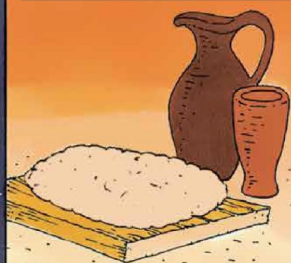


**GOD IS CLOSE BY!**

READ FOR YOURSELF: Acts 20:17-32

Jesus has made it possible for men to live together in peace...



Be grateful for his love!  
Take it from him! And worship him!



God sent his son to the world not to judge us, but to save us. Because God loves us so much, that he gave his only Son. Everyone who believes in him will no longer be lost, but will have everlasting life!



## GOD IS CLOSE BY!

Does the story of Jesus come to a close? No, it continues, every day, every minute, every second. It continued in the lives of millions of people through the centuries. And it continues in your own life.

Which story? The story of God and you together! He will be close to you. The Lord God loves people and He has set Himself apart for us. That is how He has done it from the beginning and that is how He will always keep doing it. How can you know that for sure? The Lord Jesus shows who God is and how much God loves you. The Lord Jesus makes it so clear that God's love always existed and will continue to exist for you and for the world. That grace you can experience with other Christians in church fellowship in Jesus Christ. That is the place where God's Word can be heard, where you worship God together. Where you become more enthusiastic to tell others about Jesus.

Look at Jesus. That is what God is like. That is His love. So close-by! Once you have discovered this, really, once you have discovered Him, you want to tell the whole world!

## MEMORY VERSE

*"For God loved the world so much that He gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life."  
(John 3:16)*

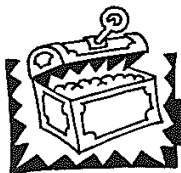
## WHO IS JESUS?

### Emmanuel

*"Well then, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: a young woman who is pregnant will have a son and will name Him 'Emmanuel' (which means 'God is with us')"  
(Isaiah 7:14)*

In Matthew 1:21-23 you can read that the Lord Jesus received this name from Isaiah at His birth. Jesus is Emmanuel: God with us. God has set Himself apart for people since the creation. The Lord Jesus has made that clear. He came for us, and He was completely there for us. And He is still here with His Spirit. That is why He is 'God with us'. Thus when He leaves earth He says:

*"And I will be with you always, to the end of the age."  
(Matthew 28:20)*

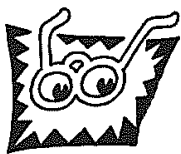


## GOD GOES FURTHER WITH HIS COMMUNITY

### OLD TREASURES

*"The new covenant that I will make with the people of Israel will be this: I will put My law within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people." (Jeremiah 31:33)*

Throughout the whole Bible you can read that the Lord God longs for a people for Himself. People completely dedicated to Him, because they know and love Him. When the Old Testament writes about a new covenant (a new testament), it speaks about people with changed hearts. The Lord Jesus made that change possible. He took away the sin that caused the separation. The Holy Spirit living in you makes it possible to know God. God and His people together are one now. Through those people, the church of Jesus, God shows the world who He is.



### EXTRA INFORMATION

#### The church and missions

The first community of followers of Jesus (the first community of the church) was formed in Jerusalem. But already very quickly many communities originate around all of Israel and even outside of Israel. Everyone can see that something special has happened with these people. They love each other! The disciples of Jesus preach the gospel (good news) everywhere. In this time the followers of Christ are being called Christians for the first time. That is actually a term of abuse, but Christians think of it as a title of honour.

Continuously more people are filled with the Holy Spirit. They have love for other people and enthusiastically spread the news of Jesus. Like Paul. First he persecuted the followers of Jesus.

### BE CLOSE WITH JESUS

Did you find a place to meet with the church of Jesus? You can discover much more about Jesus in such a place. At home you also can learn from Him. Talk to Him and read your Bible!

But he becomes a strong apostle of Jesus when he meets Him personally. He starts communities in all kinds of cities along the main streets of the Roman Empire. He lays the foundation for grace for all the communities that follow.

The gospel is even now being spread throughout the whole world. Everywhere groups of Christians come together to celebrate Jesus' love by partaking the Lord's Supper. In turn they send people out. They help the poor and the weak from the abundance that God gives them. There never have been as many Christians as there are today. Jesus lives, and that can be seen through His followers. They go out to share His love.



## DO YOU KNOW...?

1. What does the name Emmanuel mean?

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2. What does the word Gospel mean?

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3. Who was the first martyr of the Christian church (Acts 7:58-60)?

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4. What is a church fellowship?

- a) A building with Christian images or statues.
- b) A group of Christians that fellowship together in God's grace.
- c) A group of people that live in the same town

5. What does Paul do in his house in Rome (Acts 28:30-31)?

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6. Through what have you become to be Gods own people (Ephesians 1:11)?

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7. For how long has it been Gods plan to make us all His children through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:4-5)?

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## BIBLE READING

Sun	John 3:1-21
Mon	Acts 2:40-47
Tue	Acts 20:17-32
Wed	Acts 28:16-31
Thu	Jeremiah 31:31-34
Fri	Ephesians 1:1-14
Sat	Ephesians 3:14-21



## ACTION POINT!

The Bible doesn't end with the life of Jesus. Read Acts to read how the story continues with Jesus followers and the churches that were started. Also read the letters that were sent to these churches.