

**The Last Teachings
of Jesus**

Jim Rooney

The Last Teachings of Jesus

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Scripture references in the New King James Version

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These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

- Jesus Christ

Introduction

This book reviews the teachings of Jesus Christ to His disciples during His last days on Earth. Jesus had many important things to share with His followers as He was going to be leaving them soon to return to His Father in heaven. It was an intimate time of fellowship to give some final instructions and to share His love for them. This was an important time to bolster their faith as that faith would be greatly shaken after their leader would die by flogging and crucifixion. Jesus wanted to let them know exactly what would happen in advance so they would know He knew all things. His sheep would temporarily be scattered, but the Good Shepherd would bring them back together after His blessed resurrection.

How wonderful it is that while we are sinners Christ pleads on our behalf to the Father. He is our advocate, our intercessor, our only mediator, and our great High Priest who represents us before the Father. He earned that right when He died as the Lamb of God in place of the believer and atoned for our sins with the shedding of His precious blood. What a great Savior we have!

This teaching by Jesus in His last days was not only for His twelve disciples. It was for all who would become His disciples. We who believe and trust in Jesus Christ will greatly benefit by knowing what He shared with them. The content of this book comes from the Gospel accounts which cover His teachings from the Last Supper with His disciples to His ascension. It is His love story spoken to all of His followers right before He left this world to be seated on the right hand of His Father.

Chapter 1

The Passover Meal

We begin just before the final Passover meal was to be eaten by Jesus and His twelve disciples. This would be the last time they would eat this meal together. The Passover meal was an annual celebration of the Jews which commemorated God's deliverance of His chosen people Israel from 400 years of slavery under the kings of Egypt. The final plague of the ten that God sent against Egypt to force Pharaoh to let Israel go was that the first-born of each household in Egypt would die unless the blood of a lamb without spot or blemish was applied to its door posts on all three sides. The death angel sent by God, upon seeing the blood on the door, would pass over and not kill the first-born in that household. Those Jews who believed the warning from their prophet Moses and applied the blood to their doors saved their first-born of both people and animals. However, the Egyptians lost all their first-borns from Pharaoh down to the common servant if the blood was not applied to their door posts. Moses, by the power of God, then led Israel out of Egypt to the land God had promised them.

The blood of the slain lamb was a picture of the blood that would be shed by the Lord Jesus Christ, the sinless Lamb of God, on the cross. Those who have faith in Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection have His shed blood applied to the door posts of their hearts. The anger of the Lord will pass over Christians and they will be forgiven of their sins and inherit everlasting life and enter into the promised land of heaven after death. John the Baptist referred to Jesus as *"... the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world!"* (John 1:29)

Jesus knew that His hour had come when He had to die for our sins, leave the world, and go to the Father. Jesus loved all those the Father had given Him who were in the world. He would love them for all eternity.

The unleavened bread of the Passover meal represented several things. First, when Moses led Israel out of Egypt in haste there was not time to add leaven or yeast to the bread for it to rise. So the leaven was left out of the bread they baked to take with them on their journey. Second, leaven often symbolizes sin in the Bible. As a little leaven spreads throughout the bread, so too does sin spread throughout a person. Jesus was warning us about the evil of sin and how it can thoroughly contaminate us. Third, Jesus warned His disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees who were the Jewish religious leaders of His day. Their leaven (sin) was false teaching and hypocrisy.

How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

¹²*Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matt. 16:11-12)*

In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” (Luke 12:1)

It was on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread right before His death that the disciples approached Jesus and asked Him where He wanted them to prepare a place to eat the Passover meal. He told them to go into the city to a certain man and to say to him, ‘*The*

Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."" (Matt. 26:18)

God providentially directed them to the right man and the disciples went to his house and prepared it for the Passover meal.

Jesus Christ is the bread of life.

And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

We eat this bread of Jesus when we read and obey His word, the Holy Scriptures.

Chapter 2

The Lord's Supper

When the time had come to eat, Jesus told His disciples that He had a fervent desire to eat this Passover with them before His suffering to come. He said He would no longer eat of it until it was fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Jesus took bread, gave thanks and blessed it. He broke it and gave it to His disciples and told them to eat. He said that this bread is His body which would be broken for them. In a similar way, Jesus took the cup with the fruit of the vine in it and said, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood." They were to eat the bread and drink the cup in remembrance of Him.

Why were they to do this periodically? It was to help them remember the Lord's death until He returned. As believers, we should remember all the suffering the Lord went through to make the sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. In the last twenty four hours of His life, He was betrayed by one of His disciples, denied by one of his closest disciples, and was accused by the Jewish high priest of blasphemy when He spoke the truth about who He was. He was mocked, beaten, spit upon, forced to wear a crown of thorns, flogged, and then crucified. Yes, we must remember what the God of heaven went through because of His love for us.

We must have great respect for the Lord's Supper when eating it. We are to examine our lives to see if it is proper for us to worship the Lord this way. If we have sinned against God or someone else, we need to make things right before participating in the Lord Supper. We don't have to be perfect but we should confess our sins and make

reconciliation with others. It is a serious thing to eat of the Lord's Supper and do it in an unworthy manner.

The Lord's Supper in the New Testament corresponds with the Passover Meal of the Old Testament. The Passover Meal really pointed toward Jesus and the saving power of His shed blood. The Lord's Supper fulfills the Passover Meal. Jesus Christ is our Passover.

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

Chapter 3

An Example of Servanthood

Jesus' remaining time with His disciples was short as Satan had already put in the heart of Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, to betray the Lord over to the Jewish authorities. Jesus knew the Father had given all things to Him, and that He came from God, and was going to God. He stood up from the supper, removed some of His garments, and put a towel around His waist. He then poured water into a basin and started to wash His disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel.

When Jesus came to wash the feet of Simon Peter, Peter asked Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" Peter was asking Jesus why He was doing this. Jesus explained that Peter would not understand this now, but would understand it later. There are many things that we don't understand now in our lives, but when we see Jesus we will know and understand these deeper truths. Then Peter exclaimed to Jesus, "You will never wash my feet!" Why did he say this to Jesus? I believe he was saying to Jesus that he was not worthy to have Jesus wash his feet. Peter probably felt that he was the one who should be washing Jesus' feet.

Jesus firmly replied to Peter that if He didn't wash his feet Peter would have no part with Him. He was telling Peter that if He didn't wash his feet, Peter was not a true disciple of His. We must always follow Christ even though at times it seems to us not to be the best way to proceed. Jesus always knows best and it is our duty to completely follow Him or we will not be counted worthy to enter His kingdom.

Realizing his grave mistake and wanting to correct his error, Peter asks Jesus to not only wash his feet but also his hands and head, perhaps

thinking this would make him cleaner in the sight of the Lord. Jesus assured Peter that all that needed to be cleaned was his feet to be fully clean. He told Peter that the disciples were clean but not all of them. They didn't realize it at the time, but He was referring to Judas Iscariot who would betray Him.

After the Lord had finished washing the feet of His disciples, He put His garments back on and sat down to speak to them. He then asked them if they knew why He had done this to them. He said that they called Him Teacher and Lord which was which was true. If He was willing to wash their feet as their Teacher and Lord, they should be willing to wash other people's feet. He had given them an example to follow. He told them that a servant is not greater than his master and neither is the one sent greater than the one who sent him. Jesus said that if you understand these things you will be blessed if you do them. Jesus wants us to humble ourselves and serve others. A person becomes great in His kingdom by being a servant to others. The foot washing was just an example of serving others. We can serve others in a multitude of ways.

Jesus Christ is our Lord. He is greater than we are. Therefore we are to obey His commandments. If we do we will truly be happy.

Chapter 4

The Predicted Betrayal

The Lord wanted His disciples to know that He was not speaking about all of them concerning what He was about to share with them. Jesus knew those whom He had chosen to be His true followers. He told them the Scripture must be fulfilled which said, *“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.”* (Psalm 41:9) Jesus wanted to tell them in advance about His betrayal so they would know He was the Lord when it came to pass. Only God knows the future. He told His disciples that whoever would receive them would be receiving Him. Likewise, those who receive Jesus receive the Father.

Then the disciples looked at each other and were confused as to who Jesus was referring to. Upon hearing this, the disciples became very sorrowful, and they asked Jesus if they were the betrayer. One of Jesus’ closest disciples, John, was leaning on the Lord. Peter motioned to John to ask Jesus who the betrayer was. The Lord said it was the one to whom He would give a piece of bread after dipping it. Jesus said the He, the Son of Man, would experience what had been prophesied about this matter but certain calamity would fall upon the one who betrayed Him. He then gave the bread after dipping it to Judas Iscariot. Judas asked Jesus if he was the one. Jesus replied that he had said so. Satan then entered into Judas and Jesus told Judas to go ahead and do what he had planned to do which was to betray Jesus to the Jewish religious authorities. The other disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying to Judas. Some thought that since Judas was the treasurer Jesus was telling him to go buy some things they needed for

the feast or to give something to the poor. Then Judas left to betray Jesus.

Chapter 5

Who Is a True Disciple?

After Judas left, Jesus said that now He was glorified and that God was glorified in Him. How would Jesus and His Father be glorified? The betrayal of Jesus by Judas was a terrible act of disloyalty to our Lord. God, however, turns the evil actions of men to bring goodness to His people and works out evil to bring to pass God's glorious plan. This sinful betrayal by Judas would result in Jesus Christ's death which would be necessary to pardon the sins of all believers in the blessed Son.

Jesus called His disciples little children. He was like a father to them and they were like his little children. He told them He would be with them only a little while longer. They would seek Him but where He was going they would not be able to come. He then gave them a new commandment. They were to love others as He loved them. If they would do this, then everyone would know they were His disciples.

What about you? Are you a true disciple of Jesus Christ? Do you love other people as much as Jesus loves you? We should totally devote ourselves to loving others. Jesus gave us two great commandments. We are to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. We are also to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. We may have every Christian gift possible but if we don't have love we are nothing!

Chapter 6

Peter's Denial Foretold

Peter was disturbed when Jesus said He was going to a place that they could not go. Peter asked Jesus where He was going. The Lord's response was that He was going to a place where Peter could not follow Him. However, He told Peter that he would follow Jesus there later. Peter asked Jesus why he couldn't follow Him. He assured Jesus that he would be willing to die for Him.

Then Jesus told his disciples that all of them would be made to stumble that night because of Him. He quoted Scripture that said, *"I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."* (Matt. 26:31). Jesus went on to say that after He had been raised He would meet them in Galilee.

Peter answered Him saying that even if all others stumbled over Him, He would never stumble. Jesus told Peter that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed that very next morning. Peter responded that even if he had to die he would not deny the Lord. All the disciples said the same, yet Peter would deny Jesus and the disciples would run away as the Lord predicted. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

Chapter 7

The Only Way to the Father

Jesus told His disciples not to be troubled in their hearts over what they were hearing from Him. He comforted them by telling them that in His Father's house were many mansions. He was soon leaving them but was going to prepare a special place for them in heaven. Jesus is also preparing a place for all of His followers to reside in heaven with Him for all eternity. He will not forget one of His followers; they are all very special to Him as He loves them dearly. Jesus said that if He went to prepare a place for them, He will certainly come back for them so that they would be together with Him for all eternity. He also told them that they knew where He was going and they also knew the way there.

Jesus' disciple Thomas spoke up and said to the Lord that they did not know where He was going so how could they know the way to get there?

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

There is only one Way to heaven to be with God. That one and only Way is Jesus Christ and Him alone. Many will seek their way to the Father by trying to do good works, belonging to a certain church, religion, or trying to be good people. They think that if their good works outweigh their bad works, they will get to heaven. However, the Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It also says that there is none righteous, no not one. Trying to get to

heaven by believing in anything or anyone other than Jesus Christ will doom a person to eternal damnation in the lake of fire. I know this is not politically correct in our society and culture to say that, but it is the biblical truth.

This brings us to the fact that Jesus Christ is the Truth. He is the truth of God's Word. Everything that Jesus has said in the Holy Scriptures is the truth of God. You can rely on it. There is so much lying that goes on regarding life and God. What a great standard bearer for truth that we have in Jesus. He is the personification of all truth.

Jesus is also the Life. In Him exists all life because He is the Creator of all life.

¹⁶For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Col. 1:16-18)

In Him we have everlasting life.

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
(John 3:16)*

No man comes to the Father except through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. No one can inherit eternal life except by faith in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 8

“Show Us the Father”

Jesus told His disciples that if they had known Him, they would have known His Father also. He said from now on they would know the Father and also see Him. Philip replied by asking Jesus to show them the Father and said that would be enough for them. Jesus asked them how was it that He could have been with them for so long yet they still did not know Him. He said that anyone who has seen Him has seen the Father. Therefore, how could they ask to see the Father? He went on to ask them if they believed that He was in the Father and the Father was in Him. He told them that His words came not from His own authority but from the authority of His Father. Jesus challenged His disciples to believe that the Father is in Him and He is in the Father. They should believe this because He was telling them this truth. They should at least believe Him for the sake of the great works and miracles that He did by the power of God.

The point of this section is that Jesus Christ and God the Father are one. If you see Jesus you see the Father. We see this truth proclaimed in the Old Testament prophecy of the coming Child and Son who would be born and who would be God the Father.

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful,

Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end... (Isa. 9:6-7)

Chapter 9

“If You Ask Anything in My Name, I Will Do It.”

Jesus told His disciples that those who believe in Him would be able to do the great works that He did. They would also be able to do greater works than Jesus did. How could this be? It could happen because Jesus was going to His Father. Jesus is our advocate and intercessor. He will intervene on our behalf with the Father to enable us, as believers, to do great and miraculous works. Our Lord told His disciples that whatever we ask in His name He would do it for us.

This appears to be a blanket statement without any limitations. However, there are several implied limitations to it. First, our requests of the Lord must not be contrary to His will. We can't ask the Lord to do evil for us. We can't ask the Lord to do something that is against His very nature of holiness and righteousness. Second, we must pray believing that God will grant us what we ask Him for. We must have faith. This shows our trust in Him.

²²*And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”*
(Matt. 21:22)

Third, whatever we ask for must be for our good. We would want this limitation as it benefits us. Often times we ask for things out of a sense of selfishness. If we were to receive them, we might be harmed. God knows what is best for us.

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

Chapter 10

Promise of the Holy Spirit

Jesus told His disciples that if they loved Him they should keep His commandments. It is one thing to say you love the Lord. However, if your life is one of disobedience to the commands of Christ then do you really love Him? Jesus said the following:

¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them. (Matt. 7:18-20)

Actions always speak louder than words. If we truly love Jesus, we will always do our best to follow Him and keep His commandments.

Jesus told His disciples that He would pray to the Father for them and the Father would send them another Helper. Jesus had been a great helper to them, but He was going to be leaving them for a time. This other Helper would be with them forever. This Helper is the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit. Those who are children of this ungodly world cannot receive God's Spirit. They can't see Him nor know Him.

¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:14)

However, those who have faith in Jesus Christ do know the Spirit, for He dwells with them and resides in them.

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? (1 Cor. 3:16)

Jesus also comforted His disciples by saying to them that they were not orphans. He wasn't leaving them alone. They would have the other Helper soon and Jesus Himself would come to them one day.

Chapter 11

To Whom Does Jesus Reveal Himself?

Jesus told His disciples that in a little while the world would no longer see Him. The disciples, however, would see Him. After His death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples on several occasions. They also would see Him in their spirit as the Holy Spirit would reside within them and would reveal Christ to them continually. Because Jesus lived, they too would live. Jesus is the Giver of all life. He sustains all life. Jesus had given them everlasting life by their faith in Him. We, as Christians, who believe and trust in Jesus have this everlasting life.

And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:40)

After Jesus rose from the dead and visited with His disciples, they understood that Jesus was in the Father, that they were in the Son, and that the Son was in them. As Christians, we are all part of the body of Christ. We are intimately intertwined with Jesus and the Father.

Those who love Jesus will keep His commandments. The Father will love those people and Jesus will love them and reveal Himself to them. One of His disciples asked Jesus why He revealed Himself to them but not to the world. Jesus said to him that those who love Him will keep His commandments. The Father will love them, and both the Father

and the Son will come to them and make their home with them. Those who don't love Jesus will not keep His words. The words that He delivered to people are not His but those of the Father who sent Him.

Chapter 12

Peace

Jesus taught His disciples many things while He was on Earth. However, He was going to be leaving them soon. He wanted them to be comforted by the fact that the Father was going to send them the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus who would teach them all things and cause them to remember everything that He had said to them. Isn't that amazing? That is how Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were able to record the actions and teachings of Jesus so precisely and in such detail. They were guided by the Holy Spirit who inspired them to remember exactly what took place in the life of Jesus and His sayings.

²⁰*knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,* ²¹*for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet. 1:20-21)*

¹⁶*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (2 Tim. 3:16)*

Jesus told His disciples that He was going to be leaving them with His peace. His peace would not be the type of peace man might try to give, a worldly peace. His peace would be from heaven and it would truly give them peace both inwardly and outwardly. He told them not to be

troubled or afraid since He was leaving them. He reminded them that He had said He was going to leave them but He would return to them. He told them that if they loved Him they should rejoice because He said He was going to the Father. Why? Because, He said, the Father was greater than He was.

That statement has puzzled many Christians. We know that God is one God but exists as a trinity of the Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Spirit. There is only one God who manifests Himself as three separate divine persons. This is, of course, beyond our finite understanding, but the Scriptures are clear on this matter. All three persons of this Holy Godhead are equal in power, glory, and rank. How then could Jesus say the Father was greater than He was?

To answer this question I'm going to borrow a paragraph from my e-book titled, Did Jesus Christ Claim To Be God?

“When Jesus states that the Father is greater than He is, He is not denying His own deity. As I have already written in this book, while on earth Jesus possessed two natures, one divine and one human. It was in His humanity that the Father was greater than Jesus. Our Lord humbled Himself and became a lowly man. Jesus subordinated Himself to the Father when He came to earth to serve and not be served. In His humility and humanity, He voluntarily for a short time gave up His glory that He had with the Father in eternity past. His glory did break through once in His humanity in His transfiguration on the mount which was witnessed by His disciples, Peter, James, and John.”

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is

good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

⁵*While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”* ⁶*And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.* ⁷*But Jesus came and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.”* ⁸*When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. (Matt. 17:1-8)*

The disciples should rejoice that He was going to the Father because that would be the only way the Father would send the Holy Spirit to them. We will learn more about the Holy Spirit later in this book.

Jesus had told His disciples all these things that would shortly come to pass. He did this so that they would believe in Him when they saw His sayings come true. He would not be talking with them much longer because the ruler of this world, Satan, would execute his plan to kill Jesus. However, that result would fulfill the plans and prophecies of God. Satan would actually be a tool of God to bring salvation to all of His chosen people. Satan had no part in Christ. He was a created being who chose to rebel against God and would become God’s main enemy. However, Satan is no match for God. He is a condemned criminal and will face certain judgment and eternal torment in the lake of fire.

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Rev. 20:10)

Jesus wanted the world to know that He loves the Father because He obeys the Father’s commands. He would love and obey the Father by dying for those the Father had given Him before the foundation of the world.

Chapter 13

The True Vine

Jesus told His disciples that He was the true vine and that His Father was the vine dresser. He said that every branch in Him that did not bear fruit, the Father would cast off. However, every branch in Him that brought forth fruit the Father would prune it so that it would bring forth even more fruit. The disciples were clean because they listened to the word that Jesus had spoken to them. The Word had changed their lives.

We can think of the vine as the trunk of a tree. Coming out of the trunk are branches. Jesus told the disciples to abide in Him and He would abide in them. He explained to them that a branch could not bear fruit unless it continued to abide in the vine or trunk. They too would not be able to bear fruit unless they continued to abide in Him.

What was Jesus saying here? He was telling His disciples that they would not be able to do godly works unless they were truly in Him. They must be nourished by Jesus, the true vine, to be able to do works that please God.

Jesus is the vine; His followers are the branches. Those who abide in Jesus and He in them will bear much fruit for the kingdom of God. However, without Jesus they can do nothing! Those who do not abide in Christ are like branches that wither away because they have no

spiritual nourishment and will be cast off and burned in the lake of fire. They bear no fruit because they never connected to Jesus. They never had saving faith in the Lord in order to produce godly works. If we abide in Jesus and His words abide in us, He will do for us what we ask of Him. Isn't that a wonderful promise? If we truly abide in Him we will not ask for things outside of His will. When we do many godly works because we abide in Jesus, the Father is glorified. This fruit will prove that we are true disciples of Christ.

Chapter 14

Love

Jesus told His disciples that He loved them just as much as the Father loves Him. That is an amazing thing to think about. Jesus' love for all His followers is so great that He was willing to leave the glory of heaven and dedicate His life and death for them. As Christians, we have so much in Christ for which to be thankful. Because of the great love Jesus has for us, we should be willing to keep His commandments. If we don't have respect for His commandments He will not have respect for us. As Jesus is faithful to His Father by keeping His commandments, we too should be faithful to the commandments of Christ. We are in Christ as we keep His commandments. We are known by our fruit or testimony for Him. This shows our love for Jesus.

Jesus spoke these things to His disciples so that His joy would remain in them. He said that this was His commandment, that they love one another as He loved them. There is no greater love than someone laying down his life for his friends. Jesus told them that they were His friends if they obeyed His commands. Jesus no longer regarded His disciples as servants because servants don't know what their master is doing. His disciples were His friends because the things that Jesus heard from His Father He shared with them.

The disciples did not choose Jesus; He chose them. Sometimes we think we choose Jesus as our Lord and Savior. However, we chose Him only because He first chose us before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1:4, 5) We love Jesus only because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19) In choosing His disciples, He expects them to go and have fruitful lives so that their fruit will live on. He told them that whatever they would ask of the Father in Jesus' name, the Father will give it to them. Jesus spoke these things to them so that they would love one another.

Chapter 15

Persecution

Jesus warned His disciples that if the world hated them, then they should know the world hated Him first. If they were of this sinful world, the world would not hate them. However, since Jesus chose them out of this world and they live for Christ, the world hates them. He reminded them of what He had said to them before: a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Jesus, they would persecute His disciples. If they would keep Jesus' word, then they would keep the disciples' word. All the persecution the disciples would receive on His account would be because this sinful world didn't know the Father who sent Him. If Jesus hadn't left heaven to come and teach them the truth then they would have no sin. However, He did come to teach them, therefore they are without excuse.

Those who hate Jesus hate His Father also. If Jesus had not done the miraculous works He did then the world would be without sin. However, they did witness His wonderful works, yet they still hated Him and His Father. Jesus said this all happened that the word of God would be fulfilled which said, *"They hated Me without a cause."* (John 15:25)

Jesus encouraged His disciples by telling them that when the Helper or Spirit of truth comes, whom He would send from the Father, the Holy

Spirit would testify of Jesus. They too would also bear witness of Jesus because they were with Him from the beginning of His earthly ministry. Jesus told these things to His disciples so that they would not stumble in their faith under this persecution. He warned them that they would not only be thrown out of the synagogues for witnessing on His behalf, there would actually be those who would think it to be doing God's service to kill them. Why would they want to persecute them so? It was because they had not known Him or the Father. Jesus told them all these things in advance so that they would remember His words of comfort when these persecutions would later come. He didn't share this knowledge with them early on in His ministry because He was going to be with them for a while. However, since He would be leaving them shortly He wanted to reveal this to them now.

As Christians, we must realize that we may have to undergo tribulation in our lifetime. We must be strong and pray that God would give us strength to go through times of trial and tribulation. We must remember that it was God's plan for us, and we must have faith in Him that He knows what is best for us. God can remove the trials, but He sees fit to allow them to happen for our good.

Chapter 16

The Helper

Jesus told His disciples that He would be leaving them to return to His Father. He said that none of them had asked Him where He was going. He told them that because He said these things to them they were sorrowful. He explained that His leaving them was actually a good thing for them. If He didn't leave, then the Helper would not come to them, but, if He left, He would send the Helper to them. When the Holy Spirit would come He would convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. He would convict the world of sin because many in the world did not believe in Jesus. He would convict the world of righteousness because Jesus, the righteous One, would be going to the Father and would be seen no more. He would convict the world of judgment because Satan, the ruler of this evil world, is judged.

Jesus told His disciples that He had many more things He could share with them but that would be more than they could bear. However, when the Holy Spirit would come, He would guide them into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority. He will speak the things He has heard and will share with the Lord's disciples things that will come to pass. The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus and will share with the disciples the things of Christ. All things that the Father has belong to Jesus. Therefore, the Holy Spirit will share the things of Jesus which are also the things of the Father.

Chapter 17

Sorrow Becomes Joy

Jesus told His disciples that in a little while they would not see Him but also in a little while they would see Him because He was going to the Father. Then the disciples questioned each other about what Jesus meant by this statement. They were confused. Jesus knew they wanted to ask Him what He meant. He told them that they would be very sorrowful, but the world would rejoice. However, their sorrow would turn to joy. He gave them the example of a woman in labor who is sorrowful as she is about to experience the pain of giving birth. Her sorrow is turned to joy once her child, a new human being, is brought into the world. They too would have sorrow over His leaving them, but their sorrow would turn to joy when they would see Him again. No one would take that joy away from them.

He told them in that day they would not ask Him for anything. However, He went on to tell them that whatever they asked the Father for in His name, the Father would give it to them. Up until then, they had not asked for anything in Jesus' name. He told them to ask and they would receive and be joyful. The Lord wants us to ask for the things we need. When we make our requests known to Him, we demonstrate our faith. The more faith we have when we ask for things, the more likely the Lord will bless our faith and give us what we request. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Chapter 18

Jesus Has Overcome the World

Jesus told His disciples that He had been speaking to them in figurative language. He said the time was coming when He would speak clearly to them about the Father. When that time came, they would ask for things in His name. He would not have to pray to the Father for them because the Father loved them and because they loved Jesus and believed that He came from the Father. He told them He came from the Father to the world and now He was returning to the Father.

The disciples then said to Jesus that now He was speaking plainly and clearly to them without using figurative language. They said that now they were sure that Jesus knew all things and didn't need for others to question Him to see if He was speaking the truth. They said because of this they believed that Jesus came from the Father.

Jesus responded by saying to them, *"Do you now believe?"* ³² *Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. (John 16:31-32)*

He told them that He was not alone because the Father was with Him. Jesus said that He spoke these things to them so that they would have peace in Him. He warned them that in the world they would have tribulation, but for them to be happy because He had overcome the world.

Jesus has overcome all things. He has overcome the evil of this world, and also He has overcome the evil one, Satan, also called Lucifer and the Devil. Try as he might to defeat the plans of God, Satan always fails for God is all-powerful and also all-knowing. No one can defeat God. God is the only all-powerful being in existence. We need not worry about the trials of life. Jesus has overcome the evil of this world and will always make sure that whatever happens to us is for our good. Although we don't understand now how the bad things that happen to us will be for our good, God has promised us that it will be for our good! One day we will see how all the different pieces of the puzzle of our lives were for our good. Until then, we must trust in our God that He knows what He is doing.

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

Chapter 19

The Father and the Son Glorified

Jesus prayed to His Father after lifting up His eyes to heaven. He told the Father that the hour had now come. It was the hour that He had been waiting for throughout eternity. It was time that His great sacrifice on the cross would happen to pay for the sins of all His people. He prayed to the Father to glorify the Son as He, the Son, was going to glorify His Father. It was the Father who had given Jesus authority and power over all human beings to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him. This was the reason why Jesus Christ came to Earth, to give eternal life to everyone the Father had given Him.

³⁸For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. (John 6:38-39)

When did the Father give these people to the Son?

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself.. (Eph. 1:3-5)

We see here that the Father gave these people to the Son before the foundation of the world. These people are all those who will be believers in Christ. For more detailed information about these chosen of God see my e-book on www.free-ebooks.net called Free Grace or Free Will – God’s Free Salvation Plan.

What is eternal life? It is knowing the Father, the only true God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, whom the Father sent to accomplish His salvation plan. Jesus had glorified the Father while He was on Earth. Jesus had finished the work that the Father had given Him to do. He asked His Father to glorify Himself with the same glory He had with the Father before the world was created.

Chapter 20

Jesus Prays For His Disciples

Jesus had revealed the Father to His disciples whom the Father had given Him out of the world. They belonged to the Father, He gave them to Jesus, and they obeyed the Father's words. Now the disciples knew that everything the Father had given Jesus was truly from the Father. Jesus had given to them the very words that the Father had given Him. They received and believed what Jesus had told them and now knew that He came from the Father.

Jesus prayed for His disciples. He didn't pray for the world but He did for these chosen vessels whom the Father had given Him because they belonged to the Father. All who belong to Jesus also belong to the Father, and He was glorified in them. Jesus was leaving this world to go to the Father; His disciples would remain in the world. Jesus asked the Father to keep His disciples in the Father so that they would be one just like Jesus was one with His Father. This is amazing to think about. Jesus is asking His Father to make these disciples to be as close to the Father and the Son is to His Father. This was a marvelous request by Jesus.

Our Lord Jesus prayed saying that while He was with His disciples in the world He kept them in the Father's holy name. These disciples whom the Father gave to Him were kept or preserved in grace by Jesus. Not one of the disciples was lost to damnation except the son of perdition,

Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him. This was all done to fulfill what was written in the Word of God. Jesus will also keep all believers saved by that same grace!

Now Jesus was coming to His Father, and the things He was speaking would cause His disciples to have the same joy that He had. Jesus had given them the Word of God; however, the world hated them because they were not of the world just as Jesus was not of the world. Jesus did not pray for the Father to take them out of the world but that He would keep them safe from the evil one, Satan. Jesus was not of this evil world system and neither were His disciples. The world system glorifies the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Jesus and His disciples would have none of that. Jesus prayed that His Father would set them apart for holy purposes by the truth of God's word. He also asked that the Father set Him apart for holy purposes so that His disciples would see and know the truth, that Jesus is the Truth of God as the living Word of God.

Chapter 21

Jesus Prays For All of His Followers

Jesus said that He was not praying for just His disciples alone but that He was also praying for everyone who would believe in Him through their word. His disciples would spread His gospel or good news about His salvation, and many would hear and receive the Word and be saved by their faith in Christ. He prayed this so that these who came to Him in faith would become one with God just like Jesus was one with the Father so that the world would believe that the Father sent Jesus. He said that the glory the Father had given Him He gave to His followers so that they would be one in God as Jesus was one in God. He prayed that they would be perfect as one so that the world would know that the Father had sent Jesus to the world and that the Father had loved them even as the Father loves the Son.

These are some amazing things to think about. Jesus is saying that all believers in Him are one with the Father just as He is one with the Father. They have the same glory that Jesus has. Also, the Father loves all believers just as He loves Jesus, His blessed and perfect Son. He must truly love us like Jesus if we are one with both the Son and the Father. What wonderful grace we have received from God when you consider how flawed we all are! Yes, His love and grace to us is truly amazing and undeserving.

Jesus prayed to His Father that everyone the Father gave Jesus before time would always be with Him. They could then see the glory the Father had given Him for the Father had loved Him before time. That

was a wonderful prayer on our behalf. Jesus called His Father “O righteous Father!” He said the world did not know His Father, but He knew the Father, and all believers know the Father had sent Jesus to the world. Jesus told His disciples the name of the Father, and He would proclaim it so that the love the Father had for Him would be in all of Jesus’ followers and He would be in all of them. This is a love far beyond our ability to understand. We are all sinners, yet God loves us as believers even as much as He loves His own sinless Son! Thank-you eternal God for the great love You have for us who love Jesus.

Chapter 22

Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

When Jesus and the disciples had left the place where they ate the Passover meal, they walked to a place called Gethsemane where there was a garden they often spent time at. On arrival, Jesus told His disciples to sit while He went to a place nearby to pray to His Father. He took with Him Peter, James, and John to be near Him when He was praying. He became very sorrowful and distressed. He told His three closest disciples to stay with Him as He prayed and to watch with Him. He said, *“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”* (Matt. 26:38)

Whenever we have times of great trials in our life, we want to have those we are closest with to be with us to help us through the trial. Jesus had chosen and mentored His disciples. This was a time they could help Him as He had so often helped them. However, the disciples were tired and could not keep from sleeping so were no help to our Lord.

Jesus was in such great distress at this moment that Scripture records that He went a little further and fell on His face and prayed asking His Father to remove this cup from Him if possible. However, He said, *“... not as I will, but as You will.”* (Matt. 26:39)

What was the cup that Jesus was asking to be removed? Several things come to mind. Jesus knew exactly what He was facing. He knew He would be falsely condemned as a blasphemer by the Jewish authorities

and be executed by flogging and crucifixion by the Romans. It was perhaps one of the most painful ways to be killed. Perhaps even more horrible was the thought that He, the sinless Son of God, would become sin as He took upon His flesh the sins of all those who would believe on Him. (John 3:16) The Father's wrath against sin would be executed upon Jesus, and the Father would briefly turn away from His Son as He would not want to look upon sin. What agonizing thoughts our Lord and Savior was dealing with.

Christians will be forever indebted to Jesus for His dying for us. Our sins were nailed to that cross He died on. He paid our sin debt so that we would not have to suffer for our sins in the lake of fire enduring eternal punishment. However, the Bible records that those who do not come to faith in Jesus Christ will reap the wrath of God and eternal damnation.

³⁶*He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36)*

Jesus taught us here to always pray to our Father in heaven when we face trials. However, He also taught us that ultimately it is God's will that is important, not our own will. We should pray like Jesus did when He said. “... nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” (Matt. 26:39) This shows our subjection to the will of God. It shows our rightful place with God and is the proper way to end our prayers and worship of Him.

Chapter 23

The Arrest

Later in the night, Jesus awakens His disciples as His betrayer, Judas Iscariot, comes to Him leading a large number of people carrying swords and clubs. This group was sent by the chief priests and elders of the Jews. As they approach Jesus, His very countenance causes them to fall backwards to the ground. Judas approaches Jesus and gives Him a kiss which is the sign to let the armed group know which person is Jesus for them to capture.

Jesus' disciple Peter takes a sword and strikes the servant of the high priest who was there, a man named Malchus, cutting off his right ear. Peter was trying to help our Lord but was using a worldly means to do it. Peter didn't realize it then, but it was the plan of God for Jesus to die as the sacrificial Lamb of God for us. Jesus immediately commanded Peter to put away his sword. He told Peter that all who use the sword will perish by the sword. He also told Peter that if He wanted to He could ask His Father to send Him thousands of angels to protect Him. However, if Jesus had asked for that heavenly help, how could the Scriptures be fulfilled that He must die for the sins of His people?

Jesus then does a remarkable thing. He touches Malchus and heals him by restoring his right ear. Even to the end, Jesus is not thinking of what is best for Him but only of others. This is evident as He tells his captors to let His disciples go and to just take Him. Then His disciples all

abandon Jesus and run away seeking safety. His sheep were scattered just as Jesus predicted would happen. Then Jesus is seized by some of this group.

Jesus always did the right thing. He followed the Father's will, not His own will. In the face of frightening danger, Jesus didn't have a mental breakdown. He went to prayer to His Father for help. When we are in the depths of despair, we too should go to God in prayer asking for His divine help and guidance. When Malchus came to arrest Him, Jesus loved him by healing him. He then sought to have His disciples released. Again, Jesus was always thinking and doing what was best for others.

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

Chapter 24

Jesus Before Caiaphas

Once captured and bound, Jesus was brought before Caiaphas who was the Jewish high priest. Also present were some of the Sanhedrin which was the ruling religious council of the Jews made up of the high priest and other religious leaders. They were going to judge Jesus in a mockery of justice and put Him to death. They were jealous of Jesus' popularity with the people. They also hated Jesus because He made Himself out to be equal with God by saying He was God's Son. Many false witnesses were brought in to testify against Jesus. The testimony of these false witnesses did not agree. Jesus kept silent during the false charges. Finally, the high priest asked Jesus why He was not responding to all the accusations against Him.

Caiaphas then asked Jesus under oath if He was the Christ (the Anointed One), the Son of God. Our Lord doesn't remain silent any longer. He doesn't try to dodge the answer which He knows will bring His certain death. Jesus responds by saying He is who Caiaphas describes. He also said that Caiaphas would later see Him, the Son of Man, sitting on the right hand of God and coming in the clouds of heaven. Yes, they will all witness Jesus coming in awesome power and glory. Caiaphas and those persons associated with this false judgment will tremble in great fear when He returns as they will know their condemnation to eternal death in the lake of fire is shortly going to

happen. Jesus will soon sit on a great white throne and judge all men for the things they did in their life.

⁷Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. (Rev. 1:7)

Caiaphas and the council condemn Jesus of blasphemy and say He is deserving of death. Jesus spoke the truth about Himself but they could not see or recognize God come in the flesh.

³⁰I and My Father are one.” (John 10:30)

Chapter 25

Peter's Denial of Jesus

Peter follows safely behind Jesus and the crowd that captured our Lord. While Jesus meets with the Sanhedrin who is judging Him, Peter stands outside the meeting place where there is a fire warming some people. A girl there says to him with the others listening that he was one of those who was with Jesus. Peter immediately denies her statement. A short time later, another girl makes the same charge that Peter had also been with Jesus. He emphatically denies her statement too by saying he does not know the man Jesus. Finally, some of the others say that he must be one of the followers of Jesus because his accent (Galilean) proved it. Next the Scripture says that Peter curses and swears and says again that he does not know the man.

Immediately after that, the rooster crows and something else very important happens. The Scripture says that the Lord turns and looks at Peter and their eyes meet. Oh, how devastating that must have been to Peter. He immediately remembers the Lord's words that he would deny Him three times before the rooster would crow. Knowing how he had just done that as Jesus had prophesied and seeing Jesus face to face after his denial makes him leave and weep bitterly.

Our hearts go out to Peter. Would we have denied Jesus put in the same situation knowing we might face a flogging and crucifixion by telling the truth? We probably would have done the same thing. However, our Lord Jesus is a forgiving God and He not only forgives Peter but restores him as we will see later.

Chapter 26

Jesus Before Pilate

After His trial, the Jewish leaders bring Jesus bound before Pilate, the Roman governor in Jerusalem. Rome ruled much of the world at that time and the Jewish people were subjects of Rome. The Jews were not allowed to put someone to death unless the Roman governor looked into the matter and gave His consent. So they bring Jesus before Pilate to get him to approve their plan to have Jesus executed.

While being accused by the chief priests and elders, Jesus remains silent. Pilate asks Jesus why He is silent in the face of the charges. Pilate is amazed that Jesus remains silent.

Pilate asks Jesus if He is the king of the Jews since Jesus was being charged by some of the Jews as seeking to be a king. Jesus told Pilate that yes it was just as he said. However, He tells Pilate His kingdom is not of this world otherwise His servants would fight to have Him released. Pilate then again asks Jesus if He is a king. Jesus tells Pilate that it was for that reason He was born and came into the world so that He could bear witness to the truth. He said that everyone who knew the truth would hear His message. Pilate asked Him what was truth? Pilate was not listening to Jesus because Jesus was telling him the truth. Jesus is the truth and the very essence of truth in human form was standing before Pilate and talking to him and Pilate didn't understand the Truth.

However, Pilate did know that Jesus had done nothing deserving of death. He also knew the reason these Jews wanted Jesus dead was because of envy. Pilate tried several times to get Jesus released. He told the people he found no fault in Jesus. Pilate received a message from his wife to not have anything to do with this just man as she had suffered through the night with nightmares about the situation.

There was a custom of releasing one of those who was imprisoned. Pilate hoped the people would choose Jesus to be released. However, the Jews worked up the people to get them to cry out to have a man called Barabbas released instead of Jesus. Barabbas was a hardened criminal. Yet the people's voice overcame those who asked for Jesus to be released, so Barabbas was given his freedom in place of Christ.

In frustration, Pilate washes his hands in front of the people and says that he was innocent of the blood of this just man. The people yelled back that His blood would be upon them and their children. Pilate had the soldiers flog Jesus and then turned Him over to the Jews to crucify Him according to the people's desire.

Chapter 27

Judas Hangs Himself

After Judas realizes that Jesus was a condemned man because of his betrayal, the Scripture says that he was remorseful. He brings back the thirty pieces of silver that the chief priests had agreed to give him to capture Jesus. He hands the money to them and says that he had betrayed innocent blood. They say to Judas that was of no concern to them. Judas throws down the pieces of silver, walks away, and then goes out and hangs himself.

The question is often asked whether or not Judas was saved after his remorse, admission of his sin, and return of the silver. We don't see in Scripture that he ever asked the Lord for forgiveness. Was his remorse just guilt and not true repentance? There are two key passages that give us the answer regarding Judas.

Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (John 17:12)

Judas is referred to here as the son of perdition (damnation). He also is described as the only one of the twelve disciples that was lost.

²⁴*The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.” (Matt. 26:24)*

This statement by Jesus makes it clear that Judas would have been better off never to have been born than to betray His Lord and suffer the consequences of eternal punishment.

We don't know for certain what Judas' sinful motivations were in his betrayal. Some think Judas just wanted to force Jesus to use His mighty miracle working power to restore Israel's kingdom with Jesus ruling it. Perhaps the money was only a side benefit. In any event, Judas betrayed the Lord and will be judged by Christ one day for that betrayal.

Chapter 28

Jesus Crucified Between Two Thieves

After Jesus goes through the terribly painful flogging at the hands of the soldiers, is forced to wear a crown of thorns, and is made to carry a heavy wooden cross through the streets of Jerusalem, He is then crucified on it. Death by crucifixion was one of the most painful executions by the Romans. Nails were driven through His hands and feet. Breathing was very difficult because the lungs would start to collapse. He was totally exhausted and undergoing the pain of hell on our behalf. To make His indignity greater, He is crucified between two common thieves who both speak harshly toward Jesus.

While Jesus is suffering on the cross, He makes an amazing request of His Father in heaven. He asks His Father to forgive those who were crucifying Him because they didn't know what they were doing. They didn't realize that they were crucifying God who had come in the flesh. How many people could do that after being flogged and then crucified by vile people? I can think of only one person who would ever do that. That person is Jesus Christ who taught us to always forgive others of their sins against us even though they might not repent. Jesus forgave these people without their repentance.

One of the thieves cries out to Jesus that if He is truly the Christ, then He should save Himself and them also. The thief on the other side has a change of heart toward Jesus. He rebukes the other thief who spoke to Jesus and says that they were justly being punished for their wrongdoing. However, he says this man had done nothing wrong. Then the thief who spoke those kind words asks Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom. How did Jesus reply? He tells that thief that truly he would be with Him in Paradise that very day!

What a wonderful gift of salvation to this sinner right before his death. How comforting it must have been to that thief to hear those words of Jesus. A question remains. Why did this one thief, who earlier had been speaking unkind things to Jesus, have this change of heart? Why did he now believe in Christ? I think when this thief heard Jesus ask His Father to forgive those who were crucifying Him it had a life changing impact on this man. Again, it was an amazing thing to say while these people were crucifying Him. God used Jesus' request to His Father to convict this man's heart and give him the gift of saving faith.

These two thieves represent all humanity. All humanity are sinners and are not worthy to enter heaven.

²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Rom. 3:23)*

The one thief blasphemed Jesus. He didn't have faith because he questioned whether Jesus was the Christ. He represents all humanity who reject Christ and who will suffer eternal torment in the lake of fire. The believing thief represents all of humanity that believes in Jesus Christ as Lord, God, Savior, and King. At death, these saved individuals will immediately be with Jesus in Paradise.

⁸ *We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:8)*

We are also taught from this passage that it is never too late to receive Christ as one's Lord and Savior. Many a person has been saved right before death just as this dying thief did. However, do not put off coming to Christ in faith, for when Jesus returns it will be too late to come to Him. Take care of this matter today!

For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Cor. 6:2)

Chapter 29

A Roman Centurion

During the middle of the day when Jesus was crucified it became very dark, almost like evening. It was very foreboding. When Jesus said it was “finished” and He gave up His Spirit and died, a number of events happened. The Bible says the veil of the temple was torn into two from top to bottom. This symbolized that now, through our High Priest Jesus Christ, we have open access to the Father and have no further need to have a human priest or earthly tabernacle. There was also a great earthquake. Many graves were opened. After Jesus’ resurrection, many of those departed saints in those open graves came back to life and appeared to others in Jerusalem.

There at the bottom of the cross was a Roman centurion who was there to guard those being crucified and make sure their sentences were carried out. A centurion was a military commander of 100 soldiers. This military leader was completely changed after his encounter with Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He hears Jesus ask the Father to forgive His tormentors. He hears Jesus declaring that the one thief would be with Him in Paradise that day. He sees the darkness and witnesses the earthquake right when Jesus dies. He and the others were fearful. Yet he makes a wonderful confession about Jesus. The centurion says that

Jesus is truly the Son of God! I believe salvation came to him that day, and he was forever changed because of his experience with Jesus.

Chapter 30

The Resurrection of Christ

Very early the following Sunday morning after the crucifixion, Mary Magdalene and another Mary came to the tomb where Christ was laid. They came bringing spices and oils to be used to dress the body and prepare it for proper burial. When going to the tomb, they must have wondered how they would be able to get inside because a large stone had been rolled over the entrance. When they got there, a great earthquake happened. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb and sat on the stone. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing was as white as snow. The Roman guards shook with fear of him and became like dead men.

However, the angel comforted the women and told them he knew they were seeking Jesus who had been crucified. He told them that Jesus was not there and had risen from the dead. The angel told them to come into the tomb to see that it was empty. He also told them to go tell His disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead and that He would see them in Galilee.

So the women ran from there in fear and great happiness to go tell the disciples what they had witnessed and to share the message of the

angel to them. As they were going they met Jesus and fell down and worshiped him holding on to His feet. What great love and devotion they had for the Lord! Jesus told them not to be afraid but to go tell His disciples He would meet with them in Galilee. When Peter and John heard this news, they both ran to the tomb and also confirmed the tomb was empty.

Chapter 31

On the Road to Emmaus

The same day of the Lord's resurrection, two of his disciples were walking together on the road to the town of Emmaus which was seven miles from Jerusalem. One of these disciples was named Cleopas. He was not one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. As they were walking, Jesus came up alongside of them. However, His identity was hidden from their eyes so that they did not realize it was Jesus but thought it was just a stranger. He asked them what they were talking about and why were they so sad.

Cleopas replied by asking Jesus if He were the only stranger in Jerusalem who did not know the things that happened there recently. Jesus asked him what things he was referring to. The disciple said the things regarding Jesus of Nazareth who was a mighty prophet of God in word and deeds and how the Jewish religious leaders condemned Him to death and crucified Him. They were sad because they had all hoped that it was Jesus who would restore Israel to the kingdom.

He went on to tell Jesus that it was the third day since these things happened and several women who visited the tomb early that morning astonished them. The women said that the tomb was empty and they saw an angelic vision and were informed that Jesus was alive. Then

Jesus said to these two disciples, *“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”* (Luke 24:25-26)

Then Jesus taught them from the Scriptures beginning with the books of Moses and then the sayings of the prophets all about things concerning Himself. Then they came near the village they were going to and Jesus indicated He would continue on farther. However, they pleaded for Him to stay with them as it was getting late, so He stayed with them. As they sat at the table, He took some bread, broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, they recognized Jesus, and He immediately vanished from their sight.

The two disciples remarked to each other how their hearts burned as Jesus talked with them on the road as He opened the Scriptures and explained to them about Himself. They quickly returned to Jerusalem to tell the eleven disciples the Lord had risen and to share with them how Jesus appeared to them on the road and how He became known to them when they were eating bread together.

Chapter 32

The Risen Jesus Meets With His Disciples

The message of the women about seeing the angel and then meeting Jesus circulated among the disciples. That same evening, Jesus appeared to His disciples who were assembled in a room. He said for them to have peace. They were terrified at seeing Him. He assured them that it was He and not a spirit. He told them to come see His hands and His feet and to touch Him because a spirit does not have flesh and bones. They still needed assurance from Jesus, so He took from them some broiled fish and a honeycomb and ate in their presence to comfort them.

After this meeting, the disciples told Thomas, one of the twelve who was not present when Jesus first appeared to them, that Jesus had risen from the dead and had met with them. Thomas would not believe their story. He told them unless he could put his finger in the nail prints of His hands and his hand in the side where He had been pierced with the spear when He was on the cross, he would not believe Jesus had risen from the dead.

After eight days, when all the disciples were assembled, Jesus appeared to them. He spoke to Thomas and told him to put his finger in his nail prints and his hand into His side so that he would not be unbelieving

any longer. Thomas replied to Jesus saying, *“My Lord and my God!”* (John 20:28) Jesus told Thomas that he believed because he had seen Him. He said blessed are those who believe without seeing.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6)

Chapter 33

Jesus Restores Peter

Afterward Peter went fishing on the Sea of Galilee. Thomas the twin, Nathaniel of Cana, the brothers James and John, and two other disciples were with him fishing. They had caught nothing all night. A man called out to them from the shore and asked if they had any food. They replied no. The man told them to cast their net out on the right side of the boat and they would catch some. So they cast the net on the right side of the boat and their nets were so full of fish they couldn't even pull the net in.

John told Peter that the man who spoke to them was the Lord. Peter put on a garment and jumped into the water and headed for Jesus on the shore. The others followed in a boat and struggled to bring the fish in. As soon as they all got to the shore, they saw a fire of coals there with some fish cooking on it and some bread. Jesus told them to bring some more fish to cook. They had breakfast together. None of them dared ask if this man was Jesus as they knew it was.

¹⁵ *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.”* ¹⁶ *He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love*

Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. (John 21:15-17)

Why did Jesus ask Peter three times if he loved Him? Although it was very hard and hurtful for Peter to have Jesus ask him three times if Peter loved Him, it was necessary for Peter to go through this process. Peter had denied the Lord three times and affirming his love for Jesus three times would help him forgive himself for his denial. Jesus then explained to Peter how he would die for his faith in Christ.

Chapter 34

The Great Commission

Jesus met with his eleven disciples on a mountain before He finally parted from them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him, but some doubted. He had earlier rebuked some of them because they did not believe the women who had testified of His resurrection. Jesus told them that all authority had been given to Him in heaven and Earth. We need to pause here to think of the magnitude of that statement. That means that all power had been given to Him from the Father which showed He was equal to the Father as the One God. It also meant that Jesus is in control of all things in creation as He is the Creator of all things.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-3; 14)

Jesus told His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. Jesus was now opening the gift of salvation to also include Gentiles. Previously, salvation was a gift to God's chosen people Israel, for

salvation was of the Jews. Jesus said when speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well:

²²You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. (John 4:22)

Now all men, the world, both Jews and Gentiles, would be recipients of God's saving grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

As part of making disciples of all nations, the disciples were to baptize these people in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. These three are One. This shows the triune nature of God, the Holy Trinity.

The disciples were to teach these people to be obedient to all the commandments of Christ, and Jesus promised them that He would always be with them even to the end of the world. We as Christians are to also go and make disciples of all nations and teach them to be obedient to Jesus in everything.

Chapter 35

Receiving Power From the Holy Spirit

When Jesus was with His disciples at the very end of His time on Earth, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father. That promise was that in a matter of days they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The disciples asked Jesus if He was going to restore the kingdom on Earth to Israel. Jesus responded to them by saying it was not for them to know the times or the seasons of the Father's plans for the kingdom. The main thing for them to know was that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them. They would be witnesses for Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the Earth.

This power they would receive would enable them to do mighty works in the name of Jesus. They would be courageous in the face of persecution. They would be given the words to speak to those who would try them for blasphemy. They would start the spread of the Gospel all over the world.

Today Christianity is the largest religion in the world. This has come about by the power of God the Holy Spirit using Christians to evangelize the world for Jesus Christ.

Chapter 36

Christ's Ascension

After Jesus had spoken these things to His disciples, the Bible records that He was taken up in the sky into the clouds and out of their sight. They gazed up to heaven as He went upward. The Lord went to be seated on the right hand of God. Two angels appearing as men asked the disciples why they were standing there gazing up to heaven. They told them that this same Jesus would one day return from heaven coming in like manner in the clouds. Jesus is the only person in the New Testament who ascended into heaven. In the Old Testament, God took Enoch and Elijah to heaven before they died. The difference is that Jesus has received His glorified body, but Enoch and Elijah will not receive their glorified bodies until we all do at the resurrection on the last day.

³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matt. 24:30)

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:16-17)

Chapter 37

Epilogue

In this book, I have tried to share the most important teachings of Jesus Christ on His last days on Earth. There would not be enough room to chronicle all His acts or teachings, so I wanted to limit this space to the key teachings of Jesus at the very end of His life.

I hope this book has been beneficial to you spiritually. The disciple Thomas said it best when he saw Jesus after His resurrection and said that Jesus was his Lord and God! We spoke in this book about how it is impossible to please God without faith. Faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord, God, Savior, and King is the most important thing we can possess. Without this faith, we are nothing, and we are totally lost. With man, salvation is impossible; however, with God all things are possible. Pray today for your salvation if not saved. Ask Jesus to forgive you of all your sins. Ask Him to increase your faith just like the disciples did. Place all your trust in Christ. There is nothing more important in this life than to become a Christian.

... that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom. 10:9)