, any who want to walk with Jesus and learn from him. Jesus can instruct and guide us through all our struggles, pains, disappointments, and failures without impatient recrimination or condemnation because he is "lowly and humble in heart" (11:28–30). He is the beloved Son of the living God (3:17; 16:16; 17:5).

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

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

From Abraham to David

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

From David to the Babylonian Exile

- David fathered Solomon^h
by Uriah's wife,^h
⁷ Solomon fathered Rehoboam,
Rehoboam fathered Abijah,
Abijah fathered Asa,^c
⁸ Asa^c fathered Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat fathered Joram,^d
Joram fathered Uzziah,ⁱ
⁹ Uzziah fathered Jotham,
Jotham fathered Ahaz,
Ahaz fathered Hezekiah,
¹⁰ Hezekiah fathered Manasseh,
Manasseh fathered Amon,^e
Amon fathered Josiah,^j
¹¹ and Josiah fathered Jeconiah
and his brothers
at the time of the exile to Babylon.^k

From the Exile to the Messiah

- ¹² After the exile to Babylon
Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel,
Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel,
¹³ Zerubbabel fathered Abiud,
Abiud fathered Eliakim,
Eliakim fathered Azor,^l
¹⁴ Azor fathered Zadok,
Zadok fathered Achim,
Achim fathered Eliud,



"When you use cohabitation to test the waters, you need to face a blunt assessment—you are operating from a focus on self."

- ¹⁵ Eliud fathered Eleazar,
Eleazar fathered Matthan,
Matthan fathered Jacob,
¹⁶ and Jacob fathered Joseph
the husband of Mary,
who gave birth to Jesus
who is called the Messiah.^m

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

The Nativity of the Messiah

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

²⁰ But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."^r ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus,^s because he will save his people from their sins.^t

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

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

which is translated "God is with us."^u

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

^a1:6 Ru 4:18–22; 2Sm 7:12–16; 1Ch 2:1–15; Lk 3:32–34 ^b1:1 Mk 12:26; Lk 3:4; Ac 1:20; Php 4:3; Rv 3:5 ^cPs 89:3; Is 9:6; Lk 1:32,69 ^dGn 22:18; Mt 9:7; Rm 1:3; Gl 3:16 ^e1:2 Gn 29:35; Ps 147:105;9; Mt 8:11; 22:32; Jms 2:21 ^f1:3 Gn 38:29–30; 46:12; Lk 3:33 ^g1:5 Ru 1:4; 2:1; Lk 3:32 ^h1:6 1Sm 16:1; 17:12; 2Sm 11:27; 12:24 ⁱ1:7–8 1Kg 11:43; 14:31; 15:8,24; 22:50; 2Kg 14:21 ^j1:9–10 2Kg 15:5,38; 16:20; 20:21; 21:18,24 ^k1:11 2Kg 24:6,14; Is 5:13; Jr 27:20; Ezk 1:1; Mt 1:17 ^l1:12–13 Gn 10:10; 1Ch 3:17; Lk 3:27,30 ^m1:16 Mt 27:17,22; Lk 2:1; Jn 1:45; 4:25 ⁿ1:17 2Kg 24:14; Jr 27:20; Dn 9:25–26; Mk 8:29; Ac 2:31,36,38 ^o1:18 Mt 12:46; Lk 1:27,35 ^p1:19 Mt 13:17; Mk 10:12; Lk 2:36; 1Co 14:35; 2Co 11:2; Gl 4:27 ^qDt 22:20–24; 24:1–4; Mt 2:7; Lk 16:18; Jn 8:4–5 ^r1:20 2Ch 1:1; Mt 13:49; 27:19; Jn 6:20; Rm 13 ^s1:21 Lk 1:31; 2:21; Jn 10:25; 1Jn 2:12 ^tLk 2:11; Jn 1:29; Ac 4:12; 5:31; 13:23,38–39 ^u1:22–23 Is 7:14; Mt 21:1–4; Lk 24:44; Rm 1:2–4 ^v1:24 Mt 1:6; 13:49; Lk 1:1; 19:32; Jd 5 ^w1:25 Gn 4:17; Ex 13:2; Jdg 11:39; 1Sm 1:19; Lk 2:7,21

^a1:2 In vv. 2–16 either a son, as here, or a later descendant, as in v. 8 ^b1:6 Other mss add *King* ^c1:7,8 Other mss read *Asaph*
^d1:8 = Jehoram ^e1:10 Other mss read *Amos* ^f1:18 Or *betrotted* ^g1:23 Is 7:14 ^h1:25 Other mss read *to her firstborn son*

Why Marriage Is the Best Choice

Ellen Mary Dykas



Some couples think they should test their exclusivity by living together. Others consider themselves “married” before God and each other and don’t see the need for the legal formalities of a marriage license or church ceremony. Couples meeting in retirement years may feel that to marry each other would somehow betray the memory of their first spouse and that just moving in together is a good idea.

In the past fifty years, those choosing to live together without being married have increased by more than 1,500 percent. In 1960, about 450,000 unmarried couples lived together. As of a few years ago, the number had grown to more than 75 million. Most young adults in their twenties will live with a romantic partner at least once, and more than half of all marriages will be preceded by cohabitation.¹

Even many churching couples believe this is a wise, God-honoring decision. If two consenting adults want to “wisely” discern if someone is a compatible marriage partner, and if finances can be stewarded more frugally, and if there is an inner heart commitment already, why not?

God’s Perspective on Romantic Relationships

God’s original intent was that men and women would enjoy rich community and relationships. He created marriage as a unique relationship between a man and a woman, not only as a blessing for them and for society, but to point to him and his love for his people. This happens as a man and a woman join in a lifelong, committed relationship, with God at the center of their lives.

Although singles can have deep relationships through friendship, marriage further offers a primary relationship of oneness in all areas. It is the goal of a romantic relationship where two people become deeply intimate on every level.

In Ephesians 5:22–33, Paul says husbands and wives should care for each other, but he concludes, “This mystery [of ‘one flesh’] is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church.” Marriage was intended to be a signpost pointing beyond itself to the spiritual reality of God’s relationship with his people, which is initiated by his loving pursuit and entered by faith. Christian marriage mirrors this, comprising two consenting adults who commit (with a no-exit strategy) exclusively to one another before God. This commitment sets the stage for growth into deeper trust and security as they build a life together.

Couples who choose to bypass God’s design for marriage experience so much less than what he had in mind for them. Why, then, bypass marriage and simply move in together?

Reasons People Choose to Live Together

- **Fear.** Many couples approach alliances carrying painful baggage from the past. You may not have seen many (or any) positive examples of strong, loving marriages that have gone the distance. Living together then becomes a preventative measure to protect against a messy and anguishing divorce if you turn out to be incompatible. You may also fear being alone and may share a residence and a bed in hopes that marriage will be on the horizon. Or you may fear that if you don’t move in together, the relationship will end.

The experience of painful and broken relationships in the past, and especially the trauma of divorce, erodes trust in the reliability of someone’s verbal oath of faithfulness, and trust in the belief that an “official”

commitment really makes any difference. Cohabitation seems to provide an easier and less painful alternative if a relationship doesn't work out. Often couples slide into living together rather than *deciding* to commit to a long-term relationship; sleeping over at each other's homes becomes more frequent and eventually a shared household comes into place.

Whatever reason you might have, you need to realize that no human strategy can prevent relational pain. That is only an illusion. Sliding out of a relationship of cohabitation isn't as pain-free or easy as it might seem at first. Lives, belongings, friends, and households have become shared and entwined, and the dissolution *will still feel* like a divorce when the relationship ends.

- **Worldly wisdom.** You and your friends may think that jumping into a marriage without testing the water is foolish. Will this person be a good fit for me emotionally, sexually, and relationally? Will I be happy and content living 24/7 with this person? Can we live together with love and respect, or will we face conflict all the time? How many checks can I put in the column for "get married," and are they more than the checks in the "get out" column?

Wisdom does call for asking such questions and more: Do we have a similar vision for life and service and a common commitment to God and to a lifestyle of worship and obedient love before him? However, you can't "practice" the lifelong nature of marriage through a short-term experience. **When you use cohabitation to test the waters, you need to face a blunt assessment—you are operating from a focus on self. Will this work out for me? If, after a while, I can say yes, I can make a commitment; if no, I'll just step away and out.**

Self-focus, and a pursuit of "what's in it for me" is the reason most relationships fail! The relationship becomes a performance evaluation, and both of you are under each other's critical gaze. This is *not* the way God enters into relationship with his people. The kind of relationship you are considering needs a stronger foundation. When two people entwine their lives together while keeping a back door open, they increase the odds of walking through that door when times get tough—and they will. Also, real love demands commitment, which is contrary to self-protection.

- **Financial stress.** An up-and-down economy and a constant struggle of not having enough money can become another reason to live together.

Sharing expenses and making your present living situation less stressful, however, is a very shaky foundation (at best) for a lasting relationship. What happens if you or your partner loses their income while you're still in testing mode in your relationship? The notion of "what's in it for me" will become sorely tested as you begin to shoulder more responsibility to keep financially afloat. Money has never been a glue to keep people together; it is more likely to tear your relationship apart.

- **Marriage an unnecessary formality.** Couples may claim they *do* feel they have a lifelong commitment to one another and are not merely testing things out. In their minds, the formality (and sometimes the perceived hassle and unnecessary cost) of a ceremony and marriage license seem to be burdensome add-ons to the love and faithfulness they have already pledged to one another.

But what someone feels and what they promise are two different things. Relationships that are based on a public commitment to God in the presence of family and friends have an inherent strength, and they contain a much greater likelihood of both giving and receiving the kind of love the other wants.

Marriage Vows: Why Public Promises Are Significant

So if the reasons for living together don't hold water, biblically and practically, are marriage ceremonies just human tradition?

The Bible teaches that a marriage begins with a public commitment before a couple's community. God calls a man and a woman into a lifelong relationship with a commitment that is a public, holy promise.

Public

Marriage is described in Scripture as "one flesh" (Gn 2:24; Mt 19:5), involving a total commitment that is publicly demonstrated. Jesus affirmed the public nature of marriage in his reference to the account of Adam and Eve in Genesis, where beginning a new family starts with separating from one's family of origin. This argues strongly against a private moving-in arrangement. Establishing a separate family unit, with all the lifelong implications connected to that, involves one's community. The community of God's people—who are witnesses to the marriage—are responsible to help the couple grow into their public vows.²

A Holy Promise of the Deepest Kind

Marriage is not merely a cultural institution involving merging of lives, bank accounts, and homes. While the public ceremony may take different shapes, marriage is significant (Mk 10:6–9). John Piper comments that in Mark 10:6–9, based on Genesis 1:27 and 2:24, is "the clearest statement in the Bible that marriage is not a merely human doing. The words 'God has joined together' means it is *God's* doing."³

Besides Ephesians 5, God describes his relationship to his people like a marriage in Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 31:31–32; Hosea 2:16; Revelation 21:2. So marriage is a unique and lifelong commitment based on a promise of grace and selfless love, demonstrated most vividly through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Is Marriage Worth the Trouble?

To be a faithful spouse in a God-honoring marriage is more than difficult; without the love and power of Jesus Christ, it's impossible. Even more than the blessing of companionship, the pleasure of sexual love, the bearing and raising of children, and having a lifelong primary relationship in which to experience trust and safety, marriage's divine meaning is to point beyond itself. A man and a woman, living in a covenant of marriage (see Pr 2:17; Ezk 16:1,59–62; Hs 2:16–20; Mal 2:14), have a unique calling to be a signpost to the eternal reality of God's relationship with his people.

As sinful people live in the sweetness and sanctification of a 24/7 relationship with no easily available escape ramps, such things as selfishness, personal agendas, and stubborn individualism are exposed every day. The process of working through such challenges is one of the ways God conforms us to the image of his Son (Rm 8:28–29). The lifelong commitment protects both spouses from running away when this process is painful. Trust, honesty, interdependence, and a shared dependency on God knit a couple together over time as they move forward through life as one flesh, joined together before God.

Because marriage is hard work, deciding whether you should marry someone is a process that is vital to walk through. Christians who have chosen to live with a romantic partner outside marriage have pushed Jesus aside for the sake of this relationship. Christian marriage calls those considering it to reflect on an eternal truth: that there is someone we are called to love more than a husband or wife. Jesus said, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, and even his own life—he cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:26). Jesus's extreme words are meant to get across a crucial point: God will not accept second place in your life.

Marriage is a beautiful gift from God, but it is not the ultimate gift—he is. In a Christian marriage, God must be central to this relationship. You must be willing to allow him to be the loving Lord over this relationship and to captivate your heart. He must supersede the benefits you receive from your spouse.

To gain true life, we must loosen our grasp on our personal agendas. Instead of choosing to love a partner, spouse, or idea of a spouse more than anything else—which results in disappointment, pain, and disillusionment—we surrender all to Jesus by faith, and trust that he knows what he’s doing. In return, we regain our life and experience the joy of walking obediently with him. The result is that spouses love each other out of an inexhaustible well of God’s love for them.

Marriage *is* hard work, but it *is* worth it, as a rich life of love for God and others will grow as you abandon your dreams and agendas for relationships that don’t line up with his.

*Adapted from “Living Together: Why Marriage is the Best Choice” by Ellen Mary Dykas (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2016).

See endnotes page 1800.

Wise Men Visit the King

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

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

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

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

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

⁹ After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was — the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him.^g Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.^g ¹² And being

warned^h in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

The Flight into Egypt

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

The Massacre of the Innocents

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men.^k ¹⁷ Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

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

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,^m

^a2:1 Gn 25:6; 1Kg 4:30; Lk 1:5; 2:4–7 ^b2:2 Jr 23:5; 30:9; Zch 9:9; Mt 27:11; Lk 19:38; Jn 1:49 ^cNm 24:17; Rv 22:16 ^d2:4 Mt 16:21; 20:18; 21:15; 27:41; Lk 9:22 ^e2:6 2Sm 5:2; Mc 5:2; Jn 7:42; 21:16 ^f2:7–8 Mk 5:6; Lk 1:7; Ac 13:6; Rv 1:16 ^g2:11 Ps 72:10; Is 60:6; Mt 1:18; 12:46; Mk 5:6 ^h2:12 Mt 27:19; Lk 2:26; Ac 10:22; Heb 8:5; 11:7 ⁱ2:13 Mt 1:20; 13:49; Mk 11:18; Jms 4:7 ^j2:15 Ex 4:22; Nm 24:8; Hs 11:1 ^k2:16 Is 59:7; Mk 10:34; Ac 13:6; 25:3; Rv 12:4 ^l2:18 Gn 35:19; Jdg 4:5; Jr 31:15; Ac 8:2; 2Co 7:7 ^m2:19 Mt 1:20; 13:49; Lk 1:11; Jd 5

^a2:2 Or to pay him homage ^b2:6 Mc 5:2 ^c2:8 Or and pay him homage ^d2:11 Or they paid him homage ^e2:15 Hs 11:1 ^f2:18 Other mss read Ramah, lamentation, and weeping, ^g2:18 Jr 31:15

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

The Herald of the Messiah

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

A voice of one crying out
in the wilderness:
Prepare the way for the Lord;
make his paths straight!^f

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

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

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

The Baptism of Jesus

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

¹⁵ Jesus answered him, "Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John allowed him to be baptized.

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

The Temptation of Jesus

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

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

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,^y and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

He will give his angels^z orders
concerning you,
and they will support you
with their hands
so that you will not strike
your foot against a stone."^{g,aa}

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

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ And he

^a2:22 Mt 17:22; Lk 15; Ac 27:29; Col 3:21; Heb 8:5 ^b2:23 Mk 1:24; Lk 1:26; Jn 1:45–46 ^c3:1–12 Mk 1:3–8; Lk 3:2–17; Jn 1:6–8; 1:19–28 ^d3:1 Jos 15:61; Jdg 1:16 ^e3:2 Dn 2:44; Mt 4:7; 6:10; 10:7; Mk 1:15; Lk 10:9; 11:20; 21:31 ^f3:3 Is 40:3; Lk 11:7;6; Jn 1:23 ^g3:5–6 Mt 23:37; Mk 1:5; Lk 3:3; Jn 15:22; Ac 19:18 ^h3:7 Mt 16:1; 22:23; 23:15; Ac 4:1; 5:17; 23:6 ⁱMt 12:34; 23:33; Rm 5:9; 1Th 1:10 ^j3:8 Mt 3:10; 12:33; 13:8,26; 21:19,34,41,43; Mk 11:14 ^k3:9 Lk 3:8; Jn 8:33,39; Ac 13:26; Rm 4:1 ^l3:10 Mt 7:19; Lk 13:7,9; Jn 15:2,6 ^m3:11 Mk 1:4,8; Jn 1:26; Ac 1:5 ⁿIs 44; Jn 13:3; Ac 2:3–4; 11:16; Ti 3:5 ^o3:12 Is 30:24; Mt 13:30; Mk 9:43,48; Lk 3:17 ^p3:13–17 Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–22; Jn 1:31–34 ^q3:16 Mt 24:35; Lk 12:33; Ac 17:24; Eph 6:9; Rv 21:10 ^rIs 11:2; Jn 1:32; Ac 7:56; 2Pt 1:17 ^s3:17 Ps 2:7; Is 42:1; Lk 9:35; Jn 12:28 ^t4:1–11 Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13 ^u4:1 Jos 15:61; Jdg 1:16; Jn 1:6–7; Jms 1:14 ^v4:2 Ex 34:28; 1Kg 19:8; Jn 9:4 ^w4:3 Mk 3:11; 5:7; Lk 1:35; 4:41; Jn 1:34,49; Ac 9:20 ^x4:4 Dt 8:3 ^y4:5 Neh 11:18; Dn 9:24; Mt 27:53 ^z4:6 Gn 16:7; Mt 13:49; Lk 1:11; Ac 5:19; Rv 14:6 ^{aa}Ps 91:11–12; 1Pt 2:8 ^{ab}4:7 Dt 6:16; 15m 7:3; 1Ch 21:1

^a3:3 Is 40:3 ^b3:8 Lit fruit worthy of ^c3:11 Or in ^d3:11 Or to carry ^e3:16 Other mss omit for him ^f4:4 Dt 8:3 ^g4:6 Ps 91:11–12 ^h4:7 Dt 6:16

said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."^A

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

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

Ministry in Galilee

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

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

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

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

The First Disciples

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

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

Teaching, Preaching, and Healing

²³ Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee,^J teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every^G disease and sickness^H among the people.^K ²⁴ Then the news about him spread throughout Syria.^L So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the

paralytics.^M And he healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.^N

The Sermon on the Mount

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

The Beatitudes

- ³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,^Q for the kingdom of heaven^R is theirs.
- ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,^S for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ Blessed are the humble,^T for they will inherit the earth.
- ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,^U for they will be filled.
- ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.^V
- ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.^W
- ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.^X
- ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven^Y is theirs.

¹¹ "You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. ¹² Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted^Z the prophets who were before you.^{aa}

Believers Are Salt and Light

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty?¹ It's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.^{ab}

^A4:9 Or and pay me homage ^B4:10 Other mss read "Get behind me ^C4:10 Dt 6:13 ^D4:16 Lit dawned on them

^E4:15–16 Is 9:1–2 ^F4:19 Or you fishers of ^G4:23 Or every kind of ^H4:23 Or physical ailment ^I5:2 Lit Then opening his mouth

^J5:13 Or how can the earth be salted?

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

Christ Fulfills the Law

¹⁷“Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.^e ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter^a or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.^f ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

Murder Begins in the Heart

²¹“You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **Do not murder**,^{g,h} and whoever murders will be subject to judgment.^h ²²But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister^c will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults^o his brother or sister will be subject to the court.^e Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire.^{f,i} ²³So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Reach a settlement quickly with your adversary while you’re on the way with him to the court, or your adversary will hand you over to the judge, and the judge to^o the officer, and you will be thrown into prison.^j ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny.^h

Adultery Begins in the Heart

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery**.^{ik} ²⁸But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.^l

“Just because you remember aspects of your past sin from time to time does not mean that God has not forgiven you. The way to avoid this kind of wallowing is to take a front row seat in theology class.”



²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin,^m gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.ⁿ

³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Divorce Practices Censured

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

Tell the Truth

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

Go the Second Mile

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, **An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth**.^{lv} ³⁹But I tell you, don’t resist^m an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.^v

^a5:14 Pr 4:18; Jn 8:12; Php 2:15 ^b5:15 Jn 5:35; Rv 21:23 ^cMk 4:21; Lk 8:16; 11:33 ^d5:16 Mt 9:8; Jn 15:8; 1Pt 2:12 ^e5:17 Mt 7:12; Rm 3:31; 10:4; 13:8; Gl 3:24 ^f5:18–19 Mt 11:1; 24:35; Lk 16:17; Jms 2:10 ^g5:21 Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17 ^hMt 19:18; 23:31,35; Mk 10:19; Lk 18:20; Rm 13:9; Jms 2:11 ⁱ5:22 Mt 18:9; Mk 9:43; Jms 3:6; 1Jn 3:15 ^j5:25 Pr 25:8; Lk 12:58 ^k5:27 Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18 ^l5:28 2Sm 11:2; Jb 31:1; Pr 6:25 ^m5:29 Mt 18:9; Mk 9:47 ⁿMt 10:28; 23:35,33; Lk 12:5 ^o5:31 Jr 3:1; Mt 19:7; Mk 10:4 ^pDt 24:1 ^q5:32 Mt 19:9; Mk 10:11; Lk 16:18; Rm 7:3; 1Co 7:11 ^r5:33 Lv 19:12; Nm 30:2; Dt 23:21; Mt 23:16 ^s5:34–35 Ps 48:2; Is 66:1; Mt 23:22; Ac 7:49; Jms 5:12 ^t5:37 Mt 6:13; 13:19,38; Jn 17:15; 2Th 3:3 ^u5:38 Ex 21:24; Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21 ^v5:39 Lk 6:29–30; Rm 12:17; 1Co 6:7; 1Pt 3:9

^a5:18 Or *not one iota*; *iota* is the smallest letter of the Gk alphabet. ^b5:21 Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17 ^c5:22 Other mss add *without a cause* ^d5:22 Lit *Whoever says ‘Raca’*; an Aramaic term of abuse that puts someone down, insulting one’s intelligence

^e5:22 Lit *Sanhedrin* ^f5:22 Lit *the gehenna of fire* ^g5:25 Other mss read *judge will hand you over to* ^h5:26 Lit *quadrans*, the smallest and least valuable Roman coin, worth 1/64 of a daily wage ⁱ5:27 Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18 ^j5:31 Dt 24:1 ^k5:33 Lv 19:12; Nm 30:2; Dt 23:21 ^l5:38 Ex 21:24; Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21 ^m5:39 Or *don’t set yourself against, or don’t retaliate against*



Redeeming Your GUILTY Past Present Grace, Future Hope

Stephen Viars

How do you find present grace and future hope for your painful past in God's Word? How do you apply the truth of Scripture to your guilty past? (To deal with your *innocent* past, see page 1408.) Your guilty past involves times when you sinned against someone else in some way. One of the fundamental purposes of Scripture is to help humans know how to respond when they have broken God's law. Many people who seem stuck in their past are there because they have never handled their failures God's way.

Principle 1. If you have unconfessed sin, admit it to God and the appropriate people quickly and thoroughly.

Many people are struggling today because they are unreconciled with God or other people. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ said, "So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt 5:23–24).

Here's the secret to being prepared for tomorrow's challenges: You have to clean your plate from today. That is why the apostle Paul stressed that you must not "let the sun go down on your anger, and don't give the devil an opportunity" (Eph 4:26–27). The reason some people have such difficulty communicating with others is that the conversations are littered with so many unsolved problems from the past.

Some will object that the other person sinned first, or worse, or more frequently. Jesus went on in the Sermon on the Mount to ask gently, "Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye?" (Mt 7:3). We will never see the other person's failures clearly unless we first deal honestly with our own.

Is it possible that disregarding this principle is one of the reasons you are tethered to your past? Are you still angry at the person who sinned against you? Has the sun gone down? How many times? Could it be that your anger has fermented and turned into bitterness? Did you hear Paul's words when he warned that you could be giving the devil an opportunity? Do you really want to do that?

Doing things God's way is hard. But Jesus comes in personally and powerfully giving us his help and strength to follow his Word. When we do not confess sin quickly to God and the appropriate people, we are missing out on some of the benefits of our union with Christ (1Jn 1:10). Our forgiveness is intended to lead to a clear conscience for us and restored relationships with God and others (2:1–2). When we confess our sins from the past, God will cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1:9).

Now is the time to pick up the phone. Schedule the meeting. Send the e-mail. If you do, keep it short, simple, and to the point. No attacks. No excuses. Just say, "I sinned against you in such and such a way, and I am sorry now that I did. I wish I had never done so. Please forgive me. I am committed to growing in this area and never intend to treat you that way again." Then do something that many of us find very difficult to do. Be quiet. Then see if God will keep his promise to cleanse you and bring you to a refreshing new place in your relationship with him and others.

Principle 2. Use the opportunity now to rejoice in great spiritual realities.

One mistake many people make even after they confess their sin is to continue to wallow in it. That is an unproductive exercise that may also reveal a heart condition that needs to be addressed.

One such condition is pride. Sometimes when we say, "I can't believe I did that," what we really mean is "I can't believe a wonderful person like me did that."

Another reason for wallowing is fear. People worry about who might find out. Some men and women try to perpetuate the myth of perfection, but the veneer wears off. Solomon said, "The fear of mankind is a snare, but the one who trusts in the LORD is protected" (Pr 29:25). Paul told the Corinthians, "It is of little importance to me that I should be judged by you" (1Co 4:3). His identity was secure in Christ, so he wasn't ruled by their opinions.

A third reason for wallowing is the secret desire to repeat the sin. Some men and women have never truly repented of their sin and would love to create a scenario where the same choices could be repeated. This is why the Bible teaches, "The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy" (Pr 28:13).

Wallowing also comes from wrongly equating being forgiven with having forgotten. However, forgetting may never happen with certain events in your life. **Just because you remember aspects of your past sin from time to time does not mean that God has not forgiven you.**

The way to avoid this kind of wallowing is to take a front row seat in theology class. We should be thankful for the eternal security of our salvation every day. To think that we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13) and now reside in the Father's hand (Jn 10:29) should always bring great joy to our hearts. But these ideas can be especially precious after we have sinned. There are dozens and dozens of theological truths that fall into this same category. Consider God's mercy, love, and grace. Think about our redemption, justification, and future hope.

Principle 3. Learn all the possible lessons from your failure.

You cannot change the fact that you sinned in the past, but you can wring out all the lessons from that event. What were the desires of your heart? Why was that choice so appealing? What is really important to you? What were you worshipping at that moment? How can your relationship with Christ supplant those idols? What accountability needs to be put in place?

Properly handling one's guilty past pleases God and can be a source of freedom for the Christian who takes the difficult steps outlined above.

For more on dealing with your past, see "Redeeming Your PAINFUL Past: Present Grace, Future Hope" on page 1772 and "Redeeming Your INNOCENT Past: Present Grace, Future Hope" on page 1408.

*Adapted from "Redeeming Your Painful Past: Present Grace, Future Hope" by Stephen Viars (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2012).

⁴⁰ As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well. ⁴¹ And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.³

Love Your Enemies

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor**^{A,b} and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies^B and pray for those who^C persecute you,^C ⁴⁵ so that you may be^D children of your Father

in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.^d

⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary?^{E,e} Don't even the Gentiles^f do the same?⁴⁸ Be perfect,^f therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

^{A:5:42} Dt 15:8; Lk 6:34 ^{B:5:43} Lv 19:18; Dt 23:6; Lk 10:29 ^{C:5:44} Lk 6:27; 23:34; Ac 7:60; Rm 12:20; 1Co 4:12; 1Pt 2:23 ^{D:5:45} Jb 25:3; Mt 5:9; Lk 6:35; Ac 14:17 ^{E:5:47} Mt 5:37; Mk 6:51; Jn 10:10; Rm 3:1; 2Co 9:1 ^{F:5:48} Gn 17:1; Lv 19:2; Php 3:15; Col 4:12; Jms 1:4; 1Pt 1:15

^{A:5:43} Lv 19:18 ^{B:5:44} Other mss add *bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you,* ^{C:5:44} Other mss add *mistreat you and* ^{D:5:45} Or *may become, or may show yourselves to be* ^{E:5:47} Or *doing that is superior; lit doing more* ^{F:5:47} Other mss read *tax collectors*

How to Give

6 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness^a in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father in heaven.² So whenever you give to the poor, don’t sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be applauded by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.³ But when you give to the poor, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^{5,b}

How to Pray

⁵ “Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.⁶ But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^{c,d} ⁷ When you pray, don’t babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they’ll be heard for their many words.^e ⁸ Don’t be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.^f

The Lord’s Prayer

⁹ “Therefore, you should pray like this:^g
 Our Father in heaven,
 your name be honored as holy.^h
¹⁰ Your kingdom come.
 Your will be done
 on earth as it is in heaven.ⁱ
¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.^d
¹² And forgive us our debts,
 as we also have forgiven our debtors.^j
¹³ And do not bring us
 into^k temptation,^k
 but deliver us from the evil one.^{e,l}

¹⁴ “For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well.^m ¹⁵ But if you don’t forgive others,^g your Father will not forgive your offenses.

How to Fast

¹⁶ “Whenever you fast, don’t be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they disfigure their facesⁿ so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.

¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,^o ¹⁸ so that your fasting isn’t obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^c

God and Possessions

¹⁹ “Don’t store up for yourselves treasures^h on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,⁹ where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal.
²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

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

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.⁵

The Cure for Anxiety

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you:^f Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing?²⁶ Consider the birds of the sky: They don’t sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than they?²⁷ Can any of you add one moment to his life span¹ by worrying?²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don’t labor or spin thread.²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these.³⁰ If that’s how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won’t he do much more for you — you of little faith?^w
³¹ So don’t worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’

^a6:1-2 Mt 23:5; Lk 6:24 ^b6:4 Jr 17:10; Lk 14:14; Col 3:23-24; Heb 4:13
^c6:5 Mt 6:16; Mk 11:25; Lk 6:24; 18:11 ^d6:6 2Kg 4:33; Is 26:20; Mt 6:18
^e6:7 1Kg 18:26; Ec 5:2 ^f6:8 Mt 9:12; Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31; 9:11; 10:42; Ac 2:45
^g6:9-13 Lk 11:1-13 ^h6:9 Lk 11:2; 1Co 7:14 ⁱ6:10 Ps 103:20; Mt 3:2; 4:17; 26:42; Lk 22:42; Ac 21:14 ^j6:11-12 Pr 30:8; Rm 4:4; Gl 5:3 ^k6:13 Mt 26:41; 1Co 10:13; 2Pt 2:9 ^lMt 5:37; Jn 17:15; 2Th 3:3; 2Tm 4:18 ^m6:14 Mk 11:25; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13 ⁿ6:15-16 Is 58:5; Mt 18:35; Jms 2:13 ^o6:17 Ru 3:3; 2Sm 12:20; Dn 10:3 ^p6:19 Pr 23:4; Heb 13:5 ^q6:20 Mt 19:21; Lk 12:33; 18:22; 1Tm 6:19 ^r6:23 Mt 4:16; 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; 27:45 ^s6:24 Lk 16:13; Gl 1:10; Jms 4:4 ^t6:25-33 Lk 12:22-31 ^u6:25 Lk 10:41; Php 4:6; 1Pt 5:7
^v6:26 Jb 38:41; Ps 147:9; Mt 10:29-31 ^w6:29-30 1Kg 10:4-7; Mt 8:26; 14:31; 16:8

^a6:1 Other mss read *charitable giving* ^b6:4 Other mss read *will himself reward you openly* ^c6:18 Other mss add *openly*
^d6:11 Or *our necessary bread, or our bread for tomorrow* ^e6:13 Or *do not cause us to come into* ^f6:13 Or *from evil*; some later mss add *For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.* ^g6:15 Other mss add *their wrongdoing*
^h6:19 Or *valuable* ⁱ6:27 Or *add a single cubit to his height*

or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first the kingdom of God^a and his righteousness,^b and all these things will be provided for you.^c³⁴ Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble^d of its own.

Do Not Judge

7 "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged.^e For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use.^f Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye?^g Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye?^h Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.ⁱ Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs,^h or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Search, Knock

⁷ "Ask,^j and it will be given to you.^j Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door^b will be opened to you.^k For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds,^l and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.^m Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?¹¹ If you then, who are evil,¹ know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him.¹² Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.^m

Entering the Kingdom

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

¹⁵ "Be on your guard against false prophets^p who come to you in sheep's^q clothing^r but inwardly are ravaging wolves.^s ¹⁶ You'll recognize them by their fruit.^t Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from

thistles?^u In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit.¹⁸ A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit.¹⁹ Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.^v ²⁰ So you'll recognize them by their fruit.^w

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven,^x but only the one who does the will^y of my Father in heaven.^z ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons^{aa} in your name, and do many miracles in your name?'^{ab} ²³ Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you lawbreakers!'^{c,ac,d}

The Two Foundations

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

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

A Man Cleansed

8 When he came down from the mountain, large crowds^{ah} followed him. ² Right away^{ai} a man with leprosy^e came up and knelt before him,^{aj} saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

^a6:33 Mk 1:15; Ac 20:25 ^bMt 27:19; Lk 7:29; 23:41,47; Jn 5:30; 17:25; Ac 3:14 ^c1Kg 3:13; Mt 19:28; Mk 10:29; Lk 18:29; Ttm 4:8 ^d6:34 Mt 6:25; Lk 10:41; Php 4:6; 1Pt 5:7 ^e7:1-5 Mk 4:24-25; Lk 6:37-42 ^f7:2 Mk 4:24; Lk 6:38; Rm 2:1; 14:10; Jms 2:13 ^g7:3 Lk 6:41; Jn 8:7-9 ^h7:6 Pr 9:7-8; 23:9; Mt 15:26 ⁱ7:7-11 Lk 11:9-13 ^j7:7 Mt 18:22; Mk 11:24; Jn 14:13-14; 15:7; 16:24; Jms 1:5; 1Jn 3:22; 5:14 ^k7:8 Pr 8:17; Is 55:6; Jr 29:12-13 ^l7:11 Gn 6:5; 8:21 ^m7:12 Mt 22:40; Lk 6:31; Rm 13:8; Gl 5:14 ⁿ7:13-14 Lk 13:23-24 ^o7:13 Mt 26:8; Mk 14:4; Jn 17:12; Ac 8:20; Rm 9:22; Php 1:28 ^p7:15 Mt 24:11,24; Mk 13:22; Lk 6:26; Ac 13:6; 2Pt 2:1 ^qMt 9:36; 10:6,16; 12:11-12; 15:24; 18:12-13 ^rMt 3:5; 2Tm 3:5 ^sEzk 22:7; Jn 10:12; Ac 20:29 ^t7:16-21 Pr 11:30; Mt 12:33; Lk 6:43-44; Jn 4:36; Jms 3:12 ^u7:16 Mt 13:7; Heb 6:8 ^v7:19 Jr 11:19; Mt 3:10; Lk 3:9; 13:7; Jn 15:2; Jd 12 ^w7:20 Mt 7:16; 12:33; Lk 6:44; Jms 3:12 ^x7:21 Mt 3:2; 18:3; Mk 9:43 ^yPs 143:10; Pr 16:9; Mt 12:50; Gl 1:4; Eph 1:9; 1Jn 2:17 ^zIs 8:2; Mt 25:11; Lk 6:46; Rm 2:13; Jms 1:22 ^{aa}7:22 Mk 3:15; Rv 9:20; 18:2 ^{ab}Nm 24:4; Mt 10:15; Lk 13:25; Jn 11:51; 1Co 13:2 ^{ac}7:23 Ps 5:5; 6:8; Mt 25:32,41; Lk 13:25-27 ^{ad}7:24-27 Lk 6:47-49; Jms 1:22-25 ^{ae}7:24 Mt 12:36; Mk 4:14; Lk 6:47; 8:21; Jn 1:1; 2:22 ^{af}7:28 Mt 11:1; 13:5; 19:1; 26:1 ^{ag}Mt 13:54; 22:23; Mk 1:22; 6:2; 11:18; Lk 4:32; Jn 7:46 ^{ah}8:1 Mt 5:1; Lk 3:7 ^{ai}8:2-4 Mk 1:40-44; Lk 5:12-14 ^{aj}8:2 Mt 9:18; 15:25; 18:26; 20:20; Jn 9:38; Ac 10:25

^a6:33 Other mss omit of God ^b7:7 Lit and it ^c7:23 Lit you who work lawlessness ^d7:23 Ps 6:8 ^e8:2 Gk leprosy; a term for various skin diseases, also in v. 3; see Lv 13-14

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

A Centurion's Faith

⁵ When he entered Capernaum,^c a centurion came to him, pleading with him, ⁶ "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible agony."

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

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

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

Healings at Capernaum

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

He himself took
our weaknesses
and carried our diseases.^k

The Cost of Following Jesus

¹⁸ When Jesus saw a large crowd^l around him, he gave the order to go to the other side of the sea. ¹⁹ A scribe approached him

and said,^m "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

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

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

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

Wind and Waves Obey Jesus

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

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

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

Demons Driven Out by Jesus

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

³⁰ A long way off from them, a large herd of pigs was feeding. ³¹ "If you drive us out," the demons begged him, "send us into the herd of pigs."

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

^a8:4 Mt 9:30; 17:9; Mk 5:43; 7:36; 8:30 ^bLv 14:3–4,10; Lk 5:14; 17:14
^c8:5–13 Lk 7:1–10; Jn 4:46–54 ^d8:8 Ps 107:20; Lk 15:19,21 ^e8:11 Is 49:12; 59:19; Mk 1:11; Lk 13:29; Eph 3:6 ^f8:12 Mt 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk 13:28 ^g8:13 Mt 9:22,29; Jn 4:53 ^h8:14–16 Mk 1:29–34; Lk 4:38–41
ⁱ8:16 Mk 3:15; 11m 4:1; 11n 4:1 /Mt 4:24; 8:33; Ac 19:12 ^j8:17 Is 53:4; Mt 1:22 ^k8:18 Mt 14:22; Mk 4:35; Lk 8:22; Jn 6:15–17
^l8:19–22 Lk 9:57–60 ^m8:20 Dn 7:34; Mt 9:6; 12:8; 13:41; Mk 8:31
ⁿ8:23–27 Mk 4:36–41; Lk 8:22–25; Jn 6:16–21 ^o8:23 Mt 10:1; 26:56; Mk 3:7; 16:20; Lk 6:13; Jn 12:16 ^p8:26 Ps 65:7; 89:9; 107:29; Mt 6:30; Lk 4:39 ^q8:27 Mk 1:27; Lk 5:9 ^r8:28–34 Mk 5:1–17; Lk 8:26–37
^s8:29 Jdg 11:12; 2Sm 16:10; Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34; Jn 2:4; Ac 8:7

^a8:7 Or "I will come and heal him." ^b8:9 Lit under me ^c8:11 Lit recline at the table ^d8:13 Or that hour; lit very hour
^e8:17 Is 53:4 ^f8:18 Other mss read saw large crowds ^g8:28 Other mss read Gergesenes ^h8:29 Other mss add Jesus

When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.^a

The Son of Man Forgives and Heals

9 So he got into a boat, crossed over, and came to his own town.^b ² Just then^c some men^a brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, “Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven.”^d

³ At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, “He’s blaspheming!”^e

⁴ Perceiving their thoughts,^f Jesus said, “Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts?”^g ⁵ For which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk?’^h ⁶ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” — then he told the paralytic, “Get up, take your stretcher, and go home.”⁷ ⁷ So he got up and went home.⁸ When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck^{c,d} and gave glory^g to God, who had given such authority to men.

The Call of Matthew

⁹ As Jesus went on from there,^h he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, “Follow me,” and he got up and followed him.ⁱ

¹⁰ While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples.^j

¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”^k

¹² Now when he heard this, he said, “It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick.^l ¹³ Go and learn what this means: **I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**^m For I didn’t come to call the righteous, but sinners.”^f

A Question about Fasting

¹⁴ Then John’s disciples came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?”ⁿ

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

A Girl Restored and a Woman Healed

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

²⁰ Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe,^r ²¹ for she said to herself, “If I can just touch his robe, I’ll be made well.”^{k,s}

²² Jesus turned and saw her. “Have courage, daughter,” he said. “Your faith has saved you.”^t ²³ And the woman was made well from that moment.^m

^a8:34 1Kg 17:18; Lk 5:8; Ac 16:39 ^b9:1 Mt 4:13; Mk 5:21
^c9:2–8 Mt 2:3–12; Lk 5:18–26 ^d9:2 Mt 4:24; 8:10,13; 9:22; Lk 7:48;
 Jn 16:33 ^e9:3 Mt 26:65; Jn 10:36 ^f9:4 Mt 12:25; Lk 6:8; 9:47; 11:7
^g9:8 Mt 5:16; 15:31; Lk 7:16; 13:13; Jn 15:8; Ac 4:21 ^h9:9–17 Mk 2:14–22;
 Lk 5:27–38 ⁱ9:9 Mt 10:3; Mk 2:14; 3:18; Lk 6:15; Ac 1:13 ^j9:10 Mt 10:42;
 28:19; Lk 14:26; Jn 8:31; 13:25; 15:8; Ac 6:1 ^k9:11 Mt 11:19; Lk 5:30; 15:2;
 Gl 2:15 ^l9:12 Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31 ^m9:13 Hs 6:6; Mc 6:6–8; Mt 12:7
ⁿ9:14 Mt 11:2; 14:12; 15:2; Lk 11:1; 18:12 ^o9:18–26 Mk 5:22–43; Lk 8:41–56
^p9:18 Mt 8:2–3; Mk 5:23 ^q9:19 Lk 5:11; Jn 8:12 ^r9:20 Lv 15:25;
 Nm 15:38; Dt 22:12; Mt 14:36; 23:5 ^s9:21 Mt 14:36; Mk 3:10; Lk 6:19
^t9:22 Mt 15:28; Mk 10:52; Lk 7:50; 17:19; 18:42

^a9:2 Lit then they ^b9:4 Or minds ^c9:8 Other mss read amazed ^d9:8 Lit afraid ^e9:13 Hs 6:6 ^f9:13 Other mss add to repentance ^g9:15 Lit the sons of the bridal chamber ^h9:15 Lit days ⁱ9:17 Lit And they do not put ^j9:18 Lit daughter has now come to the end ^k9:21 Or be saved ^l9:22 Or has made you well ^m9:22 Lit hour

eleos

Greek pronunciation	[EH leh ahss]
CSB translation	mercy
Uses in Matthew	3 (Lk, 6)
Uses in the NT	27
Focus passage	Matthew 9:13

Eleos is one of several NT words meaning *mercy*. Each of the three times that this word appears in Matthew, Jesus uses it to refer to principles established in the OT, where God clearly required that his people show *mercy*. Twice Jesus quotes Hs 6:6, “I desire *mercy* and

Word Study

not sacrifice” (Mt 9:13; 12:7). The Hebrew term (*chesed*) underlying the Greek translation combines the ideas of love, *mercy*, and faithful loyalty. The Pharisees condemned Jesus for fraternizing with social outcasts (Mt 9:11), but he reminded them that God expected his people to show *mercy* before giving sacrifice. In Mt 23 Jesus rebuked the Pharisees even more harshly, and one of his grievances was their neglect of the more important aspects of the law (“justice, *mercy*, and faithfulness”) even while they meticulously tithed their mint, dill, and cumin.

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

Healing the Blind

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

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

They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, "Let it be done for you according to your faith."

³⁰ And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus warned them sternly, "Be sure that no one finds out."^g ³¹ But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that whole area.

Driving Out a Demon

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

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

The Lord of the Harvest

³⁵ Jesus continued going around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom,^j and healing every^k disease and every sickness.^{b,c} ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected,^k like sheep without a shepherd.^l ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples,^m "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few.³⁸ Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."

Commissioning the Twelve

10 Summoning his twelve disciples,ⁿ he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to heal every^k disease and sickness.^{c,o} ² These are the

names of the twelve apostles:^p First, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;^q ⁴ Simon the Zealot,^r and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.^q

⁵ Jesus sent out these twelve after giving them instructions: "Don't take the road that leads to the Gentiles, and don't enter any Samaritan^r town. ⁶ Instead, go to the lost sheep^s of the house of Israel.^t ⁷ As you go, proclaim, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'^u ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy,^f drive out demons.^v Freely you received, freely give. ⁹ Don't acquire gold, silver, or copper for your money-belts.^w ¹⁰ Don't take a traveling bag for the road, or an extra shirt, sandals, or a staff, for the worker^x is worthy of his food. ¹¹ When you enter any town or village, find out who is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹² Greet a household when you enter it,^y ¹³ and if the household is worthy, let your peace be on it; but if it is unworthy, let your peace return to you.^z ¹⁴ If anyone does not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet^{aa} when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment^{ab} for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.^{ac}

Persecutions Predicted

¹⁶ "Look, I'm sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves.^{ad} ¹⁷ Beware of them, because they will hand you over to local courts^e and flog you in their synagogues.^{ae} ¹⁸ You will even be brought before governors and kings because of me,

^a9:23 2Ch 35:25; Jr 9:17; 16:6; Ezk 24:17; Rv 18:22 ^b9:24 Jn 11:13; Ac 20:10 ^c9:25 Mk 9:27; Ac 3:7; 9:40–41 ^d9:26 Mt 4:24; 9:31; 14:1; Mk 1:28; Lk 4:14 ^e9:27 Mt 1:1; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30–31; Mk 10:47; Lk 18:38–39 ^f9:28 Mk 11:24; Jn 3:16; Ac 10:43; Rm 10:9; 1Pt 1:8–10 ^g9:29–30 Mt 8:4,13; 9:22; Mk 8:25; Jn 9:26 ^h9:32–34 Mt 12:22–24; Lk 11:14–15 ⁱ9:34 Mk 3:22; Jn 7:20 ^j9:35 Mt 4:23; Mk 1:15 ^k9:36 Mt 14:14; 15:32; Mk 6:54; 8:2 ^lNm 27:17; 1Kg 22:17; Ezk 34:5; Zch 10:2 ^m9:37 Mt 10:1; 26:56; Mk 3:7; 16:20; Lk 6:13; Jn 12:16 ⁿ10:1–4 Mk 3:13–19; 6:13–16 ^o10:1 Mt 9:35; Mk 6:7; Lk 9:1 ^p10:2 Mt 4:18,21; 16:18; Jn 1:42 ^q10:4 Mt 26:14; Lk 22:3; Jn 6:71; 13:2,26 ^r10:5 2Kg 17:24; Lk 9:52; 17:16; Jn 4:9; Ac 8:25 ^s10:6 Ps 119:36; Is 53:6; Jr 50:6; Mt 9:36; 18:12 ^tAc 2:36; 7:42; Heb 8:8,10 ^u10:7 Mt 3:2–3; 4:17; Lk 10:9 ^v10:8 Mk 3:15; Rv 9:20; 18:2 ^w10:9–15 Mk 6:6–8; Lk 9:3–5; 10:4–12 ^x10:10 Lk 10:7; 1Co 9:14; 1Tm 5:18 ^y10:12 1Sm 25:6; 1Ch 12:15; Ps 122:7–8 ^z10:13 Ps 35:13; Mt 8:8; Ac 16:15 ^{aa}10:14 Neh 5:13; Lk 10:11; Ac 13:51 ^{ab}10:15 Mt 12:36; Ac 17:31; Heb 10:25; 2Pt 2:9; 1Jn 4:17 ^{ac}Mt 11:22,24; 2Pt 2:6; Jd 6–7 ^{ad}10:16 Gn 3:1; Lk 10:3; Rm 16:19; Php 2:15 ^{ae}10:17 Mk 13:9,11; Lk 12:11–12; Ac 5:40; 26:11

^a9:35; ^{10:1} Or every kind of ^b9:35 Other mss add among the people ^c9:35; ^{10:1} Or physical ailment ^d10:3 Other mss read and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus ^e10:4 Lit the Cananaean ^f10:8 Gk leprosy; a term for various skin diseases; see Lv 13–14 ^g10:17 Or sanhedrins

to bear witness to them and to the Gentiles.^a
 19 But when they hand you over, don't worry about how or what you are to speak.^b For you will be given what to say at that hour,²⁰ because it isn't you speaking, but the Spirit^c of your Father is speaking through you.^d

21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.^e 22 You will be hated by everyone because of my name.^f But the one who endures to the end will be saved.^g 23 When they persecute you in one town, flee to another.^h For truly I tell you, you will not have gone through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. 24 A discipleⁱ is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master.^j 25 It is enough for a disciple to become like his teacher and a slave like his master. If they called the head of the house 'Beelzebul,' how much more the members of his household!

Fear God

26 "Therefore,^k don't be afraid of them, since there is nothing covered that won't be uncovered and nothing hidden that won't be made known.^l 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light. What you hear in a whisper,^m proclaim on the housetops.ⁿ 28 Don't fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul;^o rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.²⁹ Aren't two sparrows sold for a penny?^c Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's^p consent.^q 30 But even the hairs of your head have all been counted.^q 31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.^r

Acknowledging Christ

32 "Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge me before others, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.^s 33 But whoever denies me before others,^t I will

"Kids do not need perfect parents; they need parents who walk alongside them."



also deny him before my Father in heaven.

34 Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.^u 35 For I came to turn

**a man against his father,
 a daughter against her mother,
 a daughter-in-law against
 her mother-in-law;**

**36 and a man's enemies will be
 the members of his household.^v**

37 The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Anyone who finds his life will lose it,^x and anyone who loses his life because of me will find it.^y

A Cup of Cold Water

40 "The one who welcomes you welcomes me,^z and the one who welcomes me welcomes him who sent me.^{aa} 41 Anyone who welcomes a prophet^{ab} because he is a prophet^c will receive a prophet's reward. And anyone who welcomes a righteous person because he's righteous^d will receive a righteous person's reward.

^a10:18 Mt 28:19; Rm 1:5; Gl 1:16 ^b10:19 Ex 4:12; Nm 23:5; Dt 18:18; Mt 6:25 ^c10:20 Ps 51:11; Jn 1:33; Ac 2:4; Rm 8:9; Gl 5:25; Ti 3:5 ^dLk 12:12; Ac 4:8; 13:9; 2Co 13:3 ^e10:21 Mc 7:6; Mt 10:35–36; Mk 13:12 ^f10:22 Mt 24:9; Lk 21:17; Jn 15:18 ^gMt 24:13; Mk 13:13; Jn 12:12–13 ^h10:23 Mt 12:15; Ac 8:1; 9:25; 14:6; 17:10 ⁱ10:24 Lk 6:40; Jn 13:16; 15:20 ^j10:25 2Kg 1:2; Mt 12:24,27; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15,18–19 ^k10:26–33 Lk 12:2–9 ^l10:26 Mk 4:22; Lk 8:17; 12:2 ^m10:27 Mt 24:17; Lk 5:19; 12:3; Ac 5:20 ⁿ10:28 Is 8:12–13; 51:12–13; Jr 1:8; 1Pt 3:14 ^oMt 5:22; Lk 12:5; Heb 10:31; Jms 4:12 ^p10:29 Mt 5:16; 11:27; Lk 11:13; Jn 8:42 ^q10:30 1Sm 14:45; 2Sm 14:11; Lk 21:18; Ac 27:34 ^r10:31 Mt 6:26; 12:12 ^s10:32 Lk 12:8; Rm 10:9–10; Rv 3:5 ^t10:33 Mk 8:38; Lk 9:26; 2Tm 2:12; 2Pt 2:1 ^u10:34–36 Lk 12:51–53 ^v10:36 Ps 41:9; 55:12–13; Mc 7:6; Jn 13:18 ^w10:37–39 Lk 14:25–27 ^x10:39 Mt 16:25; Mk 8:35; Lk 9:24; 17:33; Jn 12:25 ^yMt 9:9; Jn 8:12; 12:26; 21:19 ^z10:40 Mt 18:5; Lk 10:16; Jn 13:20; Gl 4:14 ^{aa}Mk 9:37; Lk 9:48; Jn 12:44 ^{ab}10:41 Kg 17:10–15; 18:4; 2Kg 4:8; 3Jn 5–8

^a10:24 Or *student* ^b10:27 Lit *in the ear* ^c10:29 Gk *assarion*, a small copper coin ^d10:29 Lit *ground apart from your Father* ^e10:35–36 Mc 7:6 ^f10:41 Lit *prophet in the name of a prophet* ^g10:41 Lit *person in the name of a righteous person*

phobeō

Greek pronunciation	[fah BEH oh]
CSB translation	<i>fear</i>
Uses in Matthew	18 (Mk, 12; Lk, 23; Jn, 5)
Uses in the NT	95
Focus passage	Matthew 10:28

Like the English term *fear*, Greek *phobeō* covers a broad spectrum of meanings, including *worry* (Mt 1:20), *discomfort* at potential circumstances (Mt 2:22; 10:31; 14:5; 21:26,46), and feelings of *awe* and/or *terror*, especially in the presence of the supernatural (Mt 9:8; 10:28; 14:27;

Word Study

17:6–7; 27:54; 28:5,10). *Phobeō* has two main applications in the NT: *fear* of God and *fear* of man or circumstances. In regard to the former, *fear* can be understood as a healthy understanding of who God is, his power, and what he demands from us (cp. Pr 1:7; 9:10). The unbeliever should tremble in *terror* before such a God, for he is the one who can "destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt 10:28). For the believer, however, such *fear* is replaced by a relationship in which perfect love can flourish (1Jn 4:18; cp. Rm 8:15), though *awe* of God's greatness remains (2Co 5:11; 7:1).



Helping Your Anxious Child

What to Do When Worries Get Big

Julie Lowe

Paul Foxman, in his 2004 book *The Worried Child*, argued that anxiety was the number-one epidemic in the United States, and that approximately 25 percent of the population struggle with it.¹ Foxman describes how we often give children conflicting messages that the world is both safe and unsafe. We walk into public schools with metal detectors and security guards. We talk about lining backpacks with protective metals. What message might that be giving our children? We go through airports with multiple security checks, pat-downs, and bomb-sniffing dogs, yet we regularly tell our kids they are safe and not to worry.

You've probably noticed that even though a number of children may be exposed to the same events, some struggle with anxiety more than others. Why might your child struggle more with anxiety than another child? There can be several factors.

As any parent, teacher, or child counselor will tell you, every child is wired differently. They each have different strengths and weaknesses, and tendencies toward particular struggles or temptations. Some children have an innate temptation to wrestle with fear. They are more alert to potential risks and are in tune with the peril others are experiencing. This creates a heightened sense of vulnerability for them. Some kids have personalities that are more perfectionistic, which can lead them to have difficulty relaxing, to be driven by the desire to please, to be nonassertive, and to want to avoid conflict. Another cause of persistent anxiety in children may be prolonged exposure to stressful situations. Traumatic events, turmoil in the family, or an unpredictable lifestyle could lead to a sense of endangerment.

As a parent, how do you know when a child's fear is within "normal" range, or when it is problematic and needs intervention? From a counseling standpoint, you'd want to evaluate to what degree it is impeding his or her day-to-day life. And perhaps the better question is: Is their fear controlling them, or are they controlling their fear? Are they able to manage their anxiety, or does it manage them?

When experiencing persistent anxiety, the tendency is for children to find comfort in controlling or shrinking their world to what feels manageable. Some children look for security or comfort in routines, behaviors (such as thumb-sucking, sleeping with a parent, or other rituals), objects (escape into television, books, or fantasy worlds), people (the presence of a parent, sibling, or friend), or the avoidance of certain things (school refusal; staying home; fear of getting in a car, bus, or plane). The lure for us as adults is to try to reassure them that their fears are unfounded and that bad things won't happen. Sometimes that is the case, but much of the time children are afraid of dangers that are genuine and possible threats.

The truth is, just like adults, children live in a fallen, broken world where bad things happen: cancer, danger, crime, and trauma are real. We all fail, make mistakes, get made fun of, and experience bullying. Life does not always turn out the way we would like it to. You will be drawn to give your children false comfort or assurances you can't deliver. Will you give in, or will you help them to navigate life in a precarious, broken world? Your hope and theirs is found in the one who reigns over it all.

Parental Comfort vs. God's Comfort

When children are hurting, most parents agree they would do anything to help provide relief. At times, this means you might settle for solutions that bring short-term reprieve but can cause secondary problems.

Take for example six-year-old Monica, who is sincerely afraid of the dark. Each night at bedtime, she begins her routine of checking under the bed and in the closet, as well as turning on night lights and closing blinds. One night, she sees something disturbing on TV. Though you've gone through her normal nighttime routine with her, she is still quite fearful. She looks panicked and is shedding tears, begging you to stay with her until she falls asleep. You've tried praying with her, playing soothing music, reading, adding a night light, and all versions of comfort you can think of. It is getting later and you all are sleep-deprived. Eventually you give in and allow Monica to settle into bed with you so you can all get a decent night's sleep. What started out as a survival tool for a rough season, however, slowly becomes the new "normal." Monica likes the warmth and closeness of her parents and battles the idea of returning to her room.

Perhaps for another child, the coping mechanism you've settled on—allowing them to watch TV until they fall asleep—has become distracting. It began as a short-term solution in a difficult moment in order to get them through a particularly challenging stretch of anxiety. Sometimes temporary decisions like these, made out of exasperation quickly become permanent habits. Kids become dependent on the TV to fall asleep, on having a parent in the room, or another less-than-ideal comfort strategy that has been put in place. Kids don't start out depending on these methods, but they can become a secondary gain to being afraid. The child starts realizing, *I get to stay up late, watch TV, sleep with my parents, or (fill in the blank)*. Children might not want to overcome their fears, because it means losing something they have come to depend on or enjoy. What motivation will they have to overcome fear, if it means losing a special privilege?

Do you see how, if we are not thoughtful and careful about how we approach our children's fears, we may be unwittingly giving them reasons to maintain them?

Whatever comfort we provide my children, we hope to ultimately point them to Christ who can meet them in the midst of their fear: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand" (Is 41:10). As a parent, our capacity to comfort is limited; it cannot guarantee or protect them from every fear. Our comfort is flawed and prone to disappoint; we will fail them, be frustrated or forgetful, or be sinful in our responses. And our comfort is not always accessible; we cannot go to school with them, live inside their head, or be available every time they struggle. However, we can point them to the one who is always accessible, always available—whose comfort is perfect and limitless.

The Spirit can go places inside a child's heart and mind that we cannot. We are commissioned to reflect Christ in the comfort we provide our children, always leading them to him as their ultimate comfort. He can meet them in deeper and more meaningful ways than we, as parents, ever can, and he also desires that they learn to depend on him in all of life's situations.

Here is this waterfall effect: You can provide comfort to your children because it has first been given to you (see 2Co 1:3–4). You can offer hope, because you have first found hope in him. As a parent, you live out and embody before your children what Christ is and has done for you. **Kids do not need perfect parents; they need parents who walk alongside them.** Children feel understood and known when they hear a parent has struggled with fear, shared their experience, and found help. They benefit by hearing how their parent found comfort in Christ, and it encourages them to draw near to God in their struggle. God always offers his presence to his children in the midst of their fear. We see these themes in Scripture over and over (e.g., Dt 31:6; Pss 23:4; 56:3; 94:19).

Children need to find hope and comfort in the right places. We don't want to guarantee that bad things won't happen, offer false hope, or make promises we can't possibly fulfill. Young people often see through these thin attempts anyway. *We do* want to point them to the one (Christ) who can really meet them in their struggles and fears. Some kids need short-term help (accommodations, extra support, or comfort in the midst of a tragedy or hard experience); and some benefit from counseling. No matter the severity of their struggles, all apprehensive children need to know there is a God who walks with them through

their fears. Parental wisdom is knowing what type of intercession they need, while wisely, consistently pointing them to greater faith.

Giving Hope: What Message Do They Hear?

With constant media broadcasting every peril in the world, as well as more mature themes in shows that specifically target young people, the question remains: How do we infuse hope into a culture full of angst? There are many shows and miniseries out today that entice young people either with darker themes or by portraying life as meaningless. In light of the many messages children are bombarded with, there is something valuable we need to impart to them: Kids need reasons why God is relevant to them. They need to find meaning and identity in things that genuinely fulfill. They need hope.

Have we given our kids reasons why they can live life fearlessly? Have we fostered conversations about hard topics and convinced them that no topic is too touchy for us to hear, no issue is off limits, and that we can handle even the most intimate details of their lives with genuine love and concern? We must be proactive in fostering connections with our children. We must work tirelessly to engage them and invest deeply into their lives. This will powerfully counter any temptation for them to believe that what we offer is inconsequential or inadequate.

Let your child know, they are not alone. Pursue meaningful conversation with your child. Be proactive in addressing hard topics they are bound to face in their world. Be a redemptive guide speaking into the corruption they will be forced to weed through. Let them know there is one who fights on their behalf.

Thirteen Truths from Scripture to Comfort Your Anxious Child

As you foster an atmosphere of open conversation with your child, be sure to undergird your discussions with encouraging truths from Scripture. Here are some ideas to get you started:

1. You are not alone (Ps 23:4).
2. You have value (Mt 10:31; 1Pt 2:9).
3. He sees your tears (Rv 21:4).
4. There is help (Ps 46:1; Heb 4:15–16).
5. Your life has purpose (Jr 29:11).
6. What you are going through is temporary (2Co 4:16–18).
7. There is a way out (1Co 10:13).
8. You are more than the outward appearance (1Sm 16:7).
9. You cannot imagine what good lies in store for you (1Co 2:9).
10. You will not always feel this way (Ps 30:5; 2Co 4:8–9).
11. You are greatly loved (Jr 31:3; Eph 3:17–18).
12. You will not be put to shame (Is 54:4; Heb 13:5–6).
13. God is up to good in your life (Gn 50:20; Rm 8:28).

Reminding your child of unchanging promises from God's Word will give him or her a solid framework for processing worries and fears, both now and into adulthood (Is 55:11). Undergird all your reassurances with reminders of who God is, who your child is in Christ, and the promises of the Lord's care and presence no matter what the circumstances are. This comfort is what your child needs most—not a promise that nothing scary or difficult will ever happen to them, but that the Lord of all creation is with them, is for them, and has a loving plan for his or her life.

*Adapted from "Helping Your Anxious Child: What to Do When Worries Get Big" by Julie Lowe (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2018).

See endnotes page 1800.

⁴² And whoever gives³ even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple,^{a,b} truly I tell you, he will never lose his reward.”

John the Baptist Doubts

11 When Jesus had finished giving instructions to his twelve disciples, he moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns.^c ² Now when John heard in prison what the Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples^{d,3} and asked him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”^e

⁴ Jesus replied to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with leprosy⁸ are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news,^f ⁶ and blessed is the one who isn’t offended by me.”^g

⁷ As these men were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind?^h ⁸ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? See, those who wear soft clothes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.^{i,10} This is the one about whom it is written:

See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way before you.^j

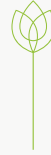
¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one greater than John the Baptist has appeared,^b but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been suffering violence,^k and the violent have been seizing it by force. ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you’re willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come.^k ¹⁵ Let anyone who has ears^l listen.”^l

An Unresponsive Generation

¹⁶ “To what should I compare this generation? It’s like children sitting in the marketplaces who call out to other children:

¹⁷ We played the flute for you,
but you didn’t dance;
we sang a lament,
but you didn’t mourn!^m

“Extreme fatigue strips life down to the bare basics of human need and God’s grace. As you learn to call upon God, you will find him. He will meet you, sustain you, comfort you, and give you hope.”



¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon!’^m ¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard,’ⁿ a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’^o Yet wisdom is vindicated^u by her deeds.”¹

²⁰ Then he proceeded to denounce the towns where most of his miracles were done, because they did not repent: ²¹ “Woe to you, Chorazin!^p Woe to you, Bethsaida!^q For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon,^r they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes long ago. ²² But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment^t than for you. ²³ And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will go down to Hades.^s For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until today. ²⁴ But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”

The Son Gives Knowledge and Rest

²⁵ At that time Jesus said,^u “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to infants.^v ²⁶ Yes, Father, because this was your good pleasure.^v ²⁷ All things have been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son desires^k to reveal him.^w

²⁸ “Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.^x ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from

^a10:42 Mt 25:40; Mk 9:41; Heb 6:10 ^bMt 28:19; Lk 14:26; Jn 8:31; 13:35; 15:8; Ac 6:1 ^c11:1 Mt 7:28; 9:35; Lk 23:5 ^d11:2–19 Lk 7:18–35 ^e11:3 Ps 118:26; Jn 6:14; 11:27; Heb 10:37 ^f11:5 Is 35:5; 61:1; Lk 4:18; Jms 2:5 ^g11:6 Is 8:14–15; Mt 13:21; Jn 6:61; 16:1 ^h11:7 Mt 3:1; Eph 4:14 ⁱ11:9 Mt 14:5; 21:26; Lk 1:76 ^j11:10 Mal 3:1; Mk 1:2 ^k11:14 Mal 4:5; Mt 17:10–13; Mk 9:11–13; Lk 1:17; Jn 1:21 ^l11:15 Mt 13:9; Mk 4:23; Lk 8:8; 14:35; Rv 2:7 ^m11:18 Mt 3:4; Lk 1:15 ⁿ11:19 Mt 9:10; Lk 7:36; 14:1; Jn 2:1; 12:2 ^oMt 9:11; 18:17; Lk 15:2; 19:7 ^p11:21–24 Lk 10:12–15 ^q11:21 Mk 6:45; Lk 9:10; Jn 12:21 ^rMt 15:21; Lk 6:17; Ac 12:20 ^s11:22 Ezk 28:2–4; Am 1:9–10; Mt 10:15; 15:21; Mk 3:8 ^t11:23 Is 14:13,15; Mt 4:13 ^u11:25–27 Lk 10:21–22 ^v11:25 Ps 8:2; Lk 22:42; Jn 11:41; 1Co 1:26; 2Co 3:14 ^w11:27 Mt 28:18; Jn 1:18; 7:29; 8:19; 10:15; 17:25–26 ^x11:28 Jr 31:25; Jn 7:37

^a10:42 Lit little ones in the name of a disciple ^b11:5 Gk leprosy; a term for various skin diseases; see Lk 13–14 ^c11:10 Mal 3:1 ^d11:11 Lit arisen ^e11:12 Or has been forcefully advancing ^f11:15 Other mss add to hear ^g11:17 Or beat your chests in grief ^h11:19 Or declared right ⁱ11:19 Other mss read children ^j11:26 Lit was well-pleasing in your sight ^k11:27 Or wills, or chooses



Dealing with Fatigue

David Powlison

Causes for Debilitating Fatigue

Fatigue can have many causes and can be experienced to varying degrees. Here are some possible causes, any or all of which can show up as depression:

- *Physical Problems:* allergies, arthritis, chronic fatigue syndrome, cancer, hypoglycemia, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, thyroid dysfunction, and many other diseases, medication side effects, sleep problems, old age, and parenting young children (also nursing and hormonal changes for women, and loss of sleep for both women and men)
- *Life Stresses:* grief, overwork, broken relationships, difficult circumstances, and a traumatic event
- *Spiritual Struggles:* fear, guilt, worry, hopelessness, and bitterness

Personal Experience

After open heart surgery, I experienced shattering and debilitating fatigue for five years. I said to my wife many months after surgery, "I feel like someone who took his car in for repairs. The car I got back turned out to be a junker." The wounds had healed, but my body didn't work.

Fatigue destroyed much of my life. I had no resilience. I was able to do only the bare minimum in every area of my life. I had to let go of many things that were valuable, gratifying, and joyous. My social circle became smaller and smaller, finally narrowing down to family and a few friends. My ministry life—counseling and teaching—was severely curtailed.

Although I lost much of my social connectedness and ministry, God's ministry to me and his social life with me became incalculably precious and sweet. Because of my deep need for God, my relationship with him became more intimate. Psalm 46 assured me, "God is . . . a helper who is always found in times of trouble." The essential dynamic of my moments and days became, "Lord, this is trouble. Help!" And he helped.

Extreme fatigue strips life down to the bare basics of human need and God's grace. As you learn to call upon God, you will find him (Mt 11:28–30). He will meet you, sustain you, comfort you, and give you hope.

Learning to Live with Fatigue

I faced five years of mystery, with no explanations. Finally, we found both an explanation and a cure. Perhaps you also will find a cause and a cure, but for now you must learn to live well within fatigue's limitations. You will have to learn how to think, feel, choose, believe, love—and not sin—while you feel like a "smoldering wick" (Is 42:3). You need to know God and live fruitfully despite your constant weariness. I know that God used my fatigue, difficult as it was, for good in my life. He plans to do the same for you.

How God Views Fatigue

God uses fatigue to teach us important truths.

- *God is in control.* You live in God's world. He made all things and oversees everything that happens. Your long-lasting fatigue is not a bad accident. It's under God's control and will be used by him to deepen your relationship with him and to grow you to be more like him. Jesus learned obedience on the long road of weakness and suffering (Heb 5:7–8). He will deal gently and sympathetically with you as he makes you like himself (Heb 4:14–16).

- *You are fundamentally weak and dependent.* When Paul says that “the Spirit . . . helps us in our weakness” (Rm 8:26), he’s talking about what it means to be a creature. We don’t have life in ourselves. We are fundamentally fragile and dependent. He makes us know our vulnerability so that we will know our need for him.

Temptations to Avoid with God’s Help

1. *Anxiety.* You have lost your health. It’s tempting to fret, obsess, and worry about your health, your future, and your identity.
2. *Compulsively seek a cure.* To obsess about your health in such a way that it takes over your whole life. Certainly, you should seek possible help from doctors. But it’s easy to make getting healthy the center of your life.
3. *Escapism.* Because you don’t feel like doing anything, it’s tempting to just vegetate—turning to food, to television, or to other escapes.
4. *Use it for secondary gains.* Fatigue gives you a very convenient excuse not to do things, even when you’re capable of doing them.
5. *Grumble.* The Israelites didn’t grumble when they were in the land of milk and honey; they grumbled when it was hard.
7. *Give up.* Losing so many capabilities is depressing, and the temptation to give up is huge.
8. *Denial.* You might also deny you limitations and keep going forward, pushing yourself, trying to do it all. You’re afraid that if you ever stopped or slowed down you would lose your identity.
9. *Self-pity.* You may imagine that your situation is unfair, too hard to bear, and harder than what others face. Comparing hardships is a no-win game.

Your Fatigue Reveals God’s Power

Instead of despising your weakness, see that your weakness reveals God’s power (2Co 12:9–10). God will use your weakness to show you that what drives your life is not you, but the power and mercy of Another. When you turn to God in your weakness, things start to happen that you would have once thought were impossible—things such as learning deep contentment and living with a profound sense of purpose. You will speak of your weakness as the place God most richly reveals himself to you. Fatigue forces you to wrestle with how your life still counts even when what you do, how much you do, and how often you can do it are greatly reduced. God is more interested in who you are in Christ than in what you do for him. God wants to use your fatigue to teach you his patience, endurance, perseverance, and longsuffering (Rm 12:12; 1Co 13:4; Eph 4:2).

Practical Strategies

1. *Depend on Jesus one day at a time.* “Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Mt 6:34). You could be cured tomorrow. You could be cured only when you see the Lord face-to-face. But whatever your future, you are called to live by faith today.
2. *Think small.* Scale down the size of your life. Focus only on those things you are responsible for. What are you called to do in this world? When you have debilitating fatigue, there’s much less you can do and much less you are called to do.
3. *Pursue medical help without obsessing.* There is no formula for this. It will be different for different people. Ask God for wisdom in this area of your life. Seek appropriate medical help while still living your life within the circumstances God has given you.
4. *Help others deal with your fatigue.* Your fatigue also creates suffering for those around you. First, you can love them by doing something as small as asking, “How are you doing?” Your fatigue is not only about you. God is calling you to love those who are suffering along with you. Second, listen graciously to people trying to “fix” you, but don’t feel you have to follow all

their advice. Sometimes you must forgive those who love and care about you. Third, share with them how God is helping you to live in his world within the limitations of your fatigue, and how God is using your fatigue to make you more like him.

*Adapted from "I'm Exhausted: What to Do When You're Always Tired" by David Powlison (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2010).

me,^a because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.^b
³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Lord of the Sabbath

12 At that time Jesus passed through the grainfields on the Sabbath.^c His disciples^d were hungry and began to pick and eat some heads of grain.² When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "See, your disciples are doing what is not lawful^e to do on the Sabbath."

³ He said to them, "Haven't you read what David did when he and those who were with him were hungry: ⁴ how he entered the house of God, and they ate^a the bread of the Presence — which is not lawful for him or for those with him to eat, but only for the priests?^f ⁵ Or haven't you read in the law that on Sabbath days the priests in the temple violate the Sabbath and are innocent?^g ⁶ I tell you that something greater than the temple is here.^h ⁷ If you had known what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice,ⁱ you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."^j

The Man with the Shriveled Hand

⁹ Moving on from there, he entered their synagogue.^k ¹⁰ There he saw a man who had a shriveled hand, and in order to accuse him they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"^l

¹¹ He replied to them, "Who among you, if he had a sheep that fell into a pit on the Sabbath, wouldn't take hold of it and lift it out?"^m ¹² A person is worth far more than a sheep;ⁿ so it is lawful to do what is good on the Sabbath."

¹³ Then he told the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out, and it was restored,^o as good as the other.¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and plotted against him, how they might kill him.^p

The Servant of the Lord

¹⁵ Jesus was aware of this and withdrew. Large crowds^q followed him, and he healed them all.^q ¹⁶ He warned them not to make him known,^r ¹⁷ so that what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

- ¹⁸ Here is my servant
 whom I have chosen,
 my beloved in whom I delight;
 I will put my Spirit on him,
 and he will proclaim justice
 to the nations.^s
¹⁹ He will not argue or shout,
 and no one will hear his voice
 in the streets.
²⁰ He will not break a bruised reed,
 and he will not put out
 a smoldering wick,
 until he has led justice to victory.^d
²¹ The nations will put their hope
 in his name.^t

A House Divided

²² Then a demon-possessed man^u who was blind and unable to speak was brought to him. He healed him, so that the man^v could both speak and see.^v ²³ All the crowds were astounded and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"^w

²⁴ When the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man drives out demons only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons."^x

²⁵ Knowing their thoughts,^y he told them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is headed for destruction, and no city or house divided against itself will stand.

^a11:29 Jn 13:15; Eph 4:20; Php 2:5; 1Pt 2:21; 1Jn 2:6 ^bJr 6:16; Zch 9:9; 2Co 10:1; 1Ph 2:7–8 ^c12:1–8 Mk 2:23–28; Lk 6:1–5 ^d12:1 Mt 10:1; 26:56; Mk 3:7; 16:20; Lk 6:13; Jn 12:16 ^e12:2 Mt 12:10; Lk 13:14; 14:3; Jn 5:10; 7:23; 9:16 ^f12:4 Ex 25:30; Lv 24:5–9; 1Sm 21:6 ^g12:5 Nm 28:9–10; 1Ch 9:32; Jn 7:22–23 ^h12:6 2Ch 6:18; Mal 3:1; Mt 12:41–42 ⁱ12:7 Hs 6:6; Mc 6:8; Mt 9:13 ^j12:8 Mt 8:20; 9:6; 12:32,40 ^k12:9–14 Mk 3:1–6; Lk 6:6–11 ^l12:10 Mt 12:2; Lk 13:14; 14:3; Jn 9:16 ^m12:11 Ex 23:4–5; Dt 22:4; Lk 14:5 ⁿ12:12 Mt 6:26; 10:31 ^o12:13 1K 13:4; Mt 8:3; Ac 28:8 ^p12:14 Mt 26:4; 27:1; Mk 3:6; Lk 6:11; Jn 10:39; 11:53 ^q12:15 Mt 4:23; 10:23; 19:2; Mk 3:7 ^r12:16 Mt 8:4; 9:30 ^s12:18 Mt 3:17; 17:5; Lk 4:18; Jn 3:34 ^t12:18–21 Is 42:1–4; Jn 10:25 ^u12:22–24 Lk 11:14–15 ^v12:22 Mt 4:24; 9:32–34 ^w12:23 2Ch 1:1; Mt 1:1; Rm 1:3 ^x12:24 Mt 9:34; 10:25; Mk 3:22 ^y12:25–29 Mk 3:23–27; Lk 11:17–22

^a12:4 Other mss read *he ate* ^b12:7 Hs 6:6 ^c12:15 Other mss read *Many* ^d12:20 Or *until he has successfully put forth justice*
^e12:18–21 Is 42:1–4 ^f12:22 Lit *mute*



Life Counsel Bible

Practical Wisdom for All of Life



Learn more at LifeCounselBible.com



CHRISTIAN
STANDARD
BIBLE®

HOLMAN®
BIBLES

N
g
New
Growth
Press

#006236102