

## God's Word about Our Commitment to Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness

### Genesis 1:26-27

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup>So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

### Genesis 9:18-19

<sup>18</sup>The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) <sup>19</sup>These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth.

### Exodus 3:7-9

<sup>7</sup>The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. <sup>8</sup>So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. <sup>9</sup>And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.

### Leviticus 19:10

<sup>10</sup>Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.

### Deuteronomy 6:21

<sup>21</sup>tell him: "We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

### Deuteronomy 10:18

<sup>18</sup>He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.

### Deuteronomy 24:19-21

<sup>19</sup>When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. <sup>20</sup>When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. <sup>21</sup>When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow.

### Judges 4:3

<sup>3</sup>Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the LORD for help.

### Judges 10:9-10

<sup>9</sup>The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim; Israel was in great distress. <sup>10</sup>Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, "We have sinned against you, forsaking our God and serving the Baals."

### 1 Samuel 2:8

He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor. "For the foundations of the earth are the LORD's; on them he has set the world.

**2 Chronicles 6:38-39**

<sup>38</sup> and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their ancestors, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for your Name; <sup>39</sup> then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you.

**Job 5:15**

<sup>15</sup> He saves the needy from the sword in their mouth: he saves them from the clutches of the powerful.

**Psalm 9:9**

<sup>9</sup> The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

**Psalm 10:12**

<sup>12</sup> Arise, LORD! Lift up your hand, O God. Do not forget the helpless.

**Psalm 10:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> You, LORD, hear the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry,  
<sup>18</sup> defending the fatherless and the oppressed, so that mere earthly mortals will never again strike terror.

**Psalm 12:5**

<sup>5</sup> "Because the poor are plundered and the needy groan I will now arise," says the LORD. "I will protect them from those who malign them."

**Psalm 35:10**

<sup>10</sup> My whole being will exclaim, "Who is like you, LORD? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them."

**Psalm 42:1-3**

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

**Psalm 42:9**

<sup>9</sup> I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"

**Psalm 57:1**

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.

**Psalm 68:5**

<sup>5</sup> A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

**Psalm 79:11**

<sup>11</sup> May the groans of the prisoners come before you; with your strong arm preserve those condemned to die.

**Psalm 72:4**

<sup>4</sup> May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor.

**Psalm 82:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. <sup>4</sup> Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

**Psalm 94:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is a God who avenges. O God who avenges, shine forth. <sup>2</sup> Rise up, Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve. <sup>3</sup> How long, LORD, will the wicked, how long will the wicked be jubilant? <sup>4</sup> They pour out arrogant words; all the evildoers are full of boasting. <sup>5</sup> They crush your people, LORD; they oppress your inheritance. <sup>6</sup> They slay the widow and the foreigner; they murder the fatherless. <sup>7</sup> They say, "The LORD does not see; the God of Jacob takes no notice."

**Psalm 103:6**

<sup>6</sup> The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

**Psalm 107:6**

<sup>6</sup> Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.

**Psalm 107:13**

<sup>13</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

**Psalm 107:19**

<sup>19</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

**Psalm 138:7**

<sup>7</sup> Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me.

**Psalm 146:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free, <sup>8</sup> the LORD gives sight to the blind, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous. <sup>9</sup> The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

**Proverbs 17:5**

<sup>5</sup> Whoever mocks the poor shows contempt for their Maker; whoever gloats over disaster will not go unpunished.

**Proverbs 20:22**

<sup>22</sup> Do not say, "I'll pay you back for this wrong!" Wait for the LORD, and he will avenge you.

**Proverbs 21:15**

<sup>15</sup> When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers.

**Proverbs 22:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, <sup>23</sup> for the LORD will take up their case and will exact life for life.

**Proverbs 31:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. <sup>9</sup> Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.

**Job 19:25**

<sup>25</sup> I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth.

**Isaiah 1:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. <sup>14</sup> Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. <sup>15</sup> When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Your hands are full of blood! <sup>16</sup> Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. <sup>17</sup> Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

**Isaiah 10:1-3**

Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees,<sup>2</sup> to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.

<sup>3</sup> What will you do on the day of reckoning, when disaster comes from afar? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your riches?

**Isaiah 14:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> On the day the LORD gives you relief from your suffering and turmoil and from the harsh labor forced on you, <sup>4</sup> you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon: How the oppressor has come to an end! How his fury has ended!

**Isaiah 30:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore this is what the Holy One of Israel says: “Because you have rejected this message, relied on oppression and depended on deceit, <sup>13</sup> this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant.

**Isaiah 33:14-15**

<sup>14</sup> The sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling grips the godless: “Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?” <sup>15</sup> Those who walk righteously and speak what is right, who reject gain from extortion and keep their hands from accepting bribes, who stop their ears against plots of murder and shut their eyes against contemplating evil—

**Isaiah 49:26**

<sup>26</sup> I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine. Then all mankind will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior, our Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

**Isaiah 58:9-10**

<sup>9</sup> Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,<sup>10</sup> and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

**Jeremiah 7:5-7**

<sup>5</sup> If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, <sup>6</sup> if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, <sup>7</sup> then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever.

**Jeremiah 22:3**

<sup>3</sup> This is what the LORD says: Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of the oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place.

**Jeremiah 50:33-34**

<sup>33</sup>This is what the LORD Almighty says: “The people of Israel are oppressed, and the people of Judah as well. All their captors hold them fast, refusing to let them go. <sup>34</sup>Yet their Redeemer is strong; the LORD Almighty is his name. He will vigorously defend their cause so that he may bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon.

**Ezekiel 22:7**

<sup>7</sup>In you they have treated father and mother with contempt; in you they have oppressed the foreigner and mistreated the fatherless and the widow.

**Amos 2:6**

<sup>6</sup>This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not relent, They sell the innocent for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals.

**Amos 5:11**

<sup>11</sup>You levy a straw tax on the poor and impose a tax on their grain. Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their wine.

**Amos 5:24**

<sup>24</sup>But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

**Micah 2:1-3**

Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning’s light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it. <sup>2</sup>They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud people of their homes, they rob them of their inheritance. <sup>3</sup>Therefore, the LORD says: “I am planning disaster against this people, from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity.

**Micah 6:8**

<sup>8</sup>He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

**Zechariah 7:8-10**

<sup>8</sup>And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: <sup>9</sup>“This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. <sup>10</sup>Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’

**Matthew 5:7**

<sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

**Matthew 6:3**

<sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

**Matthew 23:1-4, 23-24**

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup>“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. <sup>3</sup>So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. <sup>4</sup>They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

<sup>23</sup>“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. <sup>24</sup>You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

### **Matthew 25:31-46**

<sup>31</sup> “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

<sup>34</sup> “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup> I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

<sup>37</sup> “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

<sup>40</sup> “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

<sup>41</sup> “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

<sup>44</sup> “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

<sup>45</sup> “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

<sup>46</sup> “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

### **Luke 11:42**

<sup>42</sup> “Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

### **Luke 19:1-9**

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup> A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. <sup>3</sup> He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup> So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

<sup>7</sup> All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

<sup>8</sup> But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

### **Luke 10:25-37**

<sup>25</sup> On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

<sup>26</sup> “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

<sup>27</sup> He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

<sup>28</sup> “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

<sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

<sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any

extra expense you may have.’

<sup>36</sup> “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

<sup>37</sup> The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

### **John 3:16-18**

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

### **John 4:1-26**

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— <sup>2</sup> although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

<sup>4</sup> Now he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”

<sup>11</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?”

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.””

<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup> He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

<sup>17</sup> “I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. <sup>18</sup> The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

<sup>19</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

<sup>21</sup> “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

<sup>26</sup> Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

### **John 17:20-26**

<sup>20</sup>“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup>that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup>I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— <sup>23</sup>I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

<sup>24</sup>“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

<sup>25</sup>“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

### **Acts 6:1-7**

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup>So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup>Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them <sup>4</sup>and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

<sup>5</sup>This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. <sup>6</sup>They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

<sup>7</sup>So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

### **Acts 7:34**

<sup>34</sup>I have indeed seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to set them free. Now come, I will send you back to Egypt.’

### **Acts 16:25**

<sup>25</sup>About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

### **Acts 17:24-26**

<sup>24</sup>“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. <sup>25</sup>And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. <sup>26</sup>From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

### **2 Corinthians 4:17**

<sup>17</sup>For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

### **2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

<sup>16</sup>So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. <sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:<sup>[a]</sup> The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup>that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

## 2 Corinthians 6:4-5

<sup>4</sup> Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; <sup>5</sup> in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger;

## Galatians 2:11-21

<sup>11</sup> When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. <sup>12</sup> For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. <sup>13</sup> The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

<sup>14</sup> When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

<sup>15</sup> "We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles <sup>16</sup> know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

<sup>17</sup> "But if, in seeking to be justified in Christ, we Jews find ourselves also among the sinners, doesn't that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! <sup>18</sup> If I rebuild what I destroyed, then I really would be a lawbreaker.

<sup>19</sup> "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

## Galatians 3:7-14 (Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18)

<sup>7</sup> Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." <sup>9</sup> So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

<sup>10</sup> For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." <sup>11</sup> Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because "the righteous will live by faith." <sup>12</sup> The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, "The person who does these things will live by them." <sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole." <sup>14</sup> He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

## Galatians 3:23-29

<sup>23</sup> Before the coming of this faith,<sup>[a]</sup> we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. <sup>24</sup> So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

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

## James 1:27

<sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

## James 3:17

<sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

## 1 Peter 4:19

<sup>19</sup> So then, those who suffer according to God's will, should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

### **1 John 1:3-6**

<sup>3</sup>We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>We write this to make our joy complete.

<sup>5</sup>This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup>If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.

### **1 John 3:11-18**

<sup>11</sup>For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. <sup>12</sup>Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. <sup>13</sup>Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> if the world hates you. <sup>14</sup>We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. <sup>15</sup>Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

<sup>16</sup>This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup>If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? <sup>18</sup>Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

### **1 John 4:7-12**

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

### **1 John 4:19**

<sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us.

### **Revelation 6:10**

<sup>10</sup>They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"