

Free Bible Version

Mark

1 ¹Here is the beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²Just as the prophet Isaiah wrote, “I’m sending my messenger ahead of you to prepare your way. ³A voice is calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the Lord’s way! Make his paths straight.’”^a

⁴John came, baptizing in the desert, announcing a baptism of repentance^b for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵Everybody from the country of Judea and from Jerusalem went to him. They admitted their sins publicly and were baptized in the Jordan River.

⁶John wore clothes made of camel hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts^c and wild honey. ⁷This is what he had to say: “After me someone is coming who is greater than I am. I’m not worthy to bend down and untie his sandals. ⁸I baptized you in water but he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit.”

⁹Then Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan River. ¹⁰As Jesus came out of the water, he saw the heavens split apart and the Spirit like a dove descending upon^d him. ¹¹A voice from heaven said, “You are my son, the one I love. I am very pleased with you.”

¹²Right after this the Spirit sent him away into the desert ¹³where he was tempted by Satan for forty days. He was with the wild animals, and angels took care of him.

¹⁴Later, after John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee, announcing God’s good news.

¹⁵“The time predicted has come,” he said. “God’s kingdom is near. Repent and believe in the good news.”

¹⁶As he was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw Simon and his brother Andrew throwing a net into the water, for they made their living by fishing. ¹⁷“Come and follow me,” he

^a 1:3. Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3.

^b 1:4. Repentance means a “change of mind.”

^c 1:6. Most likely locust-beans rather than the insect.

^d 1:10. Or “into.”

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told them, “and I will have you fishing for people.”¹⁸ They left their nets at once and followed him.

¹⁹He went a little farther and saw James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in a boat mending their nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them to follow him^a, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired workers, and followed Jesus.

²¹They left for Capernaum, and on Sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and taught there. ²²The people were amazed at his teaching, for he spoke with authority, unlike the religious teachers^b.

²³Suddenly, right there in the synagogue, a man with an evil spirit started shouting out, ²⁴“Jesus of Nazareth, why are you bothering us? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are! You’re God’s Holy One!”

²⁵Jesus interrupted the evil spirit, telling him, “Be quiet! Come out of him.”

²⁶The evil spirit screamed, threw the man into convulsions, and came out of him.

²⁷Everyone was amazed at what happened. “What is this?” they asked each other. “What is this new teaching that has such authority? Even evil spirits do what he tells them!”²⁸ News about him spread quickly throughout the whole region of Galilee.

²⁹Then they left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon and Andrew, along with James and John. ³⁰Simon’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever, so they told Jesus about her. ³¹He went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her up. The fever immediately left her. Then she made them a meal.

³²After sunset that evening, those who were sick and demon-possessed were brought to Jesus. ³³The whole of the town gathered outside. ³⁴He healed many people who had various diseases, and threw out many demons. He did not permit the demons to speak, for they knew who he was.

^a 1:20. Implied.

^b 1:22. “Religious teachers” or “scribes.” These were more than “scribes” in the writing sense. These were men who had authority in interpreting Scripture and spent time instructing people in the requirements of the religious law.

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and went alone to a quiet place to pray. ³⁶Simon and the others went to search for him. ³⁷When they found him, they told him, “Everybody’s looking for you.”

³⁸But Jesus replied, “We have to go to the other towns around here so that I can tell them the good news as well—for that’s why I came.”

³⁹So he went all over Galilee, speaking in the synagogues and expelling demons.

⁴⁰A leper came to him asking for help. The man kneeled down before Jesus, saying, “Please, if you’re willing, you can heal me!” ⁴¹With compassion Jesus reached out and touched the man, and said, “I am willing. Be healed!”

⁴²The leprosy left him immediately, and he was healed. ⁴³Jesus sent him away with a strong warning. ⁴⁴“Make sure you don’t tell anybody anything about this,” he told him. “Go to the priest and show yourself to him. Give the offering which is required by the law of Moses for such cleansing, so that people will have proof.”

⁴⁵But the healed leper went out and told everyone what had happened. As a result Jesus could not openly go into the cities anymore, but had to stay out in the country where people came to him from everywhere around.

2 ¹A few days later Jesus returned home to Capernaum, and news spread that he was there. ²So many people crowded inside the house that it was packed, even outside the door, as Jesus told them the good news. ³Four men had brought a man who was paralyzed, ⁴but they could not get near Jesus because of the crowds. So they went up on the roof and took it apart. After they had made an opening above Jesus, they lowered down the mat with the paralyzed man lying on it.

⁵When Jesus saw the trust these men had, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

⁶Some of the religious teachers sitting there thought to themselves, ⁷“Why is he talking like this? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins? Only God can do that!”

⁸Jesus knew right away what they were thinking. He said to them, “Why are you thinking like this? ⁹What’s easier: to say to

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the paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or ‘Get up, pick up your mat, and walk’? ¹⁰But to convince you that the Son of man has the right to forgive sins, ¹¹I say to you (the paralyzed man), ‘Get up, pick up your mat, and go home.’”

¹²He stood up, picked up his mat, and walked out in front of everyone there. They were all amazed, and praised God, saying “We’ve never ever seen anything like this!”

¹³Jesus went out beside the sea once more and taught the crowds that came to him. ¹⁴As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax-collector’s booth.

“Follow me,” Jesus told him. Levi got up and followed Jesus.

¹⁵That evening Jesus ate dinner at Levi’s house. Many tax collectors and “sinners”^a joined Jesus and his disciples for the meal, for there were many of these people that followed Jesus.

¹⁶When the religious leaders of the Pharisees saw Jesus eating with such people, they asked Jesus’ disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷When Jesus heard this, he told them, “It’s not healthy people who need a doctor, but those who are sick. I haven’t come to invite those who do what is right, but those who don’t—the sinners.”

¹⁸Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting^b. Some of them came to Jesus, and asked him, “Why is it that John’s disciples and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples don’t?”

¹⁹“Do wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?” Jesus asked them. “No. While the bridegroom’s with them, they can’t fast. ²⁰But the day is coming when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then they’ll fast. ²¹No one puts a patch that’s not shrunk on old clothes. Otherwise the new piece will shrink away from the old, and make the tear worse. ²²No one puts new wine in old wineskins. Otherwise the wine will burst the wineskins, and both the wine and wineskins will be wasted. No. You put new wine in new wineskins.”

^a 2:15. “Sinners” here refers to those who were not seen as so strict in their keeping of the religious law as the religious teachers and the Pharisees.

^b 2:18. Fasting: choosing not to eat on certain days for religious reasons.

²³One Sabbath day as Jesus was walking through the grain fields, his disciples started picking heads of grain as they walked along. ²⁴The Pharisees asked Jesus, “Look, why are they doing what is not permitted on the Sabbath?”

²⁵“Haven’t you ever read what David did when he and his men were hungry and in need?” Jesus asked them. ²⁶“He went into God’s house when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the consecrated bread which no one except the priests are permitted to eat, and gave it to his men too.”

²⁷“The Sabbath was made for your benefit, not for you to benefit the Sabbath,” he told them. ²⁸“So the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

3 ¹Jesus went to the synagogue again. A man was there who had a crippled hand. ²Some of those there were watching Jesus to see if he would heal the man on the Sabbath because they were looking for a reason to accuse him of breaking the law. ³Jesus told the man with the crippled hand, “Come and stand here in front of everyone.”

⁴“Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, or to do evil? Should you save life, or should you kill?” he asked them. But they didn’t say a word.

⁵He looked around at them in exasperation, very upset by their hard-hearted attitude. Then he told the man, “Hold out your hand.” The man held out his hand, and it was healed. ⁶The Pharisees left, and immediately began plotting with Herod’s party as to how they might kill Jesus.

⁷Meanwhile Jesus returned to the Sea^a, and a large crowd followed him. They were from Galilee, Judea, ⁸Jerusalem, Idumea, Transjordan, and from the regions of Tyre and Sidon. So many people came to see him because they’d heard all he was doing.

⁹Jesus told his disciples to have a small boat ready in case the crowd crushed him, ¹⁰because he had healed so many that all the sick people kept on pressing towards him so they could touch him. ¹¹Whenever the evil spirits saw him they would fall down in

^a 3:7. Of Galilee.

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front of him and shout out, “You are the Son of God!”¹² But he commanded them not to reveal who he was.

¹³Then Jesus went away to the hill country. He called those he wanted to be with him, and they came to him. ¹⁴He chose twelve to be with him, and called them apostles. They were to be with him, and he would send them out to announce the good news, ¹⁵and with the authority to drive out demons. ¹⁶These are the twelve he chose: Simon (whom he called Peter), ¹⁷James the son of Zebedee and his brother John (who he called Boanerges, meaning “sons of thunder”), ¹⁸Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Revolutionary, ¹⁹and Judas Iscariot (who betrayed him).

²⁰Jesus went home, but such a large crowd gathered again that he and his disciples didn’t even have time to eat. ²¹When Jesus’ family^a heard about it, they came to take him away, saying, “He’s lost his senses!” ²²But the religious leaders from Jerusalem said, “He’s possessed by Beelzebul! It’s by the ruler of demons that he’s driving out demons!”

²³But Jesus called them over to him. Using illustrations^b he asked them, “How can Satan throw out Satan? ²⁴A kingdom fighting itself can’t continue. ²⁵A household that’s divided is doomed. ²⁶If Satan is divided and fights against himself, he won’t last long—he’ll soon come to an end. ²⁷Clearly, if someone breaks into the house of a strong man and tries to take his things, he won’t get far in his theft unless he ties up the strong man first.”

²⁸“I tell you the truth: all sins and blasphemies can be forgiven, ²⁹but if someone blasphemes by rejecting the Holy Spirit they can never be forgiven, because they are guilty of an eternal sin.” ³⁰(Jesus said this^c because they said, “He has an evil spirit.”)

³¹Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. They waited outside and sent him a message, asking him to come out. ³²The

^a 3:21. Literally, “those who were close to him.”

^b 3:23. Or “parables,” meaning analogies, comparisons, illustrations.

^c 3:30. Implied.

crowd that was sitting around him told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside asking for you.”

³³“Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” he responded. ³⁴Looking around at all those sitting there in a circle, he said, “Here is my mother! Here are my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does what God wants, they are my brother, and sister, and mother.”

4 ¹Jesus began teaching beside the Sea again. So many people came to listen to him that he climbed into a boat and sat in it on the water while the crowd listened from the shore. ²He illustrated his teachings using many stories.

³“Listen,” he said. “A sower went out to sow. ⁴Now as he was scattering the seeds, some fell on the path, and birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on stony ground where there wasn’t much earth. In the shallow soil the plants started growing quickly, but because the soil wasn’t deep ⁶they were scorched when the sun came up. Since they didn’t have any real roots, they soon withered. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns. The thorns grew up and choked the sprouting seeds, so they produced nothing. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil where they sprouted and grew. They produced a harvest of some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred times what was planted. ⁹If you have ears to hear, listen to what I’m saying.”

¹⁰When he was by himself, his twelve disciples and the others who were with him asked him what the illustrations meant.

¹¹He told them, “The mystery of God’s kingdom has been given to you to understand. But outsiders only have the stories, ¹²so that even though they see, they don’t really ‘see,’ and even though they hear, they don’t understand, otherwise they might turn to me and be forgiven.”

¹³“Don’t you understand this story?” Jesus asked them. “If you can’t, how are you going to understand all the other stories?”

¹⁴“The sower sows the word^a. ¹⁵The seeds on the path where the word is sown illustrate those who hear the message, but then

^a 4:14. Word—or “message,” the Word of God that Jesus came to bring. (See also John 1:1).

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Satan immediately comes along and takes away the word that's been sown in them. ¹⁶Likewise the seeds on the rocky ground illustrate those who hear the word, and happily accept it right away. ¹⁷But since they have no real roots, they only last for a while until trouble or persecution comes, and then they quickly fall away. ¹⁸Those sown among the thorns illustrate those who hear the word, ¹⁹but worries of this world, the temptation of wealth, and other distractions choke the growth of the word, and it becomes unproductive. ²⁰But the seeds sown on good soil illustrate those who hear the word, accept it, and are productive—producing thirty, sixty, and hundred times what was originally sown.

²¹“Who puts a lamp under a bucket, or beneath a bed?”

Jesus asked them. “No, you put a lamp up on a lamp-stand. ²²Everything that is hidden will be revealed, and everything that is secret will be brought out into the open. ²³If you have ears to hear, listen to what I'm saying! ²⁴Pay attention to what you're hearing,” he told them, “for you will be given according to how much you want to receive, measure for measure. ²⁵More will be given to those who already have understanding, but those who don't want to know will have what little understanding they have taken from them.

²⁶“God's kingdom is like a man sowing seed in the ground,” Jesus said. ²⁷“He goes to bed and gets up, day after day, but the man has no knowledge of how the seeds sprout and grow. ²⁸The earth produces a harvest by itself. First a shoot appears, then the heads of grain, and then the heads of grain ripen. ²⁹When the grain is ripe, the farmer reaps it with a sickle, because the harvest is ready.

³⁰“What can we compare God's kingdom to? What illustration shall we use?” he asked. ³¹“It's like a mustard seed, the tiniest seed of all. ³²But when it's sown it grows into a plant that's larger than other plants. It has branches big enough that birds can roost in its shade.”

³³Jesus used many of these illustrated stories when he spoke to the people so they would understand as much as they could.

³⁴In fact, when he spoke publicly, he only used stories; however in private he explained everything to his disciples.

³⁵Later that day, in the evening, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go across to the other side of the Sea.” ³⁶Leaving the crowd behind, the disciples went with Jesus and got into a boat. Other boats went with them. ³⁷Soon a terrible storm started blowing, and waves crashed against the boat, filling it with water. ³⁸Jesus was asleep in the stern, resting his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting at him, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re about to drown?”

³⁹Jesus woke up. He told the wind to die down and told the waves, “Be quiet! Be still.” The wind stopped, and the water became completely calm. ⁴⁰“Why are you so frightened^a? Haven’t you learned to trust me?” he asked them.

⁴¹They were stunned and terrified^b. They asked each other, “Who *is* this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

5 ¹They arrived on the other side of the lake in the region of the Gerasenes. ²When Jesus got out of the boat a man with an evil spirit came from the graveyard to meet him. ³This man lived among the tombs, and it had been impossible to tie him up any more, even with a chain. ⁴He had often been tied up with chains and shackles, but he simply tore the chains apart and broke the shackles into pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵Day and night he was always shouting out among the tombs and in the hills nearby, cutting himself with sharp stones.

⁶Seeing Jesus from a distance he ran and kneeled in front of him. ⁷In a loud voice he cried out, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of Almighty God? Swear by God that you won’t torture me!” ⁸For Jesus had already told the evil spirit to leave the man.

⁹Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

“My name is Legion, because we are many!” he replied.

¹⁰He also repeatedly pleaded with Jesus not to send them a long way away^c.

^a 4:40. The word used is for cowards.

^b 4:41. Although the aspect of fear is usually brought out in translations, the text indicates that they had been frightened previously. Now they were amazed, in awe at what had happened, though no doubt still terrified.

^c 5:9. Literally, “out of the region.”

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¹¹A large herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside nearby. ¹²The evil spirits pleaded with him, “Send us into the pigs so we can enter them.” ¹³Jesus allowed them to do this. The evil spirits left the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd, about two thousand, rushed down the steep cliff into the sea and drowned. ¹⁴The pig-keepers ran away, and spread the news all over town and in the countryside. People came out to see what had happened. ¹⁵When they found Jesus they saw the man who had been demon-possessed sitting there, dressed, and in his right mind—the one who had the legion of evil spirits—and they became frightened! ¹⁶Then those who had seen what had happened to the man who had been demon-possessed and the pigs told the others. ¹⁷They began pleading with Jesus to leave their district. ¹⁸As Jesus climbed into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹But Jesus refused, telling him, “Go home to your own people, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has been merciful to you.”

²⁰So the man went on his way and began to tell the people of the Ten Cities everything Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed.

²¹Jesus went back again by boat to the other side of the lake where a large crowd gathered around him at the shore. ²²A synagogue leader, a man named Jairus, came to him. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³and pleaded with him, saying, “My little daughter is about to die. Please come and place your hands on her so she may be healed and live.”

²⁴So Jesus went with him. Everybody followed, crowding and jostling him. ²⁵A woman was there who had been ill from bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶She’d suffered considerably under the care of many doctors, and had spent all she had. But nothing helped her—in fact she’d grown worse. ²⁷She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd, and touched his cloak. ²⁸She was telling herself, “If I can just touch his cloak, I’ll be healed.”

²⁹The bleeding stopped immediately, and she felt her body healed from her disease. ³⁰Jesus, sensing at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my cloak?”

³¹“Look at the crowd jostling you. What do you mean, ‘Who touched me?’” the disciples replied.

³²But Jesus went on looking around to see who had done it.

³³The woman, realizing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.

³⁴“My daughter, your trust in me has healed you. Go in peace. You have been completely cured of your disease,” Jesus told her.

³⁵While he was still speaking some people came from the home of the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “You don’t need to bother the Teacher any longer.”

³⁶But Jesus paid no attention to what they said. He told the synagogue leader, “Don’t be afraid, just trust in me^a.” ³⁷He wouldn’t let anyone go with him except Peter, James, and James’ brother John.

³⁸When they arrived at the synagogue leader’s house, Jesus saw all the commotion, with people crying and wailing. ³⁹He went in and asked them, “Why are you making such a commotion with all this crying? The little girl isn’t dead, she’s just sleeping.” ⁴⁰They laughed scornfully at him.

Jesus made everyone leave. Then he went into the room where the little girl was lying, taking with him the child’s father and mother, and the three disciples. ⁴¹Taking the little girl’s hand he said, “*Talitha koum*,” which means, “Little girl, get up!”

⁴²The little girl, who was twelve years old, got up immediately and began walking around. They were completely astonished at what had happened. ⁴³He gave them strict instructions not to let anyone know, and he told them to give the little girl something to eat.

6 ¹Jesus left and went home to Nazareth with his disciples. ²On Sabbath he began teaching in the synagogue, and many of those who were listening were surprised.

“Where does he get these ideas?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom he’s been given? Where does he get the power to do miracles? ³Isn’t this the carpenter, Mary’s son—the brother of

^a 5:36. “In me,” implied.

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James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Don't his sisters live here among us?" They were offended and rejected him^a.

⁴"A prophet is treated with respect except in his home town, among his relatives, and within his own family," Jesus told them. ⁵The result was that Jesus could not do any miracles there, except to heal a few sick people. ⁶He was amazed at their lack of trust.

Jesus traveled around the villages, teaching as he went. ⁷He called together the twelve disciples, and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority over evil spirits. ⁸He told them not to take anything with them except a walking stick—no bread, no bag, and no money in their belts. ⁹They could wear sandals, but they were not to take an extra shirt.

¹⁰"When you're invited into a home, stay there until you leave," he told them. ¹¹"If you're not welcomed and not listened to, then shake the dust from your feet as you leave as a sign you have given up on them^b." ¹²So they went around telling people to repent. ¹³They drove out many demons, and healed many who were sick by anointing them with oil.

¹⁴King Herod got to hear about Jesus since he had become well-known. Some said, "This is John the Baptist risen from the dead. That's why he has such miraculous powers." ¹⁵Others said, "It's Elijah." Still others said, "He's a prophet, like one of the prophets of the past."

¹⁶But when Herod heard about it, he said, "It's John, the one I beheaded! He's come back from the dead!" ¹⁷For Herod had given orders to arrest and imprison John because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom Herod had married. ¹⁸John had been saying to Herod, "It's against the law to marry your brother's wife." ¹⁹So Herodias had a grudge against John and wanted him killed. But she wasn't able to arrange it ²⁰because Herod knew John was a holy man who did what was right. Herod protected John and though what John said was very disturbing to him, he was still happy to hear what he had to say.

^a 6:3. "And rejected him"—implied in the idea of taking offense.

^b 6:11. Literally, "a witness to them." The act of shaking even the dust of the place from your feet was to indicate you completely abandoned them.

²¹Herodias had her opportunity on Herod's birthday. He gave a banquet for the nobles, military officers, and important leaders of Galilee. ²²Herodias' daughter came in and danced for them. Herod and those eating with him were delighted at her performance, so he told the girl, ²³"Ask me for whatever you like, and I'll give it to you." He confirmed his promise with an oath, "I'll give you up to half my kingdom."

²⁴She went out and asked her mother, "What should I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she replied.

²⁵The girl hurried back in and said to the king, "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a plate."

²⁶The king was very upset, but because of the oaths he'd made in front of his guests, he didn't want to refuse her. ²⁷So he immediately sent an executioner to bring him John's head. After beheading him in the prison, ²⁸the executioner brought John's head on a plate and gave it to the girl, and the young girl handed it to her mother. ²⁹When John's disciples heard what had happened they came and took his body and placed it in a tomb.

³⁰The apostles returned^a and gathered around Jesus. They told him all they had done and what they had taught.

³¹"Come with me, just yourselves. We'll go to a quiet place, and rest for a while," Jesus told them, because there was so much coming and going that they didn't even have time to eat. ³²So they went by boat to a quiet place to be alone.

³³But people saw them leaving and recognized them. So people from all the surrounding towns ran ahead and got there before them. ³⁴When Jesus got off the boat he saw a huge crowd, and he felt pity for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them about many things.

³⁵It was getting late in the day and Jesus' disciples came to him. They told him, "We're miles from anywhere, and it's really late. ³⁶You should tell the people to go and buy themselves something to eat in the villages and countryside nearby."

³⁷But Jesus replied, "You give them something to eat."

"What? We'd need more than six month's pay^a to buy bread to feed all these people," the disciples replied.

^a 6:30. From their tour of the villages, spreading the good news.

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³⁸“Well, how much bread do you have?” Jesus asked. “Go and see.”

They went and checked, and told him, “Five loaves, and a couple of fish.”

³⁹Jesus told everyone to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰They sat in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹Then he took the five loaves and the two fish. Looking up to heaven he blessed the food and broke the bread into pieces. Then he handed the bread to the disciples to give to the people, and he divided the fish up between all of them. ⁴²Everyone ate until they were full. ⁴³Then they collected up the leftovers of the bread and fish—twelve basketfuls. ⁴⁴A total of five thousand men plus their families ate the food.

⁴⁵Immediately after this Jesus instructed his disciples to get back into the boat. They were to go on ahead to Bethsaida on the other side of the lake while he sent the people on their way.

⁴⁶Once he’d said goodbye to them he went up into the hills to pray.

⁴⁷Late that evening the boat was in the middle of the lake while Jesus was alone, still on land. ⁴⁸He could see them being buffeted about as they rowed hard because the wind was blowing against them. In the early morning hours Jesus came to them, walking on the water. He would have passed them, ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the water they thought he was a ghost. They screamed out ⁵⁰because they could all see him and were absolutely terrified.

Jesus told them right away: “Don’t worry, it’s me. Don’t be afraid!” ⁵¹He went over to them and climbed into the boat, and the wind died down. They were totally shocked, ⁵²for they hadn’t understood the meaning of the feeding miracle due to their stubborn, hard-hearted attitude.

⁵³After crossing the Sea they arrived at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴As they climbed out, the people immediately recognized Jesus. ⁵⁵They ran everywhere around the whole area to bring in all the sick on their mats to where they’d heard Jesus was. ⁵⁶Wherever he went, in the villages, in the towns, or in the countryside, they put the sick in the marketplaces and begged

^a 6:37. Literally, “200 denarii.”

Jesus to let the sick touch just the edge of his clothes. Everyone who touched him was healed.

7¹ The Pharisees and religious leaders who had come down from Jerusalem to meet Jesus² noticed that some of his disciples ate with “unclean” (meaning unwashed) hands.³ (The Pharisees and all Jews don’t eat until they wash their hands, following the tradition of their ancestors.⁴ In the same way, they don’t eat when they return from the market until they have had a wash. They observe many other rituals, like the washing of cups, pots, and pans^a).

⁵ So the Pharisees and religious leaders asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples follow the tradition of our ancestors? They eat food^b with unclean hands.”

⁶ Jesus replied, “Isaiah was right about you hypocrites when he said, ‘These people claim they honor me, but in their thinking they are far from me. ⁷There’s no point in their worship of me, for what they teach as doctrines are merely human rules.’^c ⁸You disregard God’s law, and instead you carefully observe human traditions,” he told them.

⁹ “How cleverly you set aside God’s law so you can support your traditions! ¹⁰Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and ‘Whoever curses their father or mother should die.’^d ¹¹But you say, ‘If someone tells their father or mother, “Anything you might have received from me is now ‘Corban,’” (that means dedicated to God), ¹²then you don’t permit them to do anything further for their mother or father. ¹³By means of this tradition of yours that you pass down, you make God’s word null and void. You do many other things like this.”

¹⁴ Jesus called the crowd to him again and told them, “Please, everyone listen to me and understand.¹⁵ It’s not what’s on the outside and goes into you that makes you unclean. It’s what comes out that makes you unclean.”^e

^a 7:4. While hygienic, the focus was on making sure everything was ceremonially clean.

^b 7:5. Literally, “bread.”

^c 7:7. Isaiah 29:13.

^d 7:10. Exodus 20:12; 21:17.

^e 7:15. The earliest manuscripts do not have verse 16.

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¹⁷Then Jesus went inside to escape the crowd, and his disciples asked him about his illustration.

¹⁸“Don’t you understand it either?” he asked them. “Don’t you see that what you eat doesn’t make you unclean? ¹⁹It doesn’t go into your mind, but into your stomach, and then passes out of the body. So all foods are ceremonially “clean.”^a

²⁰“It’s what comes out of you that makes you unclean. ²¹It’s from the inside, from people’s minds, that evil thoughts come: sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²greed, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, thoughtlessness—²³all these evils come from inside and defile people.”

²⁴Then Jesus left and went to the region of Tyre. He didn’t want anyone to know he was staying in a house there, but he couldn’t keep it a secret. ²⁵As soon as a woman, whose little daughter had an evil spirit, heard about him she came and fell at his feet. ²⁶The woman was Greek, born in Syrophenicia. She begged Jesus to drive out the demon from her daughter.

²⁷“First let the children eat until they’re full,” Jesus replied. “It’s not right to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs^b.”

²⁸“True, sir,” she said, “but even the dogs under the table eat the scraps the children leave.”

²⁹Jesus told her, “For such an answer you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰She went home and found the child lying on the bed, the demon gone.

³¹Leaving the region of Tyre, Jesus passed through Sidon and then on to the Sea of Galilee and the territory of the Ten Cities. ³²There they brought him a deaf man who also could not speak properly. They asked Jesus to touch the man with his hand and heal him. ³³After Jesus took him aside from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers in the deaf man’s ears. Then he touched the man’s tongue with spit. ³⁴Jesus looked up to heaven and with a sigh he said, “Ephphatha,”^c which means, “Open!” ³⁵The man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was gone, and he began speaking properly. ³⁶Jesus gave strict orders not to tell anyone,

^a 7:19. Some scholars believe this sentence is a later addition.

^b 7:27. Or puppies, small dogs.

^c 7:34. This is the Aramaic word meaning “cause to be open.”

but the more he said this, the more they spread the news. ³⁷They were totally amazed and said, “Everything he does is marvelous. He even makes the deaf hear, and the dumb speak.”

8 ¹Around this time there was another large crowd that had nothing to eat. Jesus called the disciples together and told them, ²“My heart goes out to the crowd because they have already stayed with me for three days and they have nothing to eat. ³If I send them home without food, they’ll faint on the way. Some have come from a long way away.”

⁴“Where could anybody find enough bread to feed them here in this wilderness?” answered his disciples.

⁵“How many loaves do you have?” he asked.

“Seven,” they replied.

⁶He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves of bread, and gave thanks. He broke the bread and handed the pieces to his disciples to give to the crowd. ⁷They had a few fish as well, so having blessed them, he said, “Take these and share them too.”

⁸They ate until they were full, and then collected up seven baskets of leftovers. ⁹There were four thousand people there. After sending them on their way, ¹⁰Jesus climbed into a boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

¹¹The Pharisees arrived and began to argue with him, wanting him to give them a miraculous sign from heaven, trying to get him to prove himself. ¹²Jesus sighed deeply, and asked, “Why do you people^a want a sign? I tell you the truth: I will not give you a sign.”

¹³So he left them behind, climbed into the boat, and went back across the lake. ¹⁴But the disciples had forgotten to bring bread with them. All they had in the boat was one loaf.

¹⁵“Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod!” he warned them.

¹⁶“He’s saying that because we don’t have any bread,” they concluded.

¹⁷Jesus knew what they were saying, and said, “Why are you talking about not having any bread? Are you still not

^a 8:12. Literally, “this generation.”

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thinking and not understanding? Have you closed your minds^a?
¹⁸You've got eyes to see, haven't you? And ears to hear? ¹⁹Don't you remember when I shared five loaves among five thousand? How many basketfuls of leftovers did you pick up?"

"Twelve," they replied.

²⁰"And the seven loaves divided among four thousand. How many basketfuls of leftovers did you pick up?"

"Seven," they answered.

²¹"Do you still not understand?" he asked them.

²²They went to Bethsaida where some people brought a blind man to Jesus. They begged Jesus to touch him and heal him. ²³Jesus took the blind man by the hand and took him outside the village. Jesus spat on the man's eyes and touched him with his hands.

Then Jesus asked him, "Can you see anything?"

²⁴The man looked around, and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees walking." ²⁵So Jesus touched the man's eyes again. He could see properly—he was cured and his sight was clear. ²⁶Jesus sent the man home, and told him, "Don't go back through the village^b."

²⁷Jesus and his disciples left to go to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say I am?"

²⁸"Some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, others say one of the prophets," they replied.

²⁹"But who do you say I am?" he asked them.

"You are the Messiah!" Peter answered.

³⁰Jesus warned them not to tell anybody about him.

³¹Then Jesus began to explain to them that the Son of man would suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and religious teachers. He would be killed, but three days later would rise again. ³²Jesus explained this to them very clearly. But Peter took Jesus aside and started to reprimand him for what he said.

^a 8:17. Literally, "Have you hardened your hearts?"

^b 8:26. In other words, do not spread the news of what has happened.

³³Jesus turned around and looking at his disciples, reprimanded Peter. “Get away from me, Satan,” he said. “You’re not thinking as God thinks, but as human beings do.”

³⁴Jesus called the crowd and his disciples over to him, and told them, “If you want to follow me, you must give up on yourselves, pick up your cross and follow me.” ³⁵If you want to save your life you will lose it, but if you lose your life because of me and the good news you will save it.

³⁶“What use is it for you to gain everything in the whole world, and lose your life? ³⁷What would you give in exchange for your life? ³⁸If you’re ashamed to acknowledge^a me and what I say among this unfaithful and sinful people^b, then the Son of man will be ashamed to acknowledge you when he comes with his Father’s glory with the holy angels.

9 ¹Jesus told them, “I tell you the truth: some standing here won’t die before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”

²Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him, and led them up a high mountain to be by themselves. His appearance totally changed. ³His clothes shone a brilliant white, whiter than anyone on earth could bleach them. ⁴Then Elijah and Moses appeared in front of them as well, talking with Jesus.

⁵Peter spoke up and said, “Rabbi, it’s great for us to be here! We should make three shelters—one each for you, Moses, and Elijah.” ⁶(He really didn’t know what to say because they were all so frightened!)

⁷Then a cloud covered^c them, and a voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, the one I love. Listen to him.”

⁸Then, all of a sudden, as they were watching, there was nobody. Only Jesus was with them.

⁹As they came down the mountain Jesus instructed them not to tell anyone what they’d seen until the Son of man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰They kept this to themselves, but they did argue with each other over what it meant to rise from the dead.

^a 8:38. “Ashamed to acknowledge me,” or, “do not take their stand for me.”

^b 8:38. Literally, “generation.”

^c 9:7. Or, “overshadowed.”

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¹¹“Why do the religious teachers state that Elijah has to come first?” they asked him.

¹²“It’s true that Elijah comes first to prepare everything,” Jesus replied. “But why then does it say in Scripture that the Son of man has to suffer so much and be treated with contempt?”

¹³However, I tell you that Elijah has come, and they abused him in whatever way they wanted, just as Scripture said they would.”

¹⁴When they returned to the other disciples, they saw them surrounded by a large crowd and some religious teachers arguing with them. ¹⁵As soon as the crowd saw Jesus they were in total awe, and ran to greet him.

¹⁶“What are you arguing with them about?” Jesus asked them.

¹⁷One of the people in the crowd answered, “Rabbi, I brought my son to you. He has an evil spirit that prevents him speaking. ¹⁸Whenever he has a seizure it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and he becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out of him, but they couldn’t do it.”

¹⁹“You unbelieving people!” Jesus responded. “How long must I remain here with you? How long do I have to put up with you? Bring him over here to me!”

²⁰So they brought him to Jesus. When the evil spirit saw Jesus it immediately sent the boy into convulsions and threw him on the ground, where he rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

²¹“How long has he had this?” Jesus asked the boy’s father.

“Since he was small,” the father replied. ²²“Often it throws him into the fire to burn him to death, or throws him into water to drown him. Please have mercy on us and help, if you can.”

²³“Why do you say^a, ‘if you can?’” replied Jesus. “Whoever trusts has every power!”

²⁴“I do trust in you,” the man shouted out right away. “Help me not to distrust you.”

²⁵Jesus, seeing that the crowd was closing in^a, commanded the evil spirit, “Spirit that causes deafness and dumbness, I order you to come out of him and never return.”

^a 9:23. Implied. Jesus was asking why the man said to him, “if you can,” which suggested doubt as to what Jesus could do.

²⁶The spirit screamed and threw the boy into severe convulsions. Then the spirit came out of the boy and left him for dead—to the extent that many of the people said, He’s dead.”

²⁷But Jesus took the boy by the hand and helped him up, and he got to his feet.

²⁸Later, when Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him in private, “Why couldn’t we drive the evil spirit out?”

²⁹“This kind can’t be driven out except by prayer,” Jesus told them.

³⁰They left and passed through Galilee. Jesus didn’t want anyone to know where he was ³¹because he was teaching his disciples^b. “The Son of man will be betrayed to human authorities,” he told them. “They will kill him, but three days later he will rise again.” ³²They didn’t understand what he meant and were too afraid to ask him about it.

³³They arrived at Capernaum, and once they were inside the house where they were staying, Jesus asked them, “What were you talking about on the way?” ³⁴But they didn’t say anything because they had been arguing over who was the most important.

³⁵Jesus sat down and called the twelve disciples together. “If anyone wants to be first, he has to be the very last, the servant of everyone else,” he told them. ³⁶He took a small child and had the child stand right in the middle of them. Then he picked up and hugged the child, and told them, ³⁷“Whoever welcomes a child like this in my name, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me doesn’t welcome me but the One who sent me.”

³⁸John said to Jesus, “Rabbi, we saw someone driving out demons in your name. We tried to stop him because he wasn’t one of us.”

³⁹“Don’t stop him,” Jesus replied. “For no one who is doing miracles in my name can curse me at the same moment.

⁴⁰Anyone who is not against us is for us. ⁴¹Anyone who gives a cup of water to you in my name, because you belong to Christ, won’t lose their reward, believe me.

^a 9:25. Or, “running together.” This word is only used once in the New Testament.

^b 9:31. In other words, he wanted to spend time teaching his disciples.

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⁴²“But if anyone leads one of these little ones who trust in me into sin, it would be better for them if they were thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around their neck. ⁴³If your hand leads you to sin, cut it off! It’s better to enter eternal life as a cripple than to go with both hands into Gehenna^a, into the fire that can’t be put out. ^b⁴⁵If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off! It’s better to enter eternal life lame than to be thrown into Gehenna still having two feet. ^c⁴⁷If your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out! It’s better to enter the kingdom of God with just one eye than to be thrown into Gehenna still having both eyes, ⁴⁸where the worm doesn’t die and the fire never goes out. ⁴⁹Everybody will be ‘salted’ by fire. ⁵⁰Salt is good, but if it loses its taste, how could you make it salty again? You need to be like salt, and live in peace with one another.”

10 ¹Jesus left Capernaum and went to the region of Judea and Transjordan. Once again people flocked to see him, and he was teaching them like he always did. ²Some Pharisees came to see him. They tried to test him by asking the question, “Is divorce legal?”

³“What did Moses tell you to do?” he asked in reply.

⁴“Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and send the woman away,” they replied.

⁵Then Jesus told them, “Moses only wrote down this rule for you because of your hard-hearted attitude. ⁶However, in the beginning, from creation, God made male and female. ⁷That’s why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined in marriage to his wife, ⁸and the two become one body. They are no longer two but one. ⁹Let no one separate what God has joined together.”

¹⁰When they were back indoors, the disciples began asking him about this.

^a 9:43. The word used here is literally “Gehenna,” sometimes translated “hell” or “hellfire.” Gehenna was the place outside of Jerusalem where fires were lit to dispose of rubbish by burning. “Hell” is a concept that is derived from Nordic and Anglo-Saxon mythology and does not adequately convey the meaning here.

^b 9:43. Verse 44 is not in the early manuscripts.

^c 9:45. Verse 46 is not found in the early manuscripts.

¹¹“Any man who divorces his wife and marries again commits adultery against her,” he told them. ¹²“And if the wife divorces her husband and marries again she commits adultery.”

¹³Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them, but the disciples told them off and tried to keep the children away from Jesus. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw what they were doing, he became very upset and told them, “Let the children come to me! Don’t stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t welcome the kingdom of God like a child won’t enter it.” ¹⁶He hugged the children, placed his hands on them, and blessed them.

¹⁷As Jesus set out on his journey^a, a man came running over and kneeled down before Jesus. “Good teacher, what should I do to make sure I have eternal life?” he asked.

¹⁸“Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked him. “No one’s good, only God. ¹⁹You know the commandments: you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not cheat, honor your father and mother...”

²⁰“Teacher,” the man replied, “I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was small.”

²¹Jesus looked at him with love and said, “You’re only missing one thing. Go and sell everything you own, give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.”

²²At this, the man’s face fell, and he left feeling very sad, for he was very wealthy.

²³Jesus looked around, and said to his disciples, “It’s only with difficulty that wealthy people enter the kingdom of God!”

²⁴The disciples were shocked at this. But Jesus went on, “My friends, it is difficult to enter God’s kingdom. ²⁵It’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter God’s kingdom.”

²⁶The disciples were even more confused. “Then who on earth can be saved?” they asked one another.

^a 10:17. To Jerusalem, see 11:1.

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²⁷Looking right at them, Jesus replied, “From a human point of view, it’s impossible—but not with God. Everything is possible with God.”

²⁸Peter spoke up, “We’ve left everything to follow you...”

²⁹“I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “anyone who has left behind their home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands because of me, and for the sake of the good news, ³⁰will receive in return in due course a hundred times as many homes and brothers and sisters and children and lands—as well as persecution. In the world to come they will receive eternal life. ³¹However many of the first will be last, and the last first.”

³²They continued on their way to Jerusalem, with Jesus walking on ahead. The disciples were apprehensive and the other followers were afraid. So Jesus took the disciples aside and began to explain to them what was about to happen to him.

³³“We’re going to Jerusalem,” he told them, “and the Son of man will be betrayed to the chief priests and religious teachers. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to the foreigners^a.”

³⁴They will mock him, spit on him, flog him, and kill him. But three days later he will rise again.”

³⁵James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to see him.

“Teacher,” they said, “We want you to do for us whatever we ask you.”

³⁶“So what do you want me to do for you?” Jesus replied.

³⁷“When you’re victorious and sit on your throne^b, make sure we sit beside you, one on the right, the other on the left,” they told him.

³⁸“You don’t know what you’re asking,” replied Jesus. “Can you drink the cup I drink? Can you be baptized with the baptism of pain I will suffer?”

³⁹“Yes, we can,” they replied.

“You will drink the cup I drink, and you will be baptized with the same baptism as me,” Jesus told them. ⁴⁰“But it’s not for me to grant who should sit on my right or on my left. These

^a 10:33. In this context meaning the Romans.

^b 10:37. Implied.

places are reserved for those for whom they have been prepared.”

⁴¹When the other ten disciples heard about this, they started getting upset with James and John. ⁴²Jesus called the disciples together and told them,

“You realize that those who claim to rule nations oppress their people. The rulers act like tyrants. ⁴³But for you it’s not like this. Anyone of you who wants you to be a ruler must be your servant, ⁴⁴and anyone who wants to be first among you must be the slave of all of you. ⁴⁵For even the Son of man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

⁴⁶They passed through Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples were leaving town along with a large crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting at the roadside. ⁴⁷When he heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he started shouting out, “Jesus, son of David, please have mercy on me!” ⁴⁸Lots of people told him to be quiet, but that only made him shout even more, “Jesus, son of David, please have mercy me!”

⁴⁹Jesus stopped, and said, “Tell him to come here.” So they called him over, telling him, “Good news! Get up. He’s calling for you.” ⁵⁰Bartimaeus jumped up, threw off his coat, and rushed over to Jesus.

⁵¹“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

“Teacher,” he said to Jesus, “I want to see!”

⁵²“You can go. Your trust in me has healed^a you.”

Immediately Bartimaeus could see and he followed Jesus as he went on his way.

11 ¹As they approached Jerusalem, near to Bethphage and Bethany, beside the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead. ²He told them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as soon as you enter, you’ll find a colt tied up that no one has ever ridden before. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone asks you what you are doing, tell them, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back soon.’”

^a 10:52. Or “saved.” The word can mean both “save” and “heal.”

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⁴So they set off, and found a colt tied to a door, out on the street, and they untied it. ⁵Some of the people standing around asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶The disciples replied just as Jesus told them to, and the people let them go.

⁷They brought the colt to Jesus, put their cloaks on it, and Jesus sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others laid down leafy branches that they’d cut in the fields.

⁹Those leading in the front and those that were following were all shouting, “Hosanna^a! Bless the one coming in the name of the Lord. ¹⁰Bless the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!”

¹¹Jesus entered Jerusalem and went in to the Temple. He looked around him, observing everything, and then, since it was getting late, he returned to Bethany with the twelve disciples.

¹²The next day, as they left Bethany, Jesus was hungry.

¹³From some distance away he saw a fig tree with leaves, so he went over to it to see if it had any fruit. But when he got there, he found it had only leaves, because it was not the season for figs.

¹⁴He said to the tree, “May no one eat fruit from you ever again.” His disciples heard his words.

¹⁵They arrived back in Jerusalem, and Jesus went into the Temple. He started driving out the people who were buying and selling in the Temple. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the chairs of the people selling doves. ¹⁶He stopped anyone carrying things through the Temple.

¹⁷He explained to them, “Doesn’t Scripture say, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have turned it into a den of thieves!”

¹⁸The chief priests and religious teachers heard what had happened, and tried to find a way to kill Jesus. But they were afraid of him, for everyone was so impressed by his teaching.

¹⁹When evening came Jesus and his disciples left the city.

²⁰The following morning as they returned, they saw the fig tree, withered from the roots up. ²¹Peter remembered what Jesus had

^a 11:9. “Hosanna!” This is simply a transliteration of the Aramaic word meaning “Save!”

done, and said to him, “Rabbi, look, the fig tree that you cursed has withered.”

²²“Trust in God,” Jesus replied. ²³“Believe me when I say to you that if you told this mountain, ‘Get out of here and be thrown into the sea,’ and you don’t doubt in your heart, but are convinced about what you asking, then it will happen! ²⁴I’m telling you that whatever you pray for, whatever you ask, trust that you’ve received it, and it’s yours. ²⁵But when you’re praying, if you have something against someone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your sins.”^a

²⁷They returned to Jerusalem, and as he was walking in the Temple, the chief priests, religious teachers, and the leaders approached him. ²⁸“By what authority are you doing all this?” they demanded. “Who gave you the right?”

²⁹“Let me ask you a question,” Jesus told them. “You answer me, and I’ll tell you by whose authority I do these things. ³⁰John’s baptism—did that come from heaven, or from people?”

³¹They discussed it among themselves. They said, “If we say it’s from heaven, he’ll reply, ‘So why didn’t you believe him?’ ³²But if we say, it’s of human origin, well...” They were afraid of the crowd, because everyone believed that John was a true prophet.

³³So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

“Then I’m not telling you by whose authority I do these things,” replied Jesus.

12 ¹Then Jesus began to speak to them using illustrated stories^b.

“Once there was a man who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a pit for a winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to some farmers, and left on a journey.

²“When harvest-time came, he sent one of his servants to the tenant farmers to collect some of the grapes from the vineyard. ³But they grabbed hold of him, beat him up, and sent him away with nothing. ⁴So the man sent another servant. They

^a 11:25. The earliest manuscripts do not contain verse 26, which is inserted from Matthew 6:15.

^b 12:1. See on 3:23.

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hit him over the head and abused him. ⁵He sent another servant, and this one they killed. He sent many other servants, and they beat some of them and killed others. ⁶In the end the only one left was his son whom he loved, and eventually he sent him, thinking ‘they will respect my son.’ ⁷But the farmers said to themselves, ‘Here’s the owner’s heir—if we kill him, we can get what he would have inherited!’ ⁸So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. ⁹Now what is the owner of the vineyard going to do? He will come and kill those farmers, and then he will lease the vineyard to others.

¹⁰“Haven’t you read this Scripture: ‘The stone rejected by the builders has become the chief cornerstone.’ ¹¹This is from the Lord, and it’s marvelous to see!’?”

¹²The Jewish leaders tried to have him arrested because they realized that the illustration was directed at them, but they were afraid of the crowd. So they left him alone and went away.

¹³Later they sent some Pharisees with some of Herod’s supporters to Jesus in an attempt to catch him out by what he said.

¹⁴They arrived and said, “Teacher, we know you are a truthful person and you don’t look for approval, because you don’t care about status or position^a. Instead you teach God’s way in accordance with the truth. So is it right to pay tribute to Caesar or not? ¹⁵Should we pay up, or should we refuse?”

Jesus, realizing how hypocritical they were, asked them, “Why are you trying to catch me out? Bring me a coin to look at.”

¹⁶They gave him a coin. “Whose is this image, and whose inscription?” Jesus asked them. “Caesar’s,” they replied.

¹⁷“Then give back to Caesar what belongs to him, and give back to God what belongs to him,” Jesus told them. They were amazed at his reply.

¹⁸Then the Sadducees, who deny the resurrection, came and asked a question:

^a 12:14. Literally, “You have no concern for anyone because you do not look at the face of men.” However this literal translation could make it seem that Jesus was uncaring and indifferent.

¹⁹“Teacher, Moses instructed us that if a man dies, leaving his widow childless, then his brother should marry his wife, and have children by her on his behalf. ²⁰Once there were seven brothers. The first one got married, and then died without having children. ²¹The second married his widow, and then died, childless. The third did the same. ²²In fact all seven died without having children. In the end the woman died too. ²³In the resurrection, whose wife will she be, because she was the wife of all seven brothers?”

²⁴Jesus told them, “This proves you’re mistaken, and that you don’t know the Scriptures or the power of God. ²⁵When the dead rise, they don’t marry, and aren’t given in marriage. They’re like the angels in heaven. ²⁶But concerning the resurrection, haven’t you read in Moses’ writings the story of the burning bush, where God spoke to Moses and told him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ ²⁷He’s not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are completely mistaken!”

²⁸One of the religious teachers came and heard them arguing. He recognized that Jesus had given them a good answer. So he asked him, “Which is the most important commandment of all?”

²⁹Jesus replied, “The first commandment is, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. ³⁰Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your spirit, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’^a ³¹The second is ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^b There’s no more important commandment than these.”

³²“That’s right, Teacher,” the man replied. “It’s true as you said that God is one, and there is no other. ³³We are to love him with all our heart, all our understanding, and all our strength, and we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is far more important than offerings and sacrifices.”

³⁴Jesus saw that he gave a thoughtful answer, and said, “You’re not far from the kingdom of God.” After this no one was brave enough to ask him any more questions.

^a 12:30. Deuteronomy 6:4.

^b 12:31. Leviticus 19:18.

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³⁵While Jesus was teaching in the Temple, he asked, “Why do the religious teachers state that Christ is the son of David?

³⁶As David himself declared, inspired by the Holy Spirit, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.”’^a ³⁷Since David himself calls him Lord, how can he be David’s son?” The large crowd listened to what Jesus said with much delight.

³⁸Jesus continued to teach them, saying, “Beware of religious leaders! They love to walk around in long robes, to be greeted respectfully in the marketplaces. ³⁹They love to have the most important seats in the synagogues, and the best places at banquets. ⁴⁰They cheat widows out of what they own^b, and cover up the kind of people they really are with long-winded prayers. They will receive severe condemnation in the judgment.”

⁴¹Jesus sat down opposite the treasury collection box, watching people tossing in coins. Many of the rich were extravagantly throwing in a lot of money. ⁴²Then a poor widow came along and put in just two small coins^c. ⁴³He called his disciples together and told them, “I tell you the truth: this poor widow has put in more than all the rest together. ⁴⁴All of them gave from their wealth what they had, but she gave from her poverty what she didn’t have. She put in all she had to live on.”

13 ¹As Jesus was leaving the Temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Teacher, look at these massive stones and magnificent buildings!”

²“You see all these great buildings?” Jesus replied. “Not one stone will be left on top of another. Everything will be torn down.”

³As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives overlooking the Temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him in private, ⁴“Tell us when this will happen. What’s the sign that all this is about to be fulfilled?”^d

^a 12:36. Psalm 110:1.

^b 12:40. Literally, “devour widow’s houses.”

^c 12:42. Literally, “two *lepta*,” of little value.

^d 13:4. Because the disciples’ question merges the two events, Jesus’ answer combines aspects of the destruction of the Temple and the final end-time.

⁵Jesus began telling them, “Make sure no one deceives you. ⁶Many will come in my name claiming, ‘I am the Christ.’ They will deceive many people. ⁷Don’t be troubled when you hear of wars nearby and wars far away. These things must happen but this is not the end. ⁸Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines too. These are the beginnings of the world’s birth pains.

⁹“Watch out for yourselves! They will hand you over to the courts to be tried. You will be beaten in synagogues. Because of me you will have to stand before governors and kings, and you will be witnesses to them.

¹⁰“The good news must first be announced in every nation. ¹¹When they come to arrest you and put you on trial, don’t worry what to say. Just say what you’re told at that time, because it’s not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

¹²“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father will betray his child. Children will turn against their parents and have them condemned to death. ¹³You will be hated by everyone because of me, but whoever endures until the end will be saved.

¹⁴“But when you see the “abomination of desolation”^a standing where he should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea should run to the mountains. ¹⁵Those who are on the roof—don’t go back inside the house to get anything. ¹⁶Those who are out in the fields—don’t go home to get a coat. ¹⁷How hard it will be for those who are pregnant or nursing at that time! ¹⁸Pray that this won’t happen during the winter. ¹⁹For these will be days of trouble like never before since the beginning of God’s creation until now, and they won’t ever come again. ²⁰If God doesn’t cut short these days, no one will survive. However for the sake of those God has chosen, he has cut them short.

²¹“So if anyone tells you, ‘look, here is the Messiah,’ or ‘look, there he is,’ don’t believe it. ²²For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear, and they will perform miraculous signs and wonders to deceive the chosen of God, if that were possible.

²³Watch out! I’ve told you everything before it happens.”

^a 13:14. Or “the abomination that causes desolation.”

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²⁴“This is what will happen after those troubles: ‘the sun will become dark, the moon won’t shine, ²⁵the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.’^a

²⁶“Then they will see the Son of man as he comes on the clouds, possessing great power and glory. ²⁷He will send out the angels, and gather together all his chosen ones from wherever they are^b, from the most distant part of the earth to the farthest point of heaven.

²⁸“Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches grow soft and send out leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that it’s near—right outside the door! ³⁰I tell you the truth, this generation won’t come to an end until all these things have happened. ³¹Heaven and earth will come to an end, but my teachings will not.

³²“No one knows the day or hour when this will happen—not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son; only the Father knows. ³³Keep watch! Stay awake! For you don’t know when this will happen. ³⁴It’s like a man who went away on a journey. He left his house, and gave each of his servants the authority to do what he told them. He told the doorkeeper to stay awake.

³⁵“So keep watch, because you don’t know when the owner of the house is coming back. It may be in the evening, in the middle of the night, before dawn, or in the morning. ³⁶You don’t want to be caught sleeping if he returns unexpectedly. ³⁷What I’m telling you, I’m telling everyone: Watch!”

14 ¹It was now two days before Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the religious leaders were trying to find a surreptitious way to arrest Jesus and have him killed. ²“But not during Passover,” they said to themselves, “otherwise the people may riot.”

³Meanwhile Jesus was in Bethany, eating a meal at Simon the leper’s home. A woman came in with an alabaster jar of very

^a 13:25. See Isaiah 13:10.

^b 13:27. Literally, “from the four winds.”

expensive pure nard perfume^a. She broke the jar open and poured the perfume on Jesus' head.

⁴Some of those who were there became annoyed and said, "Why waste this perfume? ⁵It could've been sold for a year's wages^b and the money given to the poor." They were angry with her.

⁶But Jesus replied, "Leave her alone! Why are you criticizing her for doing something beautiful to me? ⁷You'll always have the poor with you, and you can help them whenever you want. But you won't always have me with you. ⁸She did what she could: she anointed my body in anticipation of my burial. ⁹I tell you the truth: wherever the good news is spread in the world, people will remember what she did."

¹⁰Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the chief priests and arranged to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹When they heard this, they were delighted, and promised to pay him. So Judas began to look for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

¹²On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the time when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare the Passover meal for you?"

¹³He sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city and there you'll meet a man carrying a water pot. Follow him, ¹⁴and when he goes into a house, ask the owner where I and my disciples can celebrate the Passover. ¹⁵He will take you to a large upstairs room that is furnished and ready. You can make preparations for us there."

¹⁶The disciples went into the city, and found things just as he'd described them. They prepared the Passover meal. ¹⁷In the evening Jesus went there with the twelve disciples.

¹⁸While they were sitting eating, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth: one of you is going to betray me; one who is eating with me now."

¹⁹They were shocked, and they each asked, "It's not me, is it?"

^a 14:3. Nard: an essential oil derived from the roots of the spikenard plant native to China and India.

^b 14:5. Literally, "300 denarii."

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²⁰“It’s one of the Twelve, one of you sharing this food with me,” he replied. ²¹The Son of man will die, just as the Scriptures predicted. But how terrible it will be for the man who betrays the Son of man! It would be better for that man if he’d never been born.” ²²As they were eating, Jesus picked up some bread. He blessed it, and gave it to them. “Take it. This is my body,” he told them.

²³Then he picked up the cup. He blessed it, and gave it to them. They all drank from it. ²⁴“This is my blood,” he told them, “the covenant^a that’s being poured out for many. ²⁵I tell you the truth, I won’t drink of the fruit of the vine until the day I drink it fresh in God’s kingdom.”

²⁶After they had sung a psalm, they left for the Mount of Olives.

²⁷“All of you will abandon me,” Jesus told them. “For as the Scriptures say, ‘I will attack the shepherd, and the sheep will be completely scattered.’ ²⁸But after I have risen from the dead, I will go before you to Galilee.”

²⁹“I won’t abandon you even if everyone else does,” Peter replied.

³⁰Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth that today, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny that you even know me three times.”

³¹But Peter was totally adamant, saying, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you.” All of them said the same.

³²They arrived at a place called Gethsemane^b, where Jesus told his disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray.” ³³He took Peter, James, and John with him. He became very disturbed and troubled.

³⁴Jesus told them, “My agony is so painful it feels like I’m dying. Please, remain here and stay awake.” ³⁵He went a little farther on and then fell to the ground. He prayed, asking to be spared the time^c that was coming, if it were possible.

^a 14:24. Meaning “agreement” or “pledge.”

^b 14:32. Meaning, “olive press.”

^c 14:35. Literally, “hour.”

³⁶“Abba, Father! You can do everything,” he said. “Please, take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet it’s not what I want, but what you want.”

³⁷Then Jesus returned and found the disciples asleep. “Simon, are you sleeping?” he asked Peter. “Couldn’t you stay awake for just an hour? ³⁸Stay awake, and pray so you won’t fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

³⁹He left them once more, and prayed, saying the same things. ⁴⁰Then he returned, and again he found them sleeping because they couldn’t keep their eyes open^a. They didn’t know what to say! ⁴¹He returned a third time, and asked them, “Are you still asleep? Are you still resting? Well that’s enough, because the time has come! Look, the Son of man is about to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Get up! Let’s go! See, here comes my betrayer.”

⁴³Just as he was saying this, Judas—one of the twelve disciples—arrived with a mob carrying swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests, religious leaders, and elders. ⁴⁴Now the betrayer had arranged a sign with them: “He’s the one that I kiss. Arrest him, and take him away under guard.”

⁴⁵Judas went right up to Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, and kissed him. ⁴⁶So they grabbed hold of Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷But one of those standing there pulled out his sword and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his ear.

⁴⁸“Am I some kind of rebel that you have come to arrest me with swords and clubs?” Jesus asked them. ⁴⁹“I was there with you, teaching in the Temple every day. Why didn’t you arrest me then? But this is happening to fulfill the Scriptures.”

⁵⁰Then all Jesus’ disciples deserted him and ran away. ⁵¹(One of his followers was a young man who was wearing only a linen garment. ⁵²They seized hold of him, but he ran off naked, leaving the garment behind).

⁵³They took Jesus to the high priest’s house where all the chief priests, elders, and religious teachers had gathered. ⁵⁴Peter followed him at a distance, and went into the courtyard of the high priest’s house. He sat down with the guards and warmed himself by the fire.

^a 14:40. Literally, “their eyes were burdened down.”

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⁵⁵Inside the chief priests and the whole governing council^a were trying to find some evidence to have Jesus put to death, but they couldn't find anything. ⁵⁶Many were giving false testimony against him, but their statements didn't agree.

⁵⁷Some of them got up to speak falsely against Jesus. ⁵⁸“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this Temple that human hands built, and in three days I will build another without hands.’”

⁵⁹But even so their testimony didn't agree.

⁶⁰Then the high priest stood up in front of the council, and asked Jesus, “Have you nothing to say in response to these charges made against you?” ⁶¹But Jesus remained silent and didn't answer. So the high priest asked again, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

⁶²“I am,” Jesus replied, “and you will see the Son of man sitting on the right of the Mighty One, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³The high priest tore his clothes^b and asked, “Why do we need any more witnesses? ⁶⁴You have heard the blasphemy! What's your reaction?”

They all found him guilty and condemned him to death. ⁶⁵Then some of them began to spit on him. They blindfolded him, hit him around the head, and said, “Why don't you prophesy then, you ‘Prophet’!” The guards took him away and beat him up.

⁶⁶Meanwhile Peter was down below in the courtyard. One of the high priest's servant-girls passed by, ⁶⁷and seeing Peter warming himself, looked straight at him and said, “You were with Jesus of Nazareth too!”

⁶⁸But he denied it. “I don't know what you're talking about or what you mean,” he replied. Then he went out to the forecourt, and a rooster crowed^c.

⁶⁹Seeing him there, the servant girl repeated to those standing around, “This man is one of them!” ⁷⁰Once more Peter denied it. A little while later they said to Peter again, “You're definitely one of them because you're a Galilean too!”

^a 14:55. Literally, “Sanhedrin.”

^b 14:63. In those times an expression of great anguish.

^c 14:68 “And a rooster crowed.” This phrase is not found in some of the early manuscripts.

⁷¹Peter began calling down curses on himself and he swore, “I don’t know this man who you’re talking about.”

⁷²Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him: “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” When he realized what he’d done, he burst into tears.

15 ¹Early the next morning, the chief priest, elders, and religious teachers—the whole governing council—came to a decision. They had Jesus bound and sent him to be handed over to Pilate.

²Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

“You said it,” Jesus replied.

³The chief priests kept on making many accusations against him. ⁴Pilate asked him again, “Aren’t you going to answer? See how many charges they’re bringing against you!” ⁵But Jesus didn’t give any more answers, much to Pilate’s surprise.

⁶Now it was Pilate’s custom at the Passover feast to release a prisoner to the people, whoever they requested. ⁷One of the prisoners was a man called Barabbas who belonged to a group of rebels who had committed murder during an uprising. ⁸The crowd went to Pilate and asked him to release a prisoner following his usual custom.

⁹“Do you want me to release to you the King of Jews?” he asked them, ¹⁰for he realized that it was because of their jealousy of Jesus that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas to them instead.

¹²“Then what should I do with the one you call the King of the Jews?” he asked them.

¹³“Crucify him!” they shouted back.

¹⁴“Why? What crime has he committed?” Pilate asked them.

“Crucify him!” they shouted back even louder.

¹⁵Wanting to please the mob, Pilate released Barabbas to them. First he had Jesus flogged and then handed him over to be crucified. ¹⁶The soldiers took him away into the Praetorium^a courtyard, where they called out the whole cohort^b. ¹⁷They put

^a 15:16. The Roman governor’s official residence.

^b 15:16. A cohort was a group of some 600 soldiers.

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royal purple robes on him and made a crown of thorns that they placed on him. ¹⁸Then they saluted him, saying, “Hail King of the Jews!” ¹⁹They repeatedly beat him around the head with a rod, spat at him, and fell on their knees before him as if in worship. ²⁰After they finished mocking him, they took off the purple robes, and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him away to be crucified. ²¹They forced a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the countryside, to carry his cross. Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.

²²They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means “the Place of the Skull.” ²³They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. ²⁴Then they crucified him. They divided his clothes, and threw dice to decide who would have what. ²⁵It was nine in the morning when they crucified him.

²⁶The written charge against him read: “The King of the Jews.”

²⁷They crucified two criminals with him, one on his left and one on his right^a. ²⁹People passing by shouted insults at him, shaking their heads, and saying. “Aha! You who claimed you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days: ³⁰Save yourself and come down from the cross!” ³¹Likewise the chief priests and the religious teachers made fun of him, saying, “He saved others, but he can’t save himself. ³²If he really is the Messiah, the King of Israel, then why doesn’t he come down from the cross so we can see and believe!” Even those who were crucified with him insulted him.

³³At noon darkness fell over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴At three o’clock Jesus cried out, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani,” which means, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”^b ³⁵Some of those standing there heard this, and said, “He’s calling for Elijah.” ³⁶One man ran and filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on a stick, and tried to give it to Jesus to drink. “Leave him alone,” he said. “Let’s see if Elijah will come to take him down.” ³⁷Then Jesus groaned loudly, and died. ³⁸The Temple veil was ripped in two from top to bottom. ³⁹When the centurion standing there in front of Jesus saw how he died, he said, “This man was truly the Son of God.”

^a 15:27. Verse 28 is not found in many of the early manuscripts.

^b 15:34. Ps. 22:1.

⁴⁰Some women were watching from a distance including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹They had followed Jesus and had taken care of him while he was in Galilee. Many other women who had come with him to Jerusalem were also there.

⁴²It was Friday^a, the day before the Sabbath. When evening came, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the governing council who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, had the courage to go to Pilate and ask for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised that Jesus had died so soon, so he summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵Once he had confirmation from the centurion, Pilate gave permission for Joseph to take the body. ⁴⁶Joseph bought a linen sheet. Then he took Jesus' body down from the cross and wrapped it in the sheet, and placed it in a tomb that had been cut out of rock. Then he rolled a heavy stone up against the entrance. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were watching where he was laid.

16 ¹Once the Sabbath had ended, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought aromatic ointments so that they could go and anoint Jesus' body. ²Very early Sunday^b morning, just at sunrise, they went to the tomb. ³They were asking each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴But when they arrived and looked, they saw that the very large, heavy stone had already been rolled away.

⁵When they went into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right, wearing a long white robe. They became very frightened.

⁶"Don't be frightened," he told them. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, the one who was crucified. He is risen from the dead. He is not here. ⁷Look, this is the place where they laid him to rest. Now go, and tell his disciples and Peter that he's going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there just as he told you."

^a 15:42. Literally, "preparation day."

^b 16:2. Literally, "the first day of the week."

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⁸They left and ran from the tomb, shaking and confused. They said nothing to anyone because they were too scared^a.

⁹When Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday morning, he appeared first of all to Mary Magdalene, from whom he'd driven out seven demons. ¹⁰She went and told those who had been with him as they mourned and cried. ¹¹When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they didn't believe it.

¹²Later Jesus appeared in a different form to two other disciples who'd left to go to the countryside. ¹³They returned and told the others, but they didn't believe them either.

¹⁴After this he appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating. He rebuked them for their lack of trust and their stubbornness, because they had not believed those who'd seen him after he had risen.

¹⁵Then he told them, "Go to the whole world, and announce the good news to everyone^b. ¹⁶"Anyone who trusts in me and is baptized will be saved, but anyone who chooses not to trust will be condemned. ¹⁷The following signs will accompany those who trust in me: in my name they will drive out demons; they will speak new languages; ¹⁸ they will be able to handle snakes; if they drink something poisonous they won't be harmed; they will place their hands on the sick and they will be healed."

¹⁹Then, the Lord Jesus, when he had finished speaking to them, was taken up into heaven where he sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰The disciples went out and spread the good news everywhere, and the Lord worked with them, confirming the message through miraculous signs that accompanied it.

^a 16:8. Many of the early manuscripts of Mark end here. Others continue as shown.

^b 16:15. Literally, "all creation."

