

The **Lord** your God is with you,
he is mighty to save.

He will take great delight in you,
he will quiet you with his love

he will **Rejoice**
over you with **Singing**

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

The Lord is mighty.

Zephaniah 3:17

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

The Lord himself will remove his hand of judgment, disperse Israel's enemies, and come to live among his people. He will give them gladness. Zephaniah points out that gladness results when we allow God to be with us. We do that by faithfully following him and obeying his commands. Then God rejoices over us with singing. If you want to be happy, draw close to the source of happiness by obeying God.

Paul's preaching was a demonstration of God's power and faith.

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. ...

Paul was referring to his first visit to Corinth during his second missionary journey (A.D. 51), when he founded the church (Acts 18:1ff).

A brilliant scholar, Paul could have overwhelmed his listeners with intellectual arguments. Instead, he shared the simple message of Jesus Christ by allowing the Holy Spirit to guide his words. In sharing the Good News with others, we should follow Paul's example and keep our message simple and basic. The Holy Spirit will give power to our words and use them to bring glory to Jesus.

The word of the cross is the power to save.

1 Corinthians 1:18

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Baptism was commanded by Jesus himself (Matthew 28:19) and practiced by the early church (Acts 2:41). Paul was emphasizing that no one person should do everything. Paul's gift was preaching, and that's what he did. Christian ministry should be a team effort; no preacher or teacher is a complete link between God and people, and no individual can do all that the apostles did.

We must be content to operate within the gifts God has given to us, and carry out his plan wholeheartedly. (For more on different gifts, see chapters 12 and 13.)

God's might must be proclaimed in all the world.

Romans 9:17

For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."

Paul quotes from Exodus 9:16, where God foretold how Pharaoh would be used to declare God's power. Paul uses this argument to show that salvation was God's work, not people. God's judgment on Pharaoh's choice to resist God was to confirm that sin and harden his heart. The consequences of Pharaoh's rebellion would be his own punishment.

All things will work together for the good of those who love God.

Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

God works in "everything"—not just isolated incidents—for our good. This does not mean that all that happens to us is good. Evil is prevalent in our fallen world, but God is able to turn every circumstance around for our long-range good. Note that God is not working to make us happy but to fulfill his purpose. Note also that this promise is not for everybody.

It can be claimed only by those who love God and are called by him, that is, those whom the Holy Spirit convinces to receive Christ. Such people have a new perspective, a new mind-set. They trust in God, not in worldly treasures; their security is in heaven, not on earth. Their faith in God does not waver in pain and persecution because they know God is with them.

The son of God is in power by his resurrection from the dead.

Romans 1:4

And was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

Here Paul summarizes the Good News about Jesus Christ, who

- (1) came as a human by natural descent,
- (2) Was part of the Jewish royal line through David,
- (3) Died and was raised from the dead, and
- (4) Opened the door for God's grace and kindness to be poured out on us.

You will receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The "power" believers receive from the Holy Spirit includes courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority. The disciples would need all these gifts to fulfill their mission. If you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior, you can experience the power of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Jesus had instructed his disciples to witness to people of all nations about him (Matthew 28:19, 20). But they were told to wait first for the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49). God has important work for you to do for him, but you must do it by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We often like to get on with the job, even if it means running ahead of God. But waiting is sometimes part of God's plan. Are you waiting and listening for God's complete instructions, or are you running ahead of his plans? We need God's timing and power to be truly effective.

This verse describes a series of ever-widening circles. The Good News was to spread, geographically, from Jerusalem, into Judea and Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth. It would begin with the devout Jews in Jerusalem and Samaria, spread to the mixed race in Samaria, and, finally, be offered to Gentiles all over the world.

God's Good News has not reached its final destination if someone in your family, your workplace, your school, or your community hasn't heard the Good News about Jesus Christ. Make sure that you are contributing in some way to the ever-widening circle of God's loving message.

No one comes to the father except through Jesus.

John 14:6

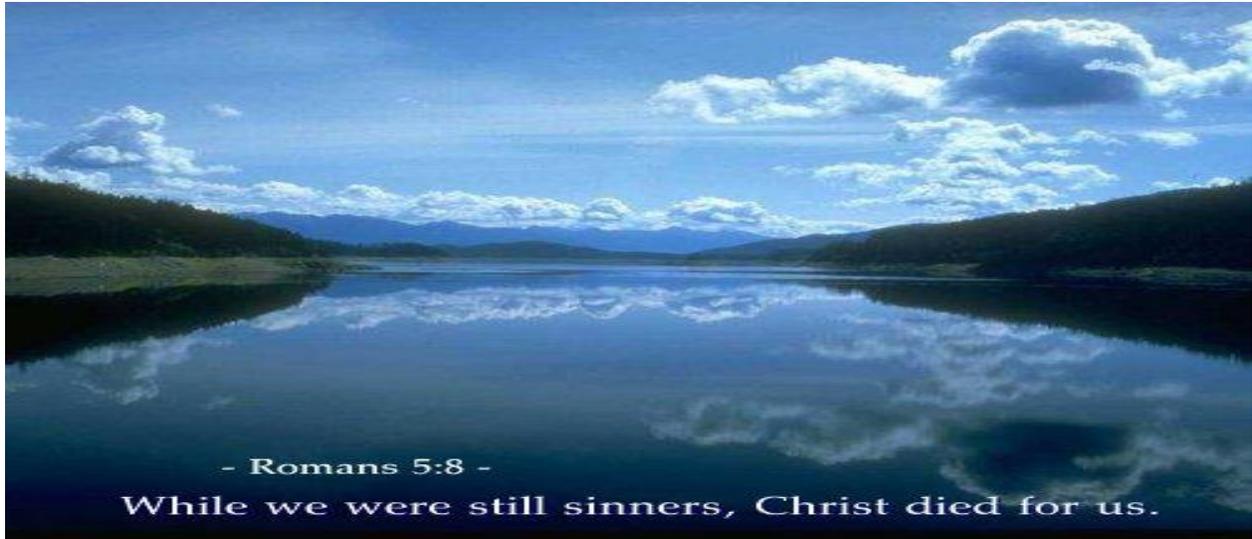
Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

This is one of the most basic and important passages in Scripture. How can we know the way to God? Only through Jesus. Jesus is the way because he is both God and man. By uniting our lives with his, we are united with God. Trust Jesus to take you to the Father, and all the benefits of being God's child will be yours.

Jesus says he is the *only* way to God the Father. Some people may argue that this way is too narrow. In reality, it is wide enough for the whole world, if the world chooses to accept it. Instead of worrying about how limited it sounds to have only one way, we should be saying, "Thank you, God, for providing a sure way to get to you!"

As the *way*, Jesus is our path to the Father. As the *truth*, he is the reality of all God's promises. As the *life*, he joins his divine life to ours, both now and eternally. Jesus is, in truth, the only living way to the Father.

Jesus is the visible, tangible image of the invisible God. He is the complete revelation of what God is like. Jesus explained to Philip, who wanted to see the Father, that to know Jesus is to know God. The search for God, for truth and reality, ends in Christ.



John 14:1

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

Jesus' words show that the way to eternal life, though unseen, is secure—as secure as your trust in Jesus. He has already prepared the way to eternal life. The only issue that may still be unsettled is your willingness to believe.

Jesus and the Father are one.

John 10:30

I and the Father are one.”

This is the clearest statement of Jesus' divinity he ever made. Jesus and his Father are not the same person, but they are one in essence and nature. Thus, Jesus is not merely a good teacher—he is God.

His claim to be God was unmistakable. The religious leaders wanted to kill him because their laws said that anyone claiming to be God should die. Nothing could persuade them that Jesus' claim was true.

No one is able to snatch you out of the father's hand.

John 10:29

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

Just as a shepherd protects his sheep, Jesus protects his people from eternal harm. While believers can expect to suffer on earth, Satan cannot harm their souls or take away their eternal life with God. There are many reasons to be afraid here on earth because this is the devil's domain (1 Peter 5:8). But if you choose to follow Jesus, he will give you everlasting safety.

Worship God through the spirit and the truth.

John 4:24

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

"God is Spirit" means he is not a physical being limited to one place. He is present everywhere, and he can be worshiped anywhere, at any time. It is not where we worship that counts, but how we worship. Is your worship genuine and true? Do you have the Holy Spirit's help? How does the Holy Spirit help us worship? The Holy Spirit prays for us (Romans 8:26), teaches us the words of Christ (14:26), and tells us we are loved (Romans 5:5).

All who believe in Jesus Christ will be saved.

John 3:16-17

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

To "believe" is more than intellectual agreement that Jesus is God. It means to put our trust and confidence in him that he alone can save us. It is to put Christ in charge of our present plans and eternal destiny. Believing is both trusting his words as reliable, and relying on him for the power to change. If you have never trusted Christ, let this promise of everlasting life be yours—and believe.

God was with Jesus to do great signs.

John 3:2

This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”

Like Nicodemus, we must examine Jesus for ourselves—others cannot do it for us. Then, if we believe he is who he says, we will want to speak up for him.

What did Nicodemus know about the Kingdom? From the Bible he knew it would be ruled by God, it would be restored on earth, and it would incorporate God's people. Jesus revealed to this devout Pharisee that the Kingdom would come to the whole world (3:16), not just the Jews, and that Nicodemus wouldn't be a part of it unless he was personally born again.

All who believe have the right to become the children of God.

John 1:12

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

All who welcome Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives are reborn spiritually, receiving new life from God. Through faith in Christ, this new birth changes us from the inside out—rearranging our attitudes, desires, and motives.

Being born makes you physically alive and places you in your parents' family (1:13). Being born of God makes you spiritually alive and puts you in God's family (1:12). Have you asked Christ to make you a new person? This fresh start in life is available to all who believe in Christ.

By the finger of God, demons are cast out.

Luke 11:20

But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Some of the Pharisees' followers also were exorcists—that is, they drove out demons. The Pharisees' accusations were becoming more desperate. To accuse Jesus of being empowered by Satan, the prince of demons, because Jesus was driving out demons was also to say that the Pharisees' own exorcists were doing Satan's work.

Jesus turned the religious leaders' accusation against them. Jesus first dismissed their claim as absurd (Why would the devil drive out his own demons?). Then he engaged in a little irony ("What about your own exorcists?"). Finally, he concluded that his work of driving out demons proved that the Kingdom of God had arrived.

And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all mankind together will see it.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.
Isaiah 40:5



They were astonished at the majesty of God.

Luke 9:43

And all were astonished at the majesty of God. But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples,

The disciples didn't understand Jesus' words about his death. They still thought of Jesus as only an earthly king, and they were concerned about their places in the Kingdom he would set up. So they ignored Jesus' words about his death and began arguing about who would be the greatest.

The heavenly host praised God.

Luke 2:13

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

Some of the Jews were waiting for a savior to deliver them from Roman rule; others hoped the Christ (Messiah) would deliver them from physical ailments. But Jesus, while healing their illnesses and establishing a spiritual Kingdom, delivered them from sin.

His work is more far-reaching than anyone could imagine. Christ paid the price for sin and opened the way to peace with God. He offers us more than temporary political or physical changes—he offers us new hearts that will last for eternity.

The Holy Spirit will demonstrate the power of the most high.

Luke 1:35

And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

Why is the Virgin Birth important to the Christian faith? Jesus was born without the sin that entered the world through Adam. He was born holy, just as Adam was created sinless. In contrast to Adam, who disobeyed God, Jesus obeyed God and was thus able to face sin's consequences in our place and make us acceptable to God (Romans 5:14-19).

Jesus Christ, God's Son, had to be free from the sinful nature passed on to all other human beings by Adam. Because Jesus was born of a woman, he was a human being; but as the Son of God, Jesus was born without any trace of human sin. Jesus is both fully human and fully divine. Because Jesus lived as a man, human beings know that he fully understands their experiences and struggles (Hebrews 4:15-16).

Because he is God, he has the power and authority to deliver people from sin (Colossians 2:13-15). People can tell Jesus all their thoughts, feelings, and needs. He has been where they are, and he has the ability to help.

The son of man is coming with clouds of heaven.

Mark 14:62

And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

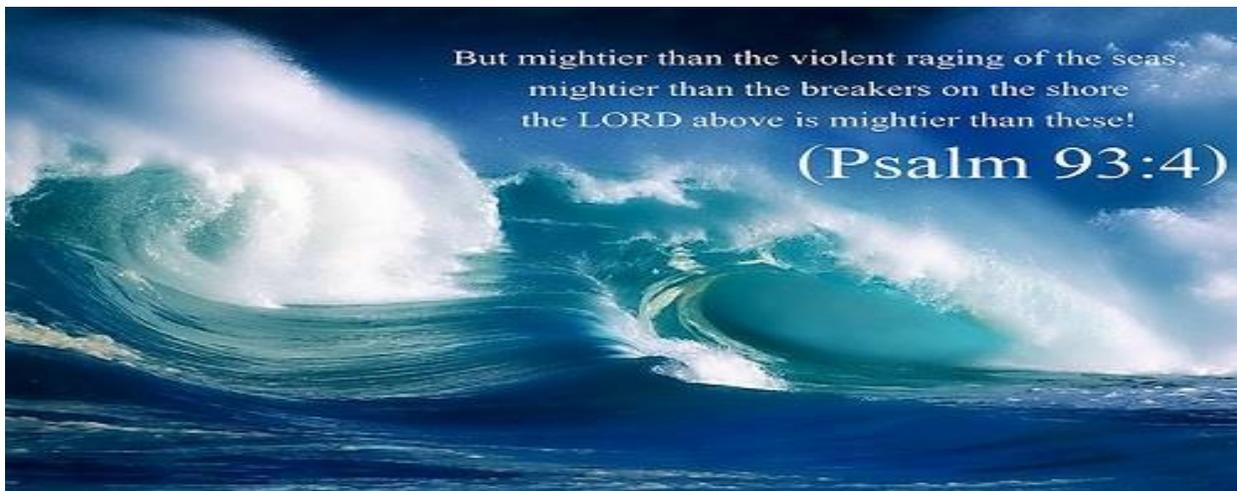
To the first question, Jesus made no reply because it was based on confusing and erroneous evidence. Not answering was wiser than trying to clarify the fabricated accusations. But if Jesus had refused to answer the second question, it could have been taken as a denial of his mission. Instead, his answer predicted a powerful role reversal.

All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

God gave Jesus authority over heaven and earth. On the basis of that authority, Jesus told his disciples to make more disciples as they preached, baptized, and taught. With this same authority, Jesus still commands us to tell others the Good News and make them disciples for the Kingdom.



Signs in the heavens tell of Christ's return.

Matthew 24:30

Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

The nations of the earth will mourn because unbelievers will suddenly realize they have chosen the wrong side. Everything they have scoffed about will be happening, and it will be too late for them.

Fear only God who can destroy your soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Jesus said that God is aware of everything that happens even to sparrows, and you are far more valuable to him than they are. You are so valuable that God sent his only Son to die for you (John 3:16). Because God places such value on you, you need never fear personal threats or difficult trials. These can't shake God's love or dislodge his Spirit from within you.

The Lord will deliver us from evil.

Matthew 6:13

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

God sometimes allows us to be tested by temptation. As disciples, we should pray to be delivered from these trying times and for deliverance from Satan ("the evil one") and his deceit.

All Christians struggle with temptation. Sometimes it is so subtle that we don't even realize what is happening to us. God has promised that he won't allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13).

God's remnant shall be marvelous in his sight.

Zechariah 8:6

Thus says the LORD of hosts: If it is marvelous in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvelous in my sight, declares the LORD of hosts?

The remnant was the small group of exiles who had returned from Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. Struggling to survive in the land, they became discouraged over the opposition they often faced from hostile neighbors.

It was hard to believe that one day God himself would reign from this city and that their land would enjoy great peace and prosperity. Our God is all-powerful; he can do anything! When confronting seemingly impossible tasks or situations, remember that "with God everything is possible" (Matthew 19:26).

God is able to humble those who walk in pride.

Daniel 4:37

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

Nebuchadnezzar's pilgrimage with God is one of the themes of this book. In 2:47, he acknowledged that God revealed mysteries to Daniel. In 3:28, 29 he praised the God who rescued the three Hebrews. Despite Nebuchadnezzar's recognition that God exists and works great miracles, in 4:30 we see that he still did not acknowledge God as his Lord.

We may recognize that God exists and does wonderful miracles, but so do many unbelievers! To be a child of God, you must invite him to be Lord of your life.

Your courage can remain strong in the day of the Lord.

Ezekiel 22:14

Can your courage endure, or can your hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with you? I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it.

The leaders, whom God chose, were responsible for the moral climate of the nation. The same is true today (see James 3:1). Unfortunately, many of the sins mentioned here have been committed in recent years by Christian leaders. We are living in a time of unprecedented attacks by Satan. We must uphold our leaders in prayer, and leaders must seek accountability in order to help them maintain their moral and spiritual integrity.

Nothing is too hard for God.

Jeremiah 32:17

'Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

After Jeremiah bought the field, he began to wonder if such a move was wise. He sought relief in prayer from his nagging doubts. In this prayer, Jeremiah affirmed that God is the Creator of heaven and earth (32:17), the wise Judge, who is aware of our conduct (32:19), and our Redeemer, who has great power (32:21). God loves us and sees our situation. Whenever we doubt God's wisdom or wonder if it is practical to obey him, we can review what we already know about him. Such thoughts and prayers will quiet our doubts and calm our fears.

God established the world by his wisdom.

Jeremiah 10:12

It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.

The location of Uphaz is unknown. Instead, it may be a metallurgical term for "refined gold." No matter how well made or how beautiful idols are, they can never have the power and life of the true and living God.



Prayer to salvation.

Lord God in heaven, I come to you in the name of Jesus.

I acknowledge to you that I am a sinner, and

I am sorry for my sins and the life that I have lived;

I need your forgiveness.

I believe that your only begotten Son Jesus Christ shed His precious blood on the cross at Calvary and died for my sins, and I am now willing to turn from my sin.

Your Holy Word declares in Romans 10:9 that if we confess the Lord our God and believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead, we shall be saved.

Right now I confess Jesus as the Lord of my soul. With my heart, I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.

This very moment I accept Jesus Christ as my own personal Savior and according to His Word, right now I am saved. Amen

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print