

Truth or Consequences

By

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(Emphasis added)

*In this teaching we will examine choices we make in this life which will have eternal consequences. Jesus said in John 8:32 that ‘... you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.’ Jesus also said He is the truth, (see John 14:6). Therefore, we must get to know Jesus in order to truly be free. He also said that when He sets us free, that we would be free indeed, (see John 8:36). In knowing Jesus we must walk in the truth, which is to say walk in the Spirit, (i.e., the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, see John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13 and Galatians 5:25). If we walk in the Spirit, then we will not give in to the lust of the flesh, (i.e., our sinful nature). It is the lust of the flesh and following this lust that will lead us into death. Conversely, following the Holy Spirit of truth will lead to **eternal life**. It is by walking in the Spirit of truth that we are set free from the law of sin and death. **This is true freedom!** However, we will need to suffer at the hands of people who do walk according to the flesh in order to be refined, but it will be worth it in the end, (see Romans chapter 8)...*

Romans 8 -

Life in the Spirit

8 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. ² For the law, (or power) of the life-giving Spirit has freed you through Christ Jesus from the law, (or power) of sin that leads to death. ³ The law of Moses could not save us, because of our sinful nature. But God put into effect a different plan to save us. He sent his own Son in a human body like ours, except that ours are sinful. God destroyed sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. ⁴ He did this so that the requirement of the law would be fully accomplished for us who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

⁵ Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. ⁶ If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. ⁷ For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God’s laws, and it never will. ⁸ That’s why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

⁹ But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them are not Christians at all.) ¹⁰ Since Christ lives within you, even though your body will die because of sin, your spirit is alive because you have been made right with God. ¹¹ The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as he raised Christ from the dead, he will give life to your mortal body by this same Spirit living within you.

¹² So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. ¹³ For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But if

through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it and its evil deeds, you will live.¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

¹⁵ So you should not be like cowering, fearful slaves. You should behave instead like God's very own children, adopted into his family—calling him “Father, dear Father.”¹⁶ For his Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God's children.¹⁷ **And since we are his children, we will share his treasures—for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.**

The Future Glory

¹⁸ **Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later.**¹⁹ For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are.²⁰ Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to God's curse.²¹ All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.²² For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.²³ And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us.²⁴ Now that we are saved, we eagerly look forward to this freedom. For if you already have something, you don't need to hope for it.²⁵ But if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently.

²⁶ And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.²⁷ And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn, with many brothers and sisters.³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And he gave them right standing with himself, and he promised them his glory.

Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

³¹ What can we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?³² Since God did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't God, who gave us Christ, also give us everything else?

³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? Will God? No! He is the one who has given us right standing with himself.³⁴ Who then will condemn us? Will Christ Jesus? No, for he is the one who died for us and was raised to life for us and is sitting at the place of highest honor next to God, pleading for us.

³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or are hungry or cold or in danger or threatened with death?³⁶ (Even the Scriptures say, “For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.”)³⁷ No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from his love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels can't, and the demons can't. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, and even the powers of hell can't keep God's love away. ³⁹ Whether we are high above the sky or in the deepest ocean, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹

Jesus also said in John 4:23-24 that we must worship God in spirit and truth. There is no other option in worshiping God. This is the reason that we were created, to love God and worship Him. In worshiping Him, we can only do so in truth. That is why Jesus said in John 15:5 that without Him, we can do nothing. Therefore, if we are to get to the place where we walk in the Spirit and truth, we must do so through Jesus. This is why we read in John 14:6...⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."²

When we do not speak the truth or do what is right according to the Word of God, then we are no longer living and walking according to the law of the Spirit of truth. When this happens, we put ourselves back under the old law of sin and death and we become subject to the curses of the old law. We have a choice in this matter. The motivating factor for our choice is either FEAR or FAITH. Fear is the currency of the kingdom of darkness. It is the main thing that the devil uses to thwart God's purposes in our lives. When we give into fear, then we will disobey God. Faith is the currency of the kingdom of heaven. The only fear that we Christians are to have is the fear of the Lord. It is being reverentially afraid of disappointing God that will motivate us to obey Him and keep us from deciding to sin, (see Proverbs 16:6)...

Proverbs 16:6 -

⁶ In mercy and truth
Atonement is provided for iniquity;
*And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.*³

When we obey God, we will be blessed. When we disobey God, He will curse us, (see Deuteronomy chapter 28 and 30:15-20)...

Deuteronomy 28 -

¹“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. ²“And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God: ³“Blessed *shall* you *be* in the city, and blessed *shall* you *be* in the country. ⁴“Blessed *shall* *be* the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. ⁵“Blessed *shall* *be* your basket

¹*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

and your kneading bowl. ⁶“Blessed *shall* you *be* when you come in, and blessed *shall* you *be* when you go out.

⁷“The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. ⁸“The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

⁹“The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰“Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. ¹¹“And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹²“The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³“And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*. ¹⁴“So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, *to* the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

¹⁵“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: ¹⁶“Cursed *shall* you *be* in the city, and cursed *shall* you *be* in the country. ¹⁷“Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl. ¹⁸“Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. ¹⁹“Cursed *shall* you *be* when you come in, and cursed *shall* you *be* when you go out.

²⁰“The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. ²¹“The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. ²²“The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. ²³“And your heavens which *are* over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you *shall be* iron. ²⁴“The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed. ²⁵“The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶“Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten *them* away. ²⁷“The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. ²⁸“The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. ²⁹“And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save *you*. ³⁰“You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. ³¹“Your ox *shall be* slaughtered before

your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey *shall be* violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep *shall be* given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue *them*.³²“Your sons and your daughters *shall be* given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail *with longing* for them all day long; and *there shall be* no strength in your hand.³³“A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.³⁴“So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see.³⁵“The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.³⁶“The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods—wood and stone.³⁷“And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.³⁸“You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it.³⁹“You shall plant vineyards and tend *them*, but you shall neither drink *of* the wine nor gather the *grapes*; for the worms shall eat them.⁴⁰“You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint *yourself* with the oil; for your olives shall drop off.⁴¹“You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity.⁴²“Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.⁴³“The alien who *is* among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower.⁴⁴“He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.⁴⁵“Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.⁴⁶“And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

⁴⁷“Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,⁴⁸“therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.⁴⁹“The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,⁵⁰“a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.⁵¹“And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, *or* the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.⁵²“They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you.⁵³“You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you.⁵⁴“The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind,⁵⁵“so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.⁵⁶“The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of

her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, ⁵⁷“her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

⁵⁸“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, ⁵⁹“then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. ⁶⁰“Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹“Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. ⁶²“You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. ⁶³“And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

⁶⁴“Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone. ⁶⁵“And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. ⁶⁶“Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. ⁶⁷“In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see. ⁶⁸“And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again.’ And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you*.⁴

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 -

¹⁵“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, ¹⁶“in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. ¹⁷“But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸“I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. ¹⁹“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; ²⁰“that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He *is* your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”⁵

⁴The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁵The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

We always have the choice to do the right thing or not. When we make the wrong decision, then there will be consequences as outlined in the scriptures above. However, these consequences are not the only ones we will face if we make the wrong choices. These consequences are only physical and temporary. They are designed to cause people to move away from the sin which brought them on and to turn back toward God. However, God has also put into place eternal consequences that many people do not realize exist. Even if they do realize that they exist, most people do not think that they really apply to them. These eternal consequences are for people who refuse to obey God and who die in their sin without repenting and changing their ways through faith in Jesus Christ. The consequences I am speaking of here are hell and the lake of fire. These two places are real and for people who disobey God, they will end up there. If disobedient and unrepentant people die before Judgment Day, then they will go to hell and suffer continuously until that Day. After Christ returns, on Judgment Day, these people will be thrown into the lake of fire. This is especially true for false Christian leaders, (just like the Pharisees in Jesus' day) and those who teach the Word of God in error for personal gain, because they make baby Christians stumble. If we do not live in the truth, then God will give us over to believe the lie and we will be destroyed in it, (see Matthew 5:21-30, 10:28, 15:1-20, 18:1-9, 23:1-36, Mark 9:38-50, II Thessalonians chapter 2, II Peter chapters 1-3 and Revelation 20.

Matthew 5:21-30 -

²¹“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ ²²“But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire. ²³“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴“leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵“Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶“Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

²⁷“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. ³⁰“And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for **it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.**⁶

Matthew 10:28 -

⁶The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁸“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. **But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**” ⁷

Matthew 15:1-20 -

¹Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, ²“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.” ³He answered and said to them, “**Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?**” ⁴“For God commanded, saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’” ⁵“But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me *is a gift to God*”—’” ⁶“then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.” ⁷“**Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:**

⁸ **‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
And honor Me with *their* lips,
But their heart is far from Me.**
⁹ **And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching *as* doctrines the commandments of men.’”**

¹⁰When He had called the multitude to *Himself*, He said to them, “Hear and understand:” ¹¹“**Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.**” ¹²Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” ¹³But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.” ¹⁴“Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.” ¹⁵Then Peter answered and said to Him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶So Jesus said, “Are you also still without understanding?” ¹⁷“Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated?” ¹⁸“**But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.**” ¹⁹“**For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.**” ²⁰“**These are *the things* which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.**”⁸

Matthew 18:1-9 -

¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” ²Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, ³and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.” ⁴“Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ⁵“Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.”

⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

6“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. **7**“Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! **8**“If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. **9**“And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.⁹

Matthew 23:1-36 -

¹Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, ²saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³“Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. ⁴“For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men’s shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. ⁵“But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. ⁶“They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷“greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ ⁸“But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. ⁹“Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. ¹⁰“And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹“But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹²“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. ¹³“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in *yourselves*, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. ¹⁴“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. **15**“**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.** ¹⁶“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged *to perform it.*’ ¹⁷“Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? ¹⁸“And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged *to perform it.*’ ¹⁹“Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? ²⁰“Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. ²¹“He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. ²²“And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it. ²³“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ²⁴“Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! ²⁵“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-

indulgence. ²⁶“Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. ²⁷“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men*’s bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸“Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. ²⁹“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, ³⁰“and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ ³¹“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³²“Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. ³³“**Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?** ³⁴“Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, ³⁵“that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶“Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.¹⁰

Mark 9:38-50 -

³⁸Now John answered Him, saying, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.”

³⁹But Jesus said, “Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰“For he who is not against us is on our side. ⁴¹“For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

⁴²“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. ⁴³“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— ⁴⁴“where

‘Their worm does not die,
And the fire is not quenched.’

⁴⁵“And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— ⁴⁶“where

‘Their worm does not die,
And the fire is not quenched.’

⁴⁷“And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire— ⁴⁸“where

‘Their worm does not die,
And the fire is not quenched.’

⁴⁹“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. ⁵⁰“Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”¹¹

II Thessalonians Chapter 2 -

Chapter 2

¹Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ²not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸**And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.** ⁹The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹²that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

¹³But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, ¹⁴to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵**Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.** ¹⁶Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, ¹⁷comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.¹²

II Peter -

Chapter 1

¹Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: ²Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain to*

¹¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

⁵But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸For if these things are yours and abound, *you will be* neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. ¹⁰**Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;** ¹¹**for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

¹²For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. ¹³Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding *you*, ¹⁴knowing that shortly I *must* put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. ¹⁵Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.

¹⁶For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” ¹⁸And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 2

¹**But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.** ²**And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.** ³**By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.**

⁴**For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;** ⁵**and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;** ⁶**and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;** ⁷**and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked ⁸(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)— ⁹*then* the Lord knows how to deliver**

the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, ¹⁰and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,* ¹¹whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

¹²But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, ¹³and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, *as* those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, ¹⁴having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. *They have* a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children. ¹⁵They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; ¹⁶but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. ¹⁷These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

¹⁸For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. ¹⁹While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. ²⁰For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. ²¹For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²²But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Chapter 3

¹Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), ²that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, ³knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation." ⁵For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷**But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.** ⁸**But**, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth

and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹**Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹²looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; ¹⁵and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures. ¹⁷**You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; ¹⁸but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.**¹³

Revelation Chapter 20 -

Chapter 20

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

⁴And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. **⁶Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**

⁷Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. ⁹They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰The 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.

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead,

¹³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵**And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.**¹⁴

In these scriptures we see that there are indeed eternal consequences for our thoughts and actions. Anyone who rejects the sacrifice that Jesus made for us and even those who accept it, but then willfully sin and thereby trample on Jesus, will end up in hell and ultimately the lake of fire, (see Hebrews 6:4-8 and 10:19-39).

Hebrews 6:4-8 -

⁴**For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame. ⁷For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; ⁸but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.***¹⁵

Hebrews 10:19-39 -

¹⁹Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. ²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

²⁶**For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. ²⁸Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which**

¹⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The LORD will judge His people.” ³¹It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. ³²But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: ³³partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; ³⁴for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. ³⁵Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

³⁷ “For yet a little while,
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.
³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith;
 But if *anyone* draws back,
 My soul has no pleasure in him.”

³⁹But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. 16

Since Jesus IS the truth, then we cannot do the right thing in God’s eyes without Him. It is only through faith which is belief in Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we can do what God wants us to do, (see John 14:15-15:17).

John 14:15-15:17 -

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ **“If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you do, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. ¹⁸ No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. ¹⁹ In just a little while the world will not see me again, but you will. For I will live again, and you will, too. ²⁰ When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Those who obey my commandments are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them, and I will love them. And I will reveal myself to each one of them.”**

²² Judas (not Judas Iscariot, but the other disciple with that name) said to him, “Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?”

²³ Jesus replied, **“All those who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and live with them. ²⁴ Anyone who doesn’t love me will not do what I say. And remember, my words are not my own. This message is from the Father who sent me. ²⁵ I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. ²⁶ But when**

the Father sends the Counselor as my representative—and by the Counselor I mean the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I myself have told you.

²⁷“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn’t like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid. ²⁸Remember what I told you: I am going away, but I will come back to you again. If you really love me, you will be very happy for me, because now I can go to the Father, who is greater than I am. ²⁹I have told you these things before they happen so that you will believe when they do happen.

³⁰“I don’t have much more time to talk to you, because the prince of this world approaches. He has no power over me, ³¹but I will do what the Father requires of me, so that the world will know that I love the Father. Come, let’s be going.

Jesus, the True Vine

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³You have already been pruned for greater fruitfulness by the message I have given you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful apart from me.

⁵“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Anyone who parts from me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. ⁷But if you stay joined to me and my words remain in you, you may ask any request you like, and it will be granted! ⁸My true disciples produce much fruit. This brings great glory to my Father.

⁹“I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. ¹⁰When you obey me, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! ¹²I command you to love each other in the same way that I love you. ¹³And here is how to measure it—the greatest love is shown when people lay down their lives for their friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you obey me. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a master doesn’t confide in his servants. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. ¹⁶You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. ¹⁷**I command you to love each other.**¹⁷

This is a very simple and complete plan for us. We do not have to complicate things. We only have to decide to do the right thing then ask God for help and He will help us, (see II Corinthians 11:3).

II Corinthians 11:3 -

³But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.¹⁸

Living in and speaking the truth, no matter what the consequences from the devil and those who are obedient to him in this life, is the only way to eternal life in the presence of God. It is better to suffer now at the hands of Satan, than to suffer eternally from God as a result of wrong choices now. Living in the truth will give us peace and joy, even through the tough times. We will reap an eternal reward from God if we press through all that the devil can throw at us, even if it means dying, and do the work that God has put us here to do. People who chose to live a lie now for profit may make a lot of money but will pay with their eternity. Those who give up things for Jesus and for the sake of the gospel will have them returned to them multiplied in this life and the next, (see Matthew 10:28 above, Psalm chapters 15 and 17, Matthew 19:23-30, Luke 16:10-17, 18:23-30, John 16:1-4 and Romans 14:17).

Psalm Chapter 15 -

15 *A psalm of David.*

¹ Who may worship in your sanctuary, LORD?
Who may enter your presence on your holy hill?

² Those who lead blameless lives
and do what is right,
speaking the truth from sincere hearts.

³ Those who refuse to slander others
or harm their neighbors
or speak evil of their friends.

⁴ Those who despise persistent sinners,
and honor the faithful followers of the LORD
and **keep their promises even when it hurts.**

⁵ Those who do not charge interest on the money they lend,
and who refuse to accept bribes to testify against the innocent.
Such people will stand firm forever.¹⁹

Psalm Chapter 17 -

Psalm 17

A Prayer of David.

¹ Hear a just cause, O LORD,
Attend to my cry;
Give ear to my prayer *which is* not from deceitful lips.

¹⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁹*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

2 Let my vindication come from Your presence;
 Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright.
 3 You have tested my heart;
 You have visited *me* in the night;
 You have tried me and have found nothing;
 I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.
 4 Concerning the works of men,
 By the word of Your lips,
 I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer.
 5 Uphold my steps in Your paths,
That my footsteps may not slip.
 6 I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God;
 Incline Your ear to me, *and* hear my speech.
 7 Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand,
 O You who save those who trust *in You*
 From those who rise up *against them*.
 8 Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
 Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,
 9 From the wicked who oppress me,
From my deadly enemies who surround me.
 10 They have closed up their fat *hearts*;
 With their mouths they speak proudly.
 11 They have now surrounded us in our steps;
 They have set their eyes, crouching down to the earth,
 12 As a lion is eager to tear his prey,
 And like a young lion lurking in secret places.
 13 Arise, O LORD,
 Confront him, cast him down;
 Deliver my life from the wicked with Your sword,
 14 **With Your hand from men, O LORD,**
From men of the world *who have* their portion in *this* life,
And whose belly You fill with Your hidden treasure.
They are satisfied with children,
And leave the rest of their *possession* for their babes.
 15 As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness;
I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.²⁰

Mathew 19:23-30 -

²³Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴“And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁵When His disciples heard *it*, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?”

²⁰*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁶But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, **“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”** ²⁷Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” ²⁸So Jesus said to them, **“Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** ²⁹**“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.** ³⁰“But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first.²¹

Luke 16:10-17 -

¹⁰**“Unless you are faithful in small matters, you won’t be faithful in large ones. If you cheat even a little, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities.** ¹¹ **And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?** ¹² **And if you are not faithful with other people’s money, why should you be trusted with money of your own?**

¹³**“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”**

¹⁴ **The Pharisees, who dearly loved their money, naturally scoffed at all this.** ¹⁵ **Then he said to them, “You like to look good in public, but God knows your evil hearts. What this world honors is an abomination in the sight of God.**

¹⁶“Until John the Baptist began to preach, the laws of Moses and the messages of the prophets were your guides. But now the Good News of the Kingdom of God is preached, and eager multitudes are forcing their way in. ¹⁷ But that doesn’t mean that the law has lost its force in even the smallest point. It is stronger and more permanent than heaven and earth.²²

Luke 18:24-30 -

²⁴And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, **“How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!** ²⁵**“For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”** ²⁶And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?” ²⁷But He said, **“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”** ²⁸Then Peter said, “See, we have left all and followed You.” ²⁹So He said to them, **“Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,** ³⁰**“who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”²³**

²¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²²*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

²³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

John 16:1-4 -

¹“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. ²“They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, **the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.** ³“And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. ⁴“But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.²⁴

Romans 14:17 -

¹⁷for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.²⁵

*The Lord has revealed to me that there are three general reasons that cause us to choose not to tell the truth or obey God. **The first reason that we lie is that we are more afraid of what other people will think of us than we are concerned about what God thinks of us.** This is one of the most common motivating factors that cause us to lie and to disobey God. This fear of others is out of God’s order. Therefore, we must become more afraid of God than we are of other people, so that we will speak and walk in the truth, (see Proverbs 29:25)...*

Proverbs 29:25 -

²⁵Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but to trust the LORD means safety.²⁶

***Secondly, a common reason that we lie is that we want to justify our position.** When we do or say something wrong and we get confronted with it, then we will begin to try to ‘weasel’ out of the bind that we find ourselves in by trying to justify what we have done or said. Typically we will only dig ourselves deeper into the pit. Instead of lying, we should repent for what we have done or said wrong, lay down the ‘right to be right’, and make things right before God. Usually in these instances we will talk a lot. This is a red flag that we are lying and trying to justify what we have done or said, (see Proverbs 10:16)...*

Proverbs 10:16 -

¹⁹ *In the multitude of words sin is not lacking,
But he who restrains his lips is wise.²⁷*

²⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

²⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

²⁶*Holy Bible, New Living Translation, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.*

²⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

Even when we are right, we are generally wrong somewhere, so we cannot take our case before God with much hope of success, (see Isaiah 43:25-28 and Micah chapter 6)...

Isaiah 43:25-28 -

²⁵ “I—yes, I alone—am the one who blots out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again. ²⁶ Let us review the situation together, and *you can present your case if you have one.* ²⁷ From the very beginning, your ancestors sinned against me—all your leaders broke my laws. ²⁸ That is why I have disgraced your priests and assigned Israel a future of complete destruction and shame²⁸

Micah 6 -

¹ Hear now what the LORD says:

“Arise, *plead your case* before the mountains,
And let the hills hear your voice.

² Hear, O you mountains, the LORD’s complaint,
And you strong foundations of the earth;
For the LORD has a complaint against His people,
And He will contend with Israel.

³ “O My people, what have I done to you?
And how have I wearied you?
Testify against Me.

⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
I redeemed you from the house of bondage;
And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵ O My people, remember now
What Balak king of Moab counseled,
And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him,
From Acacia Grove to Gilgal,
That you may know the righteousness of the LORD.”

⁶ With what shall I come before the LORD,
And bow myself before the High God?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,
With calves a year old?

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
Ten thousand rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression,
The fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

⁸ He has shown you, O man, what *is* good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly,
To love mercy,

And to walk humbly with your God?

- 9 The LORD's voice cries to the city—
 Wisdom shall see Your name:
 "Hear the Rod!
 Who has appointed it?
 10 Are there yet the treasures of wickedness
 In the house of the wicked,
 And the short measure *that is* an abomination?
 11 Shall I count pure *those* with the wicked scales,
 And with the bag of deceitful weights?
 12 For her rich men are full of violence,
 Her inhabitants have spoken lies,
 And their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.
 13 "Therefore I will also make *you* sick by striking you,
 By making *you* desolate because of your sins.
 14 You shall eat, but not be satisfied;
 Hunger *shall be* in your midst.
 You may carry *some* away, but shall not save *them*;
 And what you do rescue I will give over to the sword.
 15 "You shall sow, but not reap;
 You shall tread the olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil;
 And *make* sweet wine, but not drink wine.
 16 For the statutes of Omri are kept;
 All the works of Ahab's house *are done*;
 And you walk in their counsels,
 That I may make you a desolation,
 And your inhabitants a hissing.
 Therefore you shall bear the reproach of My people."²⁹

Finally, the third reason that we lie is that we want something that we do not think we can get by telling the truth. We should instead wait on God to give us all the things that He deems necessary for our lives. This last reason that we lie is rooted and grounded in selfishness, impatience, and worldly wisdom which is the opposite of love and comes from the devil, (see I Corinthians 13:4-7, James 1:19-27 and chapter 3)...

I Corinthians 13:4-7 -

⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. ⁶ It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.³⁰

²⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁰*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

James 1:19-27 -

¹⁹My dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. ²⁰Your anger can never make things right in God's sight.

²¹So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the message God has planted in your hearts, for it is strong enough to save your souls.

²²And remember, it is a message to obey, not just to listen to. If you don't obey, you are only fooling yourself. ²³For if you just listen and don't obey, it is like looking at your face in a mirror but doing nothing to improve your appearance. ²⁴You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. ²⁵But if you keep looking steadily into God's perfect law—the law that sets you free—and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

²⁶If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are just fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. ²⁷Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles, and refuse to let the world corrupt us.³¹

James chapter 3 –

¹My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ²For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

¹³Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. ¹⁷But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.³²

³¹*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

³²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

The Lord has also revealed to me that there are several words, phrases, manners of speech and actions that people exhibit that are telltale signs that they are engaging in dishonesty. Some of the sayings are...

*'I am just (or only) saying...'
 'What I am trying to say is...'
 'I was just (or only) joking...'
 'Because...'
 'Well...'*

There are others, but these are some examples. These words are often accompanied by gestures or voice inflections that are 'give-aways' as well, such as rolling of the eyes, waving of the hands, pointing the finger, a high-pitched voice, looking up and to the left, etc. Some of these things are outlined in Proverbs 6:12-19, and God hates them. When any of these are done among Christians, God considers it an abomination...

Proverbs 6:12-19 -

12 A worthless person, a wicked man,
 Walks with a perverse mouth;
 13 He winks with his eyes,
 He shuffles his feet,
 He points with his fingers;
 14 Perversity *is* in his heart,
 He devises evil continually,
 He sows discord.
 15 Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly;
 Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy.

16 These six *things* the LORD hates,
 Yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him:
 17 A proud look,
 A lying tongue,
 Hands that shed innocent blood,
 18 A heart that devises wicked plans,
 Feet that are swift in running to evil,
 19 A false witness *who* speaks lies,
 And one who sows discord among brethren.³³

The world will tell you that everyone lies sometimes. They will say that telling 'white lies' is okay. These are both lies and from the devil. Every person who practices telling lies is a child of the devil and will end up in the lake of fire, (see John 8:42-47, Revelation 21:7-8 and 22:14-15).

³³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

John 8:42-47 -

⁴² Jesus told them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, because I have come to you from God. I am not here on my own, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why can’t you understand what I am saying? It is because you are unable to do so! ⁴⁴ **For you are the children of your father the Devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning and has always hated the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.** ⁴⁵ So when I tell the truth, you just naturally don’t believe me! ⁴⁶ Which of you can truthfully accuse me of sin? And since I am telling you the truth, why don’t you believe me? ⁴⁷ Anyone whose Father is God listens gladly to the words of God. Since you don’t, it proves you aren’t God’s children.”³⁴

Revelation 21:7-8 -

⁷“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and **all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**”³⁵

Revelation 22:14-15 -

¹⁴Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and **whoever loves and practices a lie.**³⁶

Now that we have been shown these things, we must pray each day, and throughout the day, that God will take out of our hearts the things that cause us to lie and disobey Him. He is the only one who can do the work, but we have to allow Him to do it by asking and yielding to the Holy Spirit of truth. When the Holy Spirit makes us aware that we have disobeyed God, sinned with our mouth, or even with a gesture, we must repent quickly and ask God to forgive us and to help us not do that again. We must obey God by walking in the Spirit of God and in truth through Christ in order to be free from sin and eternal death. We must live in the truth, or suffer the eternal consequences. Amen.

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³⁴*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

³⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.