



# **PRESENCE:**

**SCRIPTURES OF COMFORT,  
HOPE, AND PEACE**

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HOPE, AND PEACE**

Muskingum Valley Presbytery  
<http://mvpresby.org>

**T**his document also exist in an editable format so that local Christian communities can adapt them to their needs.

אָנָה אֵלֶיךָ מֵרוּחְךָ וְאָנָה מִפְּנֵיךָ אֲבָרַח: ]  
אִם־אֶסְקֶה שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אַתָּה וְאֶצִּיעָה שְׂאוֹל הַגֶּהֱ:

Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee  
from your presence?  
If I ascend to heaven,  
you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol,  
you are there.

**Psalm 139:7-8**

# SCRIPTURES OF COMFORT, HOPE, AND PEACE

## Isaiah 35

- 1** The desert and the parched land will be glad;  
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.  
Like the crocus, **2** it will burst into bloom;  
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.  
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,  
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;  
they will see the glory of the LORD,  
the splendor of our God.
- 3** Strengthen the feeble hands,  
steady the knees that give way;
- 4** say to those with fearful hearts,  
"Be strong, do not fear;  
your God will come,  
he will come with vengeance;  
with divine retribution  
he will come to save you."
- 5** Then will the eyes of the blind be opened  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
- 6** Then will the lame leap like a deer,  
and the mute tongue shout for joy.  
Water will gush forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert.

- 7** The burning sand will become a pool,  
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.  
In the haunts where jackals once lay,  
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.
- 8** And a highway will be there;  
it will be called the Way of Holiness.  
The unclean will not journey on it;  
it will be for those who walk in that Way;  
wicked fools will not go about on it.
- 9** No lion will be there,  
nor will any ferocious beast get up on it;  
they will not be found there.  
But only the redeemed will walk there,
- 10** and the ransomed of the LORD will return.  
They will enter Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy will crown their heads.  
Gladness and joy will overtake them,  
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

## **Isaiah 40:28-31**

**28** Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He will not grow tired or weary,  
and his understanding no one can fathom.

**29** He gives strength to the weary  
and increases the power of the weak.

**30** Even youths grow tired and weary,  
and young men stumble and fall;

**31** but those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.

## **Isaiah 61:1-4**

- 1** The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
- 2** to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor  
and the day of vengeance of our God,  
to comfort all who mourn,
- 3** and provide for those who grieve in Zion—  
to bestow on them a crown of beauty  
instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness  
instead of mourning,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
a planting of the LORD  
for the display of his splendor.
- 4** They will rebuild the ancient ruins  
and restore the places long devastated;  
they will renew the ruined cities  
that have been devastated for generations.



## **Psalm 6:2-4, 6-9**

- 2** Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am faint;  
O LORD, heal me, for my bones are in agony.
- 3** My soul is in anguish.  
How long, O LORD, how long?
- 4** Turn, O LORD, and deliver me;  
save me because of your unfailing love.
- 6** I am worn out from groaning;  
all night long I flood my bed with weeping  
and drench my couch with tears.
- 7** My eyes grow weak with sorrow;  
they fail because of all my foes.
- 8** Away from me, all you who do evil,  
for the LORD has heard my weeping.
- 9** The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;  
the LORD accepts my prayer.

**Psalm 22** (selected verses)

- 1** My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from saving me,  
so far from the words of my groaning?
- 2** O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,  
by night, and am not silent.
- 14** I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint.  
My heart has turned to wax;  
it has melted away within me.
- 15** My strength is dried up like a potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;  
you lay me in the dust of death.
- 19** But you, O LORD, be not far off;  
O my Strength, come quickly to help me.
- 22** I will declare your name to my brothers;  
in the congregation I will praise you.
- 23** You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!  
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!
- 24** For he has not despised or disdained  
the suffering of the afflicted one;  
he has not hidden his face from him  
but has listened to his cry for help.

## **Psalm 23** (KJV)

**1**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

**2**He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:  
he leadeth me beside the still waters.

**3**He restoreth my soul:  
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

**4**Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff  
they comfort me.

**5**Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:  
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

**6**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

**Psalm 27** (selected verses)

- 1** The LORD is my light and my salvation—  
whom shall I fear?  
The LORD is the stronghold of my life—  
of whom shall I be afraid?
- 4** One thing I ask of the LORD,  
this is what I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD  
all the days of my life,  
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD  
and to seek him in his temple.
- 5** For in the day of trouble  
he will keep me safe in his dwelling;  
he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle  
and set me high upon a rock.
- 6** Then my head will be exalted  
above the enemies who surround me;  
at his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy;  
I will sing and make music to the LORD.
- 7** Hear my voice when I call, O LORD;  
be merciful to me and answer me.
- 8** My heart says of you, "Seek his face!"  
Your face, LORD, I will seek.
- 9** Do not hide your face from me,  
do not turn your servant away in anger;  
you have been my helper.  
Do not reject me or forsake me,  
O God my Savior.
- 13** I am still confident of this:  
I will see the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living.

**14** Wait for the LORD;  
be strong and take heart  
and wait for the LORD.

## **Psalm 42:1-5**

- 1** As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.
- 2** My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When can I go and meet with God?
- 3** My tears have been my food  
day and night,  
while men say to me all day long,  
"Where is your God?"
- 4** These things I remember  
as I pour out my soul:  
how I used to go with the multitude,  
leading the procession to the house of God,  
with shouts of joy and thanksgiving  
among the festive throng.
- 5** Why are you downcast, O my soul?  
Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
for I will yet praise him,  
my Savior and

**Psalm 69** (selected verses)

- 1** Save me, O God,  
for the waters have come up to my neck.
- 2** I sink in the miry depths,  
where there is no foothold.  
I have come into the deep waters;  
the floods engulf me.
- 3** I am worn out calling for help;  
my throat is parched.  
My eyes fail,  
looking for my God.
- 13** But I pray to you, O LORD,  
in the time of your favor;  
in your great love, O God,  
answer me with your sure salvation.
- 14** Rescue me from the mire,  
do not let me sink;  
deliver me from those who hate me,  
from the deep waters.
- 15** Do not let the floodwaters engulf me  
or the depths swallow me up  
or the pit close its mouth over me.
- 16** Answer me, O LORD, out of the goodness of your love;  
in your great mercy turn to me.
- 17** Do not hide your face from your servant;  
answer me quickly, for I am in trouble.
- 29** I am in pain and distress;  
may your salvation, O God, protect me.
- 30** I will praise God's name in song  
and glorify him with thanksgiving.

- 32** The poor will see and be glad—  
you who seek God, may your hearts live!
- 33** The LORD hears the needy  
and does not despise his captive people.
- 34** Let heaven and earth praise him,  
the seas and all that move in them,



**Psalm 86** (selected verses)

- 1** Hear, O LORD, and answer me,  
for I am poor and needy.
- 2** Guard my life, for I am devoted to you.  
You are my God; save your servant  
who trusts in you.
- 3** Have mercy on me, O Lord,  
for I call to you all day long.
- 4** Bring joy to your servant,  
for to you, O Lord,  
I lift up my soul.
- 5** You are forgiving and good, O Lord,  
abounding in love to all who call to you.
- 6** Hear my prayer, O LORD;  
listen to my cry for mercy.
- 7** In the day of my trouble I will call to you,  
for you will answer me.
- 11** Teach me your way, O LORD,  
and I will walk in your truth;  
give me an undivided heart,  
that I may fear your name.
- 12** I will praise you, O Lord my God,  
with all my heart;  
I will glorify your name forever.
- 13** For great is your love toward me;  
you have delivered me from the depths of the grave.
- 15** But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,  
slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.
- 16** Turn to me and have mercy on me;  
grant your strength to your servant  
and save the son of your maidservant.

## **Psalm 103:1-5**

- 1** Praise the LORD, O my soul;  
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
- 2** Praise the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits-
- 3** who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your diseases,
- 4** who redeems your life from the pit  
and crowns you with love and compassion,
- 5** who satisfies your desires with good things  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

## **Psalm 121**

- 1** I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
    where does my help come from?
- 2** My help comes from the LORD,  
    the Maker of heaven and earth.
- 3** He will not let your foot slip—  
    he who watches over you will not slumber;
- 4** indeed, he who watches over Israel  
    will neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5** The LORD watches over you—  
    the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
- 6** the sun will not harm you by day,  
    nor the moon by night.
- 7** The LORD will keep you from all harm—  
    he will watch over your life;
- 8** the LORD will watch over your coming and going  
    both now and forevermore.

## **Psalm 130**

**1** Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

**2** O Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive  
to my cry for mercy.

**3** If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins,  
O Lord, who could stand?

**4** But with you there is forgiveness;  
therefore you are feared.

**5** I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,  
and in his word I put my hope.

**6** My soul waits for the Lord  
more than watchmen wait for the morning,  
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

**7** O Israel, put your hope in the LORD,  
for with the LORD is unfailing love  
and with him is full redemption.

**8** He himself will redeem Israel  
from all their sins.

**Psalm 139** (selected verses)

- 1** O LORD, you have searched me  
and you know me.
- 2** You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- 3** You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.
- 4** Before a word is on my tongue  
you know it completely, O LORD.
- 5** You hem me in—behind and before;  
you have laid your hand upon me.
- 6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.
- 7** Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?
- 8** If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- 9** If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
- 10** even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.
- 11** If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"
- 12** even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.
- 13** For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 14** I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully  
made;

your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.

- 15** My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place.  
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,
- 16** your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me  
were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.
- 17** How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!
- 18** Were I to count them,  
they would outnumber the grains of sand.  
When I awake,  
I am still with you.
- 23** Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- 24** See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

## **Matthew 5:1-12**

**1**Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,

**2**and he began to teach them saying:

**3**"Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**4**Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

**5**Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

**6**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

**7**Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

**8**Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

**9**Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.

**10**Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**11**"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

**12**Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Matthew 10:1, 5a, 7-8a; Mark 6:12-13**

Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The Kingdom of Heaven has come near.' Cure the sick." So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.



### **Matthew 11:2-5**

When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples **3**to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

**4**Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: **5**The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

### **Matthew 11:28-30**

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. **29**Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30**For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

### **Mark 10:13-16**

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. **14**When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. **15**I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." **16**And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

### **Luke 4:40**

When the sun was setting, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them.

## **Luke 5:12-16**

While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

**13** Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him.

**14** Then Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."

**15** Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. **16** But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

## **Luke 8:43-48**

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him.

**43**And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. **44**She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

**45**"Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."

**46**But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

**47**Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. **48**Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

## **John 12:1-11**

Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

**2**Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. **3**Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

**4**But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, **5**"Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages. [b]" **6**He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

**7**"Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. **8**You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

**9**Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **10**So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, **11**for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

### **John 14:1-6, 25-27**

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. **2**In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. **3**And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. **4**You know the way to the place where I am going."

**5**Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

**6**Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

**25**"All this I have spoken while still with you. **26**But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. **27**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

### **Acts 3:1-10**

**1**One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. **2**Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. **3**When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. **4**Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" **5**So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

**6**Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." **7**Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. **8**He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. **9**When all the people saw him walking and praising God, **10**they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

## **Romans 8:13-23**

For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, **14**because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. **15**For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

**16**The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. **17**Now if we are children, then we are heirs —heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

**18**I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. **19**The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. **20**For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope **21**that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

**22**We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. **23**Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

### **Romans 8:26-28**

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

**27**And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

**28**And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.



## **Romans 8:31-39**

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? **32**He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? **33**Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. **34**Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. **35**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? **36**As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;

we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." **37**No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38**For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39**neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **Romans 12:1-2**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual<sup>[a]</sup> act of worship. **2**Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

## **1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. **2**By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

**3**For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4**that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, **5**and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. **6**After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. **7**Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, **8**and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

**9**For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **10**But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. **11**Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

## **1 Corinthians 15:12-34**

But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? **13**If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. **14**And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. **15**More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. **16**For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. **17**And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. **18**Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. **19**If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

**20**But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. **21**For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. **22**For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. **23**But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. **24**Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. **25**For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. **26**The last enemy to be destroyed is death. **27**For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. **28**When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

**29** Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them? **30** And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? **31** I die every day—I mean that, brothers—just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. **32** If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised,

"Let us eat and drink,  
for tomorrow we die." **33** Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." **34** Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

## **1 Corinthians 15:35-58**

But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" **36**How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. **37**When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. **38**But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. **39**All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. **40**There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. **41**The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

**42**So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; **43**it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; **44**it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. **45**So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. **46**The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. **47**The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. **48**As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. **49**And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

**50**I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **51**Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— **52**in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **53**For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. **54**When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

**55**"Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?" **56**The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. **57**But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**58**Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

### **Galatians 3:15-29**

Brothers, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. **16**The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

**17**What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. **18**For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.

**19**What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. **20**A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

**21**Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. **22**But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

**23**Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. **24**So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. **25**Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.



**26**You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,  
**27**for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **28**There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

## **Ephesians 4:1-16**

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. **2** Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. **3** Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. **4** There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6** one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. **7** But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. **8** This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high,  
he took many captives  
and gave gifts to his people.”

**9** (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? **10** He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) **11** So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

**14** Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. **15** Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature

body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **16** From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

## **Philippians 4:4-9**

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5**Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6**Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

**7**And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**8**Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. **9**Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

### **Colossians 3:1-17**

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. **2**Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. **3**For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. **4**When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

**5**Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. **6**Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. **7**You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. **8**But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. **9**Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices **10**and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. **11**Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

**12**Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13**Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14**And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

**15**Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. **16**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude

in your hearts to God. **17**And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9**

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. **15**For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. **16**Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

**7**During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. **8**Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered **9**and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

## **James 5:13-16**

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. **14**Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15**And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. **16**Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

## **1 Peter 1:3-9**

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4**and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, **5**who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **6**In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **7**These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. **8**Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9**for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

## **Revelation 21:1-7**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. **2**I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. **3**And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. **4**He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

**5**He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

**6**He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

**7**He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.



May God bless your efforts,  
honor your heart,  
celebrate your service,  
move through your actions,  
bring comfort with your words,  
and heal the nations through Jesus Christ  
and in the power of the Spirit.  
Amen and Amen.