

# MATTHEW

## THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST

**1** An account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

### FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID

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

### FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

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

### FROM THE EXILE TO THE CHRIST

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

- <sup>15</sup> Eliud fathered Eleazar,  
Eleazar fathered Matthan,  
Matthan fathered Jacob,  
<sup>16</sup> and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Mary,  
who gave birth to Jesus who is called the Christ.

<sup>17</sup> So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; and from David until the exile to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.

#### THE NATIVITY OF THE CHRIST

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

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

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

<sup>23</sup> **See, the virgin will become pregnant  
and give birth to a son,  
and they will name him Immanuel,**

which is translated "God is with us."

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

#### WISE MEN VISIT THE KING

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

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

<sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> **And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah:**

**Because out of you will come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel."**

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him."

<sup>9</sup> After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was — the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

#### **THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT**

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

#### **THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS**

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

<sup>18</sup> **A voice was heard in Ramah,  
weeping, and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
and she refused to be consoled,  
because they are no more.**

#### **THE RETURN TO NAZARETH**

<sup>19</sup> After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, <sup>20</sup> saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, because those who intended to kill the child are dead." <sup>21</sup> So he got up, took the child and his mother, and entered the land

of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> Then he went and settled in a town called Nazareth to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

#### THE HERALD OF THE CHRIST

**3** In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea <sup>2</sup> and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!" <sup>3</sup> For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

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

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

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

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

#### THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

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

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

<sup>16</sup> When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him,

and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."

#### THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

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

<sup>4</sup> He answered, "**It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup> and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

**He will give his angels orders concerning you,  
and they will support you with their hands  
so that you will not strike  
your foot against a stone.**"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus told him, "**It is also written: Do not test the Lord your God.**"

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup> And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus told him, "**Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

#### MINISTRY IN GALILEE

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

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

<sup>16</sup> **The people who live in darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those living in the land of the shadow  
of death,  
a light has dawned.**

<sup>17</sup> From then on Jesus began to preach, "**Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.**"

**THE FIRST DISCIPLES**

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

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

**TEACHING, PREACHING, AND HEALING**

<sup>23</sup> Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And he healed them. <sup>25</sup> Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

**THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

**5** When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> Then he began to teach them, saying:

**THE BEATITUDES**

- <sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.
- <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.
- <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the humble,  
for they will inherit the earth.
- <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst  
for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.
- <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.
- <sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.
- <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.
- <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because  
of righteousness,  
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

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

#### **BELIEVERS ARE SALT AND LIGHT**

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

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

#### **CHRIST FULFILLS THE LAW**

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

#### **MURDER BEGINS IN THE HEART**

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

**ADULTERY BEGINS IN THE HEART**

<sup>27</sup> “You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery.**<sup>28</sup> But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

**DIVORCE PRACTICES CENSURED**

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

**TELL THE TRUTH**

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

**GO THE SECOND MILE**

<sup>38</sup> “You have heard that it was said, **An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.**<sup>39</sup> But I tell you, don’t resist an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.<sup>40</sup> As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well.<sup>41</sup> And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two.<sup>42</sup> Give to the one who asks you, and don’t turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

**LOVE YOUR ENEMIES**

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.**<sup>44</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>45</sup> so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.<sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same?<sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your

brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don't even the Gentiles do the same?<sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

#### HOW TO GIVE

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

#### HOW TO PRAY

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

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

<sup>9</sup> “Therefore, you should pray like this:

- Our Father in heaven,  
your name be honored as holy.
- <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.
- <sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread.
- <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
- <sup>13</sup> And do not bring us into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

<sup>14</sup> “For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well.<sup>15</sup> But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses.

#### HOW TO FAST

<sup>16</sup> “Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they make their faces unattractive so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have

their reward. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that your fasting isn't obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

#### **GOD AND POSSESSIONS**

<sup>19</sup> "Don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup> "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light within you is darkness, how deep is that darkness!

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

#### **THE CURE FOR ANXIETY**

<sup>25</sup> "Therefore I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Consider the birds of the sky: They don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any of you add one moment to his life-span by worrying? <sup>28</sup> And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don't labor or spin thread. <sup>29</sup> Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. <sup>30</sup> If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won't he do much more for you — you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. <sup>34</sup> Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

#### **DO NOT JUDGE**

**7** "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged. <sup>2</sup> For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure

you use.<sup>3</sup> Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye?<sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye?<sup>5</sup> Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.<sup>6</sup> Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

#### **ASK, SEARCH, KNOCK**

<sup>7</sup> "Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you.<sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.<sup>9</sup> Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?<sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?<sup>11</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

#### **ENTERING THE KINGDOM**

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

<sup>15</sup> "Be on your guard against false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves.<sup>16</sup> You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles?<sup>17</sup> In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit.<sup>18</sup> A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit.<sup>19</sup> Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.<sup>20</sup> So you'll recognize them by their fruit.

<sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.<sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?'<sup>23</sup> Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. **Depart from me, you lawbreakers!**'

#### **THE TWO FOUNDATIONS**

<sup>24</sup> "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his

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

<sup>28</sup> When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, <sup>29</sup> because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

#### A MAN CLEANSED

**8** When he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. <sup>2</sup> Right away a man with leprosy came up and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

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

#### A CENTURION'S FAITH

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

<sup>7</sup> He said to him, "Am I to come and heal him?"

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

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

#### HEALINGS AT CAPERNAUM

<sup>14</sup> Jesus went into Peter's house and saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. <sup>15</sup> So he touched her

## SHARE BIBLE DIRECTIONS

Don't let these instructions intimidate you. They are simple to follow. Get your pen, a colorful highlighter, and mark your sharing Bible/New Testament as follows:

1. In the front of your Bible, write the page number \*\* of Romans 3:23.
2. Highlight Romans 3:23.
3. Write the page number \*\* of Romans 6:23 in the top margin. Since I usually sit across from the person with whom I am sharing, I turn the Bible around to face him. In this same manner, with the Bible facing away from you, write the notes in the top margin (now the margin nearest you). This way, while your friend reads the Scripture aloud, you can read your "upside-down" notes.
4. Highlight Romans 6:23 and write the page number \*\* of John 3:3 in the margin.\*
5. Circle the word *sin*.
6. Underline the word *death*.
7. Write the word *hell* over the word *death*.
8. Underline the word *in*.
9. Highlight John 3:3 and write the page number \*\* of John 14:6 in the margin.\*
10. Draw a cross and an X next to John 3:3.
11. Highlight John 14:6 and write the page number \*\* of Romans 10:9–11 in the margin.\*
12. Highlight Romans 10:9–11 and write the page number \*\* of 2 Corinthians 5:15 in the margin.\*
13. Highlight 2 Corinthians 5:15 and write the page number \*\* of Revelation 3:20 in the margin.\*
14. Highlight Revelation 3:20.

\* Don't forget to turn your Bible around to write your notes in the (top) margin nearest you.

\*\* You may write the page number and/or the Scripture reference.

## 36 RESPONSE SCRIPTS TO OBJECTIONS

The following list provides some of the common objections in response to a presentation of the gospel message. Use the accompanying sample response scripts to answer their objections.

### OBJECTION TOPIC LIST

1. I'm not ready. *Page 433*
2. My friends will think I am crazy. *Page 433*
3. What about my family? *Page 433*
4. I've done too many bad things. *Page 433*
5. I'm having too much fun. *Page 434*
6. Why does God let bad things happen? *Page 434*
7. There are many paths to God. *Page 434*
8. There are many religions in the world. *Page 435*
9. I've always believed in God. *Page 435*
10. There are too many hypocrites in the church. *Page 435*
11. I don't believe in God. *Page 436*
12. I'm a member of another world religion. *Page 436*
13. I'm Jewish. *Page 437*
14. Cults are the answer. *Page 439*
15. How can a loving God send someone to hell? *Page 440*
16. How can I know the Bible is true? *Page 441*
17. I don't believe the resurrection took place. *Page 441*
18. You can't possibly know what truth is. *Page 442*
19. There are many translations of the Bible. *Page 442*
20. There are too many errors in the Bible. *Page 442*
21. What about those who never hear the gospel? *Page 443*
22. You must think you're better than me. *Page 443*
23. I'm a good person. *Page 443*
24. I'm God. *Page 444*
25. I'm not a sinner. *Page 444*
26. A Christian hurt me. *Page 444*
27. The church only wants my money. *Page 445*
28. I've tried it and it didn't work out. *Page 445*
29. How do I know I have enough faith? *Page 445*
30. I can't live the Christian lifestyle. *Page 446*
31. God cannot forgive me. *Page 446*
32. I'm not good enough. *Page 446*
33. I'm not sure I'm saved. *Page 447*
34. My beliefs are private. *Page 447*
35. I want to think about it. *Page 448*
36. The argument never stops. *Page 448*

### 1. I'm not ready.

- YOU:*
- Why? (Allow your friend to answer.) Are you really going to let (his answer) stand between you and God?
  - (If the answer is no) Are you ready to invite Christ into your life?

**Additional comments:** In response to your question "Why?" your friend may say, "I am not ready because this information is so new to me. This is a whole new way of thinking and I want to count the cost." Be prepared to stop the presentation and to release your friend to God's sovereignty and control. Say something like, "I enjoyed our time and I will be praying for you. May I talk to you again in a few days or weeks?"

See objection/response "I want to think about it" in this appendix.

### 2. My friends will think I'm crazy.

- YOU:*
- Why?
  - If they are really your friends, won't they be happy and thrilled that the God of the universe lives inside of you and that all of your sins are forgiven? After all, when they see you change, they may want what you have.
- READ:*
- "There is joy in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who repents" (Lk 15:10).
- YOU:*
- Are you ready?

### 3. What about my family?

- YOU:*
- What about your family?
- READ:*
- "The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:37-38).
- YOU:*
- What does this say to you?
- READ:*
- "Do you think that I came here to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on, five in one household will be divided: three against two, and two against three. They will be divided, father against son, son against father, mother against daughter, daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law" (Lk 12:51-53).
- YOU:*
- What does this say to you?
  - Are you ready to pray?

### 4. I've done too many bad things.

**Additional comment:** See objection/responses "I'm not good enough" or "God cannot forgive me" in this appendix.

### 5. I'm having too much fun.

- YOU:**
- What about your family?
  - (Echo back what your friend answers. Example:) In other words, you are into the party scene—sex, drugs, and rock and roll.
  - According to this, when you die, where are you going?
  - Drive carefully. (or) Have a nice day.
  - (If he answers, "hell," with fear and trembling) Are you ready to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior?

**Additional comment:** You may need to release your friend from this conversation, but be sure to give him your phone number if he wants to call you back in a few days. Keep praying.

### 6. Why does God let bad things happen?

**Note:** Allow this person to vent if he wants. Your job is to listen. When he is done,

- YOU:**
- What about you? Who taught you to tell your first lie?
  - Let me tell you the story about Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Before they disobeyed God, the garden was perfect. There was no evil because there was no sin. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the fruit God forbade them to eat, sin entered the world and into us. That is why no one has to be taught to lie, cheat, steal, or lust, or to be envious of other people. It is part of the nature that is in us.
  - Jesus has made a difference in my life. He has forgiven me and taught me to base my choices on his goodness. Would you like to know his forgiveness too?

**Note:** If your friend is dealing with a tragedy that has happened to him, continue:

- YOU:**
- You may wonder why God allowed that to happen to you. But here are your choices. You can walk through the rest of your life alone in your pain, or you can choose to hold onto a nail-scarred hand. What do you want to do?

### 7. There are many paths to God.

- YOU:**
- You are correct, all roads lead to God. But here's the problem, what are you going to say when you get there? For God is either going to meet you as your Savior or as your judge.

**READ:**

- "So that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—in heaven and on earth and under the earth—and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Php 2:10-11).

- YOU:**
- Are you ready to invite Christ into your heart?

**Additional comment:** See objection/responses "Cults are the answer," "I'm a member of another world religion," "I'm God," "There are many religions in the world," "I'm not good enough," and "I don't believe in God" in this appendix.

### 8. There are many religions in the world.

- YOU:*
- I've discovered all of the religions in the world can be divided into two groups. Imagine, every religion other than Christianity is in my left hand—Mormonism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, whatever “ism,”—and Christianity is in my right hand. Everyone in my left hand makes two distinctive claims: (a) Jesus is not God, or he is not the only God. He may be a great prophet, teacher, or good man, but not the Messiah; and (b) If you do enough good works through your own efforts, such as terrorists acts, diet, or good deeds, you can receive some form of salvation.
  - Two opposite claims cannot possibly be true. I would be willing to admit that if the “ism” pile is true, my faith would be in vain. Would you be willing to admit, if the Christianity in my right hand is true, that your faith is in vain? Let's examine the evidence so we can find out which one of us is possibly in error.
  - Christianity claims that Jesus is God and that God has come to us in Jesus who lived, died on the cross, and rose from the grave that we might have eternal life. Christianity claims:

*READ:* • “For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast” (Eph 2:8-9).

- YOU:*
- Can both of these teachings be true?
  - May I show you some Scriptures that changed my life?

**Additional comment:** See objection/responses “Cults are the answer,” “There are many religions in the world,” “There are many paths to God,” “I'm a member of another world religion,” “I'm Jewish,” and “How can I know the Bible is true?” in this appendix.

### 9. I've always believed in God.

*READ:* • “You believe that God is one. Good! Even the demons believe—and they shudder” (Jms 2:19).

- YOU:*
- I'm glad you believe in God. That's wonderful. But so does the devil. In fact he's even seen God. How are you any different?
  - Would you like to receive Jesus as your Savior?

### 10. There are too many hypocrites in the church.

- YOU:*
- You are absolutely correct. There are hypocrites in every church. I'm glad you are concerned about that, because when you join the perfect church, it won't be perfect any longer.
  - Jesus said not to follow hypocrites, but to follow him.
  - I'm glad you know the difference between a hypocrite and a genuine person.

- (Smile.) If you accept Christ as your Savior and I see you begin to act like a hypocrite, I will remind you of this conversation.
- Are you ready to pray?

**Note:** Some of your friends may want to discuss dishonest TV evangelists or others who misrepresent Christ. In this event,

**YOU:** • If I falsely represented myself to you as a realtor in order to scam your money, does that mean all realtors are dishonest? Of course not. Just because a person says he represents Christ does not mean he is a representative of Christ. Only Christ knows his heart. Would you let a dishonest person stand in your way of knowing God's love for you? Are you ready to pray?

#### 11. I don't believe in God.

**YOU:** • (If this objection is stated at the beginning of the presentation, ask, Why?)

- May I show you some Scriptures that changed my life? (Show the "Share Jesus Scriptures.")
- (If this objection is stated at the end of the presentation, ask, Why?)
- If you became convinced that God existed, would you be willing to give your life to him? Would you be willing to ask a nonexistent God to help you in your unbelief?

**PRAY:** • God, if You are real, help me to believe.

**YOU:** • Let's talk again in a few days/weeks.

**Additional comment:** If further help is needed, recommend your friend read *More Than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell.

#### 12. I'm a member of another world religion.

**YOU:** • Has anyone ever told you about Christianity?

- Who taught you your first lie?
- Almost everyone has lied. No one had to teach me to lie. My parents or friends did not give me lying lessons. It came out of myself. It comes from our sinful nature.
- Let me tell you the story about Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Before they disobeyed God, the garden was perfect. There was no evil because there was no sin. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the fruit God forbade them to eat, sin entered the world and into us. That is why no one has to be taught to lie, cheat, steal, or lust, or to be envious of other people. It is part of the nature that is in us.
- Let me show you some Scriptures that help explain this idea. (Show the "Share Jesus Scriptures.")

**Additional comment:** See objection/responses "Cults are the answer," "There are many religions in the world," "I'm Jewish," and "There are many paths to God" in this appendix.