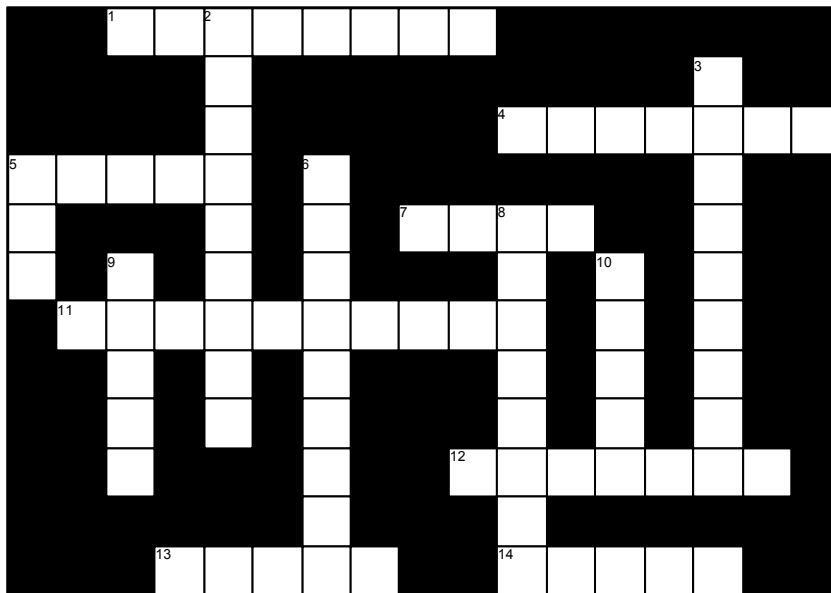


A Bible Crossword: Matthew, Part 3



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ACROSS

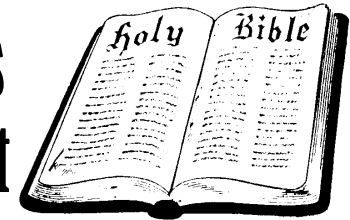
- 1 The harvest is plentiful, but these are few .
- 4 Disciple Jesus called at a tax office.
- 5 Foxes have these....but Jesus has now here to lay His head.
- 7 John's disciples asked why Jesus' disciples didn't do this.
- 11 Jesus came to call sinners to this.
- 12 Jesus touched a man with this disease.
- 13 The Gergesenes demons entered a herd of these.
- 14 Two blind men seeking mercy called Jesus this man's son.

DOWN

- 2 The scribes thought Jesus guilty of this when He forgave the paralytic's sins.
- 3 Members of this group said Jesus cast out demons by the ruler of demons.
- 5 A touch of this part of Jesus' garment healed a sick woman with faith.
- 6 Jesus healed the servant of a man with this Roman army position.
- 8 The multitudes were like sheep without one
- 9 In outer darkness, there will be weeping and gnashing of these.
- 10 Jesus healed this disciple's mother-in-law .

—All answers can be found in Matthew, Chapters 8-9

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Your Obituary Has Already Been Written

Last week the Bloomberg news group released the obituary for Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Computers. He was praised for making personal computers more accessible and revolutionizing the cell phone. Bloomberg's comments were complimentary and brief in honoring the memory of one of the computer industry's greats.

The only problem with the report was the fact that Steve Jobs is not in fact a memory. He is alive, and by all subsequent reports, doing well. The release of the obituary was entirely accidental.

When pressed as to how such a thing could happen, the Bloomberg group revealed a little secret: news services maintain short obituaries for scores of famous people. The short obituaries are kept on file, ready for immediate release upon news of the death of any famous person. So, if you are famous, your obituary has already been written.

In a sense, this is true of everyone, famous or not. Though it may not be in print, your obituary has already been written too.

Of Abel, the Hebrews writer says, "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks" (11:4).

Abel continues to be remembered today. Though we know of no sermons that he preached, his deeds continue to speak long after his death. Through his actions, Abel was writing his own obituary.

Through our actions, we are all writing our obituaries, the testimonies about our lives that will follow after us.

Some have written derogatory obituaries for themselves, their wicked deeds serving as warning for all generations to come.

Jude compared the false teachers of his day to three infamous characters, saying, "Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah" (Jude 11).

Cain preferred to worship God as Cain desired instead of as God desired. He offered an unacceptable sacrifice and slew his brother whose acceptable offering cast him in a bad light (Genesis 4:1-8).

Balaam wanted to get paid. Balak, King of Moab, hired Balaam to curse the Israelites who were marching towards his kingdom. Balaam could only speak the words God put in his mouth, but he earned his money by advising Balak to subvert Israel through idolatry and immorality (Numbers 31:16).

Korah challenged the organization of Israel's priesthood. He desired that the duties of ministering before the Lord be extended to include all tribes and not just the Levites (Numbers 16).

Each of these three men wrote derogatory obituaries, condemning themselves in the process. Is that the kind of obituary that you are writing?

Hebrews 11, where Abel is praised, is an obituary of another kind. Each entry is brief, usually highlighting a single, righteous act for which those listed are remembered.

Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.

Enoch walked with God in a time of great wickedness and was translated, never seeing death.

Noah built the ark as God directed for the saving of himself and his household.

Abraham left the security of his home and sojourned as a pilgrim in the land of promise.

The Hebrews writer continues, listing person after person, before reaching a conclusion: "And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets" (Hebrews 11:31). The list of Old Testament people worthy of praise is just too long to recite.

Based upon the things you have and are doing, where would you find yourself remembered? Would you be listed among the infamous in Jude or among the faithful in Hebrews?

You are writing your own obituary, and whether you realize it or not, people are reading it. When those around you view your life, do they see an example worthy of following? Do they see an example of indifference and lethargy? Do they see an example of hypocrisy, of one calling out "Lord, Lord" on Sunday but denying Him by daily life?

Your obituary is already written, but so long as you live, you are still writing. Through faith and repentance, you can still make it one worth reading. -RAB