



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY ®

*Program
Study Guides*

For

March 2016

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Your Soul Luke 12:16-21

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

One day, you'll separate yourself from everything you possess except _____ thing. Today we're going to consider something that many people _____. What is it? We're here to search the Scriptures for God's _____. We search because our _____ destiny depends on what the Scripture says. If we're wise, we'll _____ with love to God's Word and _____ it. Every _____ that we enjoy comes from the hand and the heart of God. We give God our hearts and our minds as we _____ to Him speak in His Word, the Bible.

Life is swift and _____ with many joys and sorrows, victories and defeats, hopes and heartaches. Some things we _____ control, and other things we _____. When life comes to a close, there are many earthly things that we must _____ behind. We'll leave our possessions, our treasures, and our families. Paul said, "For we brought nothing into the _____, so we cannot take anything out of it either" (1 Timothy 6:7). You will only take _____ thing out of this life. And, you're making a _____ from day to day where you will go when this life is over. What will you take with you? Your soul!

"Soul?" That's a word you don't _____ much these days. You have a soul. You've _____ had a soul. Your soul is you. God _____ you your soul, and you're deciding each day by how you think and how you live what you're going to _____ with your soul. You're deciding each day what will _____ to your soul by how you think about God and how you _____ to Him. God is taking notice of your _____. He knows _____ about your heart and your life. You can't fool him. He knows what's going on in your soul. What is God _____ inside of you?

Our reading today comes from the words of Jesus in the Gospel According to Luke 12:16-21. Those are the Word's of Jesus and need to be taken seriously.

What is the soul? The Hebrew word for soul is *nephesh*, and it originally _____ "to breathe." God gave us life and breath and we became a _____ soul. Genesis 2:7 says in the King James Version, "And the LORD God formed man of the _____ of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a _____ soul." To have a soul means that I have a _____ existence. Sometimes the word soul is translated "life," or "being," or "self." While animals also have a life force, only man is spoken of as having as a part of that life, a _____. According to Stephen Renn in his Expository Dictionary of Bible Words, the underlying essence of the word *nephesh* or soul "may be described as that quality which lends to human beings their distinctive individuality as creatures made in the _____ of God." Your soul is what makes you what you are as a person.

The Bible translates the word “soul” in a variety of ways and with different _____. I want to _____ some of those meanings. First, the word “soul” can sometimes refer to the _____ person. Here it’s the equivalent to the word “_____.” The Lord God asks us to love Him with _____ our heart and soul. There really is no difference between those two words. Both refer to that inner person, the _____ of our emotions, our intellect, and our will.

The word “soul” is found 143 times in the book of Psalms and the psalmists are usually speaking of their passionate _____ being. David worshiped God saying, “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is _____ me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psalm 103:12). In Psalm 139:14, David said to God, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully _____. Wonderful are your _____; and my soul knows it very well.” Isaiah expressed the feelings of his soul, “At night my soul _____ for You, Indeed, my spirit within me _____ You diligently; For when the earth experiences Your judgments, The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9).

When Mary found out that God had _____ her to bear a holy child, the Son of God, she said, “My soul magnifies the Lord” (Luke 1:46). When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He told His disciples, “Oh, my soul is very _____, even to death” (Mark 14:34). So the soul can _____ to our innermost thoughts and emotions.

But, the reason the soul is able to feel and to reason is because it’s _____ in nature. The Lord Jesus warned, “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 _____” (Matthew 10:28). That spiritual part of us, our souls, is not a material thing, but it will _____ beyond this life. The Hebrew writer tells us, “Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be _____ to the Father of spirits, and live?” (Hebrews 12:9). You have a spirit, a soul, that’s given to you by _____. That’s what makes you a creature made in the _____ of God. That spiritual part of you is what you will _____ into heaven or into hell. That’s why your soul is so _____!

Jesus is a _____ to our souls. Not only does He offer us forgiveness of sins, He also provides a way that our souls can _____. Christianity is livable! It’s not impossible to _____ the Christian life. It’s not so difficult that we can’t go to _____. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30.** Jesus _____ your soul and He wants to give you an abundant life, and that means giving you peace and comfort.

Second, sometimes the word “soul” refers not to some part of us but to the _____ person. For instance, Acts 2:41 says, “So those who received his word were _____, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.” Peter spoke of Noah and his family being _____ on the ark. First Peter 3:20 speaks of “the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls (or persons), were saved through water.”

Third, sometimes the word “soul” refers to the life force in a person, that which _____

him life. While soul and spirit are sometimes speaking of the same thing, there are times when they emphasize different aspects of the spiritual _____ of man. **Read Hebrews 4:12.** The idea here is not so much that these terms are opposed to one another, as it is that they overlap and emphasize different aspects of the _____ man. The word “soul” emphasizes more the life _____ within a person, while the word “spirit” emphasizes the understanding and emotions of a person.

First Thessalonians 5:23 also seems to distinguish the soul and the spirit. This verse says, “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” God wants to save us completely: body, soul, and spirit. God is saving us as _____ people. This phrase is like the great commandment of Jesus in Mark 12:30 that you “shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” That’s all of you, every _____ of you. Just as we give our _____ to God, so God saves us completely: body, soul, and spirit.

Fourth, there are times that God distinguishes the body from the soul or spirit. One can lose his life physically, when his _____ dies, yet not lose his _____. **Remember the warning of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 10:28.** Death is a _____ of the body from the spirit or soul. James 2:26 says, “For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.” While the body _____, the spirit remains _____. Ecclesiastes 12:7 describes what happens at death, “then the _____ will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit (our soul) will _____ to God who gave it.” Your body will _____ here on earth, but your spirit, or soul will return to God.

Read what Paul could say in Philippians 1:21-23. When you’re a faithful Christian like Paul, you have the _____ of being with Christ when this life is over. This is one of the many _____ to become a Christian. The way to become a Christian is to _____ and _____ the Lord. We must never think that Christianity is somehow a _____ matter that has no personal connection. Your faith and your soul are unchangeably _____. What you believe will _____ your soul for eternity. So, I hope you _____ in the Lord Jesus and in His gospel, and you are _____ for the Lord Jesus, the way you ought to.

James 1:21 says, “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to _____ your souls.” When people believe in Jesus, when they repent of their sins, and when they receive or accept the word of the gospel into their lives by their obedience, the word saves their souls. My friend, have you _____ the gospel message? Have you _____ it?

Accepting it means believing that it’s _____, and not only believing but committing yourself to it, in word and in deed. You not only want to get right with God, you must _____ with the Lord. Many these days are _____ the Lord and leaving His church, wandering off

into false religion and no religion. When Christians _____ from the truth of the Word of God, they put their souls in _____. **Read James 5:19-20.**

When people give up on their faith, or they start believing something that is false, or they begin to practice sin because of these things, they could _____ their souls. This is why we need to _____ God's Word, and _____ to it. Your home in _____ with the Lord Jesus is dependent on you knowing the Word of God and following it. You can know all kinds of technology, history, science, and literature, but if you wish to live forever, to live with the Lord for all time, you must also _____ the Scriptures, believe them, and follow them.

Your soul is accountable to God. **Read what God said through the prophet in Ezekiel 18:4.** Your soul _____ to God, and if you sin against Him, you will _____. This death is not simply a physical death, as some wrongly suppose, but a _____ one. If you sin, you'll _____ your soul from the grace of God. Death is a separation, and the one thing you should never _____ is to be separated from the God who created you.

Read what God's Word clearly says in Romans 2:6-11 that God will render in the Judgment.

When this life is over, I hope you can say "for me to live is Christ and to die is _____." If your soul is right with the living God, _____ will be great gain. You only have one _____ and you only have one _____. Make your time on this earth _____. Seek for glory, seek for honor and immortality in Christ. Do what is good and right; be obedient. Don't let _____ overcome you. Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy the _____, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding." Oh, my friend, follow the Lord. If the God of heaven was willing to _____ His Son Jesus on a cross in order to save you from sin, that shows not only how much He _____ you but also how much your soul is _____ to Him. How much is your soul worth to you? The Lord Jesus asked, "For what will it profit a man if he _____ the whole world and _____ his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26). Your soul is worth more than the _____ world. You only have one soul. Get it right with God. On the Day of Judgment, nothing _____ will matter but whether your soul is right with the living God.

Read the text in Luke 12:16-21 again.

One day, the Lord will _____ your soul of you. Are you right with God? To get right with God, you must _____ with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; you must _____ of your sins and turn your heart toward the Lord; you must _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God; and you must be _____ into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. This baptism is an _____ in water in the name of Jesus Christ. Baptism is when we _____ upon God for a good conscience, when God _____ away our sins and gives us _____ of life. Oh, we urge you to get right with God today!

Your Sin James 1:13-16

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Some people are saying, “Sin is an _____ word” and should be dropped from our vocabulary. Today we’re going to talk about sin, something that affects _____ of us.

The Bible is the _____ important book that you’ll ever read. It’s the _____ book that tells you where you came from, why you’re here, and what will happen after death. Scripture reveals God’s _____ for mankind and how He’s dealt with our problem of sin. God’s desire for all men is that they be _____ from sin and live with Him eternally. Sin, however, keeps us from _____ life. The Bible reveals the answer to sin and how we can live eternally with God.

Some people _____ using the word “sinner” is offensive and a hindrance to Christianity. Some _____ that Jesus never called anyone a sinner. Several years ago, Dr. Karl Menninger saw this _____ in attitude in American people and he wrote the book, *Whatever Became of Sin?* More recently John MacArthur wrote the book, *The Vanishing Conscience*. Both of these men realized that many had grown callous about their sin and had decided to _____ the concept of sin altogether.

Does sin really exist? What does the _____ say about sin? What does it _____ to be a sinner? What’s the big deal about sin anyway? Is sin really so offensive that a person will spend an eternity _____ without God? Should we ever call anyone a sinner? In a politically _____ world, some have banned the word “sin” as being offensive. But, is the word “sin” really so _____ that we should never mention it? I realize some folks don’t want to hear about it, but sin is a real _____! Ignoring sin won’t make it go away and it won’t turn something that is _____ into something that’s _____.

Our reading today comes from the letter of James 1:13-16. The word “sin” is certainly a Biblical term. It’s used _____ times in the New Testament alone; and the word “sinner” is used an additional _____ times. The Bible also uses other terms when speaking of sin. Sin is sometimes described as an “error,” “iniquity,” “unrighteousness,” an “evil,” a “trespass,” or a “transgression.” Sin is not some _____ thing that one can ignore or dismiss. You’ll never find sin taken _____ in Scripture. You’ll never find Jesus _____ that sin is an outdated word. In fact, every time Jesus thought about sin, he called for _____. He recognized that sin was _____.

You can hardly understand the _____ of Jesus without talking about sin. When Mary was with child, the angel told Joseph, “she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their _____” (Matthew 1:21). When John the Baptist

introduced Jesus, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the _____ of the world!” (John 1:29). More than seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah. He spoke about Jesus and how Jesus would _____ our transgressions.

Read Isaiah 53:5-6. Jesus died a cruel, ugly death upon a cross so that we might be _____ from sin. His suffering brought us forgiveness, grace, and peace. To suggest that sin is an unimportant word makes a _____ of what Jesus did on the cross for you and for me. It suggests that we don’t need His _____.

Sadly, some people don’t realize just how _____ sin truly is. Sin has caused much of our greatest _____ and has wasted countless lives. Sin, of some sort or another, is at the root of every _____ and every violent act; it’s brought so much guilt and shame, and so much pain. Calling sin “outdated” doesn’t make it outdated. Relabeling sin only shows the _____ of the one who makes this claim. God takes note of sin whether we do or not. When men sin, they sin against God—they _____ God. Sin is not merely a transgression against the law; it’s a transgression against God’s law and God Himself, and it breaks his heart! There is no “victimless” sin for _____ is always the victim.

Some people think of sin as something somebody _____ does. Nearly everyone can point to someone they think is a _____ sinner than themselves. But everyone sins. Paul said, “for _____ have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Every person who reaches the age where he knows about God, and he knows about right and wrong, comes to that point where he acts in _____ of God’s law and so sins. We all stand guilty before God.

Some people have categories of sin. They think “_____” sins are really bad, but “_____” sins are no big deal. Or they figure _____ commit the big sins, while they themselves only commit little ones. But all sins are bad. All sins transgress God’s law and break God’s _____. All sins go against His _____ for our lives. Paul said, “the wages of sin is _____” (Romans 6:23), and that hasn’t changed. When he talks about death, he’s talking about _____ death, that is separation from God and from His grace.

Isaiah 59:1-2 explains, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a _____ between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.” When people persist in sin they build this _____ between themselves and God. This barrier means that God no longer _____, that one doesn’t stand in His grace and receive His blessing.

Some people still don’t think they’ve sinned. However, John said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, then he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, why we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:8-10). People tend to _____ to themselves about many things. Some ignore warnings about the _____; others ignore warnings about their _____.

When your sins aren't forgiven, they will _____ you your soul. Sin is no joke. **Read what Jesus said in Matthew 16:26-27.** Some people _____ about sin, but no one will be laughing when Jesus comes again. Then they will weep with regret that they didn't _____ their lives and come to the Lord.

Sin not only has eternal consequences, it also creates _____ in this life. Sin deceives and hardens people's _____. **Read Hebrews 3:12-13.** Most people sin because they think it _____ good, or because it's pleasurable; but in the end sin will _____ your heart and hurt you. It's deceptive and it's cruel. Sin will make a person desert every member of his family just to feed a _____.

We generally think of taking drugs or getting drunk as addictive and destructive behaviors, but actually _____ become addictive and destructive. A person can become _____ to lying, to gossip, to stealing, to anger, to sexual sins, and even to violence. These behaviors not only hurt the person who does them, they also hurt _____ people. How many families have been destroyed or impoverished because somebody thought they could sin and get away with it. The prisons are _____ of people who thought they could get away with their sins, or people who knew they'd someday get caught but wouldn't give up their sins.

There is an unalterable _____ in Scripture about the life we choose to live, and you can't cheat this law or change it. You can't wish it away or ignore it. **Read Galatians 6:7-8.** When a writer says, "Do not be deceived," it's usually because people _____ themselves and _____ to themselves about the lives that they're living.

Oh, I hope you're not _____ yourself, thinking that you can live an immoral lifestyle and avoid any consequences. You simply can't. Sometimes those consequences are physical diseases if you _____ your body. Sometimes they are shortened life if you commit _____. Sometimes sin _____ families and _____ friendships. Sometimes sin enslaves us financially with heavy _____ like gambling does. The choices that you make today may _____ you far more than you ever dreamed in your health; or the spiritual drain in guilt, in money and friendships. My friend, if you continue in sin, you won't be the exception. You will someday _____ what you _____.

The prodigal son wanted his inheritance, and he wanted it so that he could waste it on his _____. That's what a prodigal is, one who _____ his resources with reckless living. You remember the story. **Read Luke 15:14-16.** I tell you, when you live a selfish, sinful lifestyle, the time comes when you run out of _____. Selfish people are friends only when they see some _____. As long as the prodigal son paid the bill, he had friends.

It was only when the prodigal son was desperate and alone that he began to _____ about sin. **Continue reading Luke 15:17-19.** Sin _____ the senses, but reality _____ us up. Sin makes a person feel _____ in his own eyes. He no longer felt _____ to be called a son of his father.

While sin _____ only to shame and guilt, the wonderful thing is how much God loves us even in our sin and guilt. **Continue reading Luke 15:20-24.** God _____ when his prodigal children come home. He _____ to meet his ragged, dirty, but penitent son. He embraced and kissed him. It was a time of celebration, for his son was now _____ and found! God wants to _____ you, too. Sin will hurt you and embarrass you; but God still _____ for you because He loves you. No matter what your past has been, God wants to _____ you as you turn away from the old evil life and come home to Him. God's love is _____ than our sin.

Read what Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:12-16. My friend, there is _____ for you. If you'll _____ in the Lord, if you'll _____ of your sins, if you'll _____ His name, if you'll be _____ (immersed in water) for the forgiveness of your sins, you too will become a _____ of God and a member of the Lord's _____. The prodigal son came home; Saul of Tarsus came home. They found forgiveness, and so can you.

We've seen that sin matters; it's not trivial. Scripture tells us that unresolved sin costs people their _____. You remember Paul said, "The wages of sin is death." Here, "death" is a reference to separation from _____ which lasts for eternity. Don't let Satan or the world _____ you into believing that sin is no big deal. It's the critical _____ to your soul and will cost you everything when Jesus comes again if it's left unforgiven. If sin weren't such a big deal, Jesus would never have gone to such great lengths to _____ for your sins by his cruel death on the cross. Sin is not trivial when you consider the _____ of Christ. Jesus didn't die for a petty, unimportant problem. He died for you because your sins are the greatest _____ that you face.

When you consider the Lord's _____, you can readily see His love. There's no _____ love that a man can have than to lay down his _____ for his friends. That's what Jesus did for you. He wanted you to be _____ from sin and to _____ with Him eternally in heaven. "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is _____ _____ in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Forgiveness is a _____ from God; and I would hate for you never to know how much God loves you and wants to _____ you. If God takes sin and your soul that seriously, shouldn't you take it seriously? Don't let anything keep you from having _____ the blessings of the Lord? Love Him, _____ Him, and _____ Him.

To become a Christian, _____ Jesus Christ is the Son of God, _____ of sin that separates you from God, _____ Jesus before others, and be _____ into Christ. Baptism is an immersion in water for the _____ of sins. You'll never regret obeying the Lord. So, do it today!

March 20, 2016

Your Salvation

Romans 5:6-10

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Most people think everybody is going to heaven, but the Scripture distinguishes the _____ from the _____. Does it _____ whether we're saved? The New Testament _____ more than a dozen chapters to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus died upon the cross so that _____ might be saved. We study the Scriptures because we know they tell about Jesus, and we want a relationship with the Lord Jesus, and to be saved by His _____. For us, the _____ is not merely words on paper; they give us _____. **Read what the apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:1-2.** We want everyone to be saved; we don't want anyone to believe in _____.

Jesus came to earth "to save His people from their _____" (Matthew 1:21). "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might _____ to sin and _____ to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus is in the saving business, the _____ business. He takes people where He _____ them and He _____ them into the kind of people that He wants them to be. He's the _____ of sinners! He's like the _____ who leaves the ninety-nine in the open pasture and searches for the lost sheep until he finds it! He brings it home on his shoulders _____! God rejoices over every sinner that _____ (Luke 15:7). The Lord is _____ for you if you're a sinner, my friend. He wants to find you. He doesn't want you to be _____!

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the Romans 5:6-10. God's Word tells us about the great demonstration of the _____ of Jesus.

What does it mean to be lost spiritually? We know what it means to lose our _____ or our _____. We know what it means to lose our _____, our savings, or our _____. We have _____ alerts for a lost child and _____ alerts for a lost senior citizen. When a child is missing or a senior is missing, we'll turn over every rock to _____ them. All these things are tragic, but they're trivial compared to the loss of our _____. Being lost spiritually means that we're without _____ and without _____ in this world. Being lost spiritually means that we can't enjoy the blessings or the _____ of God in this life or in the one to come. God doesn't want _____ to be lost. First Timothy 2:3-4 says, "This is good, and it's pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

The fact is that many are lost and don't _____ it. Our nation has become so morally and religiously confused that many have come to _____ that everyone is okay with the Lord. The Lord Jesus, however, clearly taught that not everyone is saved. He said, "Enter

through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are _____ who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are _____ who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). Wouldn’t it be _____ not to be among that few who find life? Scripture reminds us that there is salvation in no one else, “for there is no other _____ under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Even many religious people think that they are right with God, but not everyone who is _____ is saved. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will _____ the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the _____ of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” When people _____ to follow the will of the Lord, even if they’re religious, the Lord will not allow them into heaven. But when people do love the Lord, when they are willing to _____ to His Words and obey Him, God opens His heart and opens the way for them to enter into Heaven. When you get away from the Words of Jesus, you get away from Jesus.

The prodigal son had lived wickedly until he ran out of _____. When he became destitute, he took a long look at his _____ and life. The Scriptures say, “he came to his senses.” He realized that he needed saving. What about you? Do you need saving? Are you in _____ and in need of forgiveness. The prodigal son decided to go home to his father and _____ that he had sinned against heaven and in his father’s sight. In his _____, he was no longer worthy to be his father’s son. Sin makes us small in our own _____. Sin ruins our lives. Our sins _____ be atoned for. Jesus _____ on the cross to atone for our sins. We must be willing to _____ to Him for forgiveness.

The prodigal son was afraid of what might happen, and many today have a _____ that the Lord or the church won’t accept them. When people come home humbly and penitently, willing to do the will of the Father, God will _____ them. When David came to God for forgiveness, he said, “For You (God) do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:16-17). Just as the prodigal son’s father, God will _____ His arms to us, run to meet us, embrace us, and kiss us. The Father knew his son had been wicked, but the father _____ loved him. God still loves us!

“But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was _____ and has come to _____ again; he was _____ and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate” (Luke 15:22-24). God celebrates when people recognize their sins and come home in _____. Do you need to come back to God?

God wants to _____ you, to save you from sin because He loves you. Your salvation is so very important. Preaching the gospel means _____ about sin and salvation. That is what gospel preaching is all about.

What happens when you're saved? Let's see:

First, your salvation means that God has _____ you clean from sin. Sin leaves a _____ and it causes us to feel the sting of our _____. When we become Christians, the stain and the guilt are _____. **Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.** When we're washed clean, we're also made _____ and righteous. God no longer sees what we _____ but sees what we have _____, and what He caused us to become. We're _____ creatures.

When we're baptized, we're _____ out to God for a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21). Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, "Now why do you _____? Get up and be baptized, and _____ away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16). That's how we _____ upon God for salvation. First Peter 3:21 explains, "Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an _____ to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." In baptism, we're asking God to _____ our souls and our consciences so that we can be right with Him and right with ourselves.

Second, your salvation means you are _____ and reconciled to God. Reconciliation means I'm in a right relationship with God; God and I are _____ again. To be _____ of sin and know you're not forgiven is scary. To think I will _____ eternity without God's favor, without His friendship, and having no hope; my friend, that is frightening. Hebrews 10:31 reminds us, "It's a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the _____ God." I wouldn't want to face God outside of Christ, lost in sin, never having believed or never having _____ the gospel. I wouldn't want to face God having forsaken the _____. I wouldn't want to face God living in sin and being unwilling to _____.

I'm thankful for the words of 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slow about His _____, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for _____ to come to repentance." God doesn't want to _____ anybody. He wants people to believe, to love Him, and to _____ their ways. He wants us to leave our sins and to become _____. I'm thankful God is _____ with us. I don't want to presume on the _____ or the patience of God. I know I must change my _____ if I want to see the grace of God work in my life.

My favorite saying is this: "I'm not all I _____ to be; I'm not all I _____ to be; I'm not all I'm _____ to be; but thank God by His mercy and grace, I'm not what I _____ to be." God's grace and forgiveness transforms us. When we're obedient to the gospel, we become a _____ of God. We become _____ people, transformed into a child of God. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19.** Being forgiven means that God no longer holds my sins against me, and that allows me to _____ friends with God once again.

Third, your salvation means that you are _____. What does that mean? It means God _____ you holy and regards you as holy. **Read how Peter describes obedient Christians in 1 Peter 2:9-10.**

If God has forgiven you, and cleansed you by the blood of Jesus, and He's made you holy, then you should _____ that way. **Read what God's Word says in 2 Timothy 2:19-22.**

Fourth, when the Lord saves you at the time that you're baptized, He _____ you to His kingdom, His family, the church! When you're baptized into Christ, you're also baptized into His _____. **Read what Peter said in Acts 2:38-41.**

These penitent believers were _____ to do what God says. They didn't _____ with God. They committed themselves, and God recognized that. So, He added them to the _____ believers, to the church. Acts 2:47 says, "And the Lord was adding to their number (that is, the church) day by day those who were being _____." My friend, to be saved means to be added to their number, and to be a part of the church, the family of God.

Why does this matter? It matters because we're talking about your _____ and your _____. To be saved means every _____ in Christ is yours. To be lost means you have no relationship with God and no _____. Don't gamble with your _____. Buy the _____ and do not sell it. Get right with God and don't let anything come _____ you and God ever again. Don't _____ with God. Life is too uncertain to put off putting your _____ in the Lord and _____ the gospel in repentance and baptism. If the Lord Jesus came in the clouds this day, would you greet Him with love or would you be _____? Why would you remain afraid? Get right with God!

How are we saved? God saves us by His grace; it's a _____. God has always wanted to save and redeem us from _____. Ezekiel 18:23 says the Lord takes "no _____ in the death of the wicked" but He wants us to "turn from" our sinful ways and live! God is in the saving business. People lose their souls when they _____ against God, or _____ to believe in God, or will not _____ God. God grieves when His people sin. He made and loves you and He doesn't want anybody to be lost.

Some people want the grace of God, but have little _____ in what He teaches or commands. They want a Savior, but not a _____. However, you can't separate Him from His _____. Wanting Him means _____ to what He has to say. First Corinthians 1:21 says, "God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the _____ preached to save those who believe." God saves through a message. **Read what 1 Peter 1:22-23 says.** God saves us through the _____ (Romans 1:16).

If you _____ and are willing to _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God; if you're willing to _____ of your sins; and if you're willing to be _____ into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, you too can be saved and the Lord will add you to His church. Peter told the people to repent and to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). Ananias told Saul of Tarsus to rise and be baptized and wash away your sins (Acts 22:16). That is how a person responds to the grace of God. Won't you repent and be baptized today?

March 27, 2016

Your Destiny James 4:13-17

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

You have a soul that will _____ beyond this life. What is your destiny? The Bible says, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things _____ belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29). God doesn't answer every _____ that we can ask, but God does give us everything that we _____ to know, everything that pertains to life and godliness. If you wish to live with God eternally, you can do nothing more valuable than to _____ God's Word.

Hebrews 9:27 says, "it's appointed for men to _____ once and after this *comes* judgment." From our earliest days we've heard about the Day of Judgment. We've heard about _____ and _____. We know something exists _____ this life, but we don't know everything we'd like to know. Movies and television stimulate our imagination, but they only provide someone's _____ about what lies beyond. We want to know what God says will _____ when we die. That's why we go to God's inspired Word for _____.

Today, we're going to talk about a very _____ subject, so I want to speak to you personally. I hope that this time will be like two _____ having a heart-to-heart conversation. Life is _____, and death is _____. Even if you're young and healthy, you can't _____ reality. Your death will either open the _____ to the most wonderful experience that you've ever enjoyed or the worst experience that anyone could have. God wants to _____ you, and the Bible gives us the information we need to _____ that blessing.

Our reading today comes from the letter of James 4:13-17.

The word "death" occurs _____ times in the Old Testament and _____ times in the New Testament. Death signifies _____. Physical death separates the _____ from the _____. Spiritual death separates people from _____ and His blessing. The good news is that while death is a separation, it is not the _____ of our existence.

The Bible describes death in James 2:26, "For as the _____ apart from the spirit is dead, so also _____ apart from works is dead." The body is dead without the spirit. But, we're _____ than a fleshly body. We are body and spirit. The body _____ but the spirit still exists. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, "the dust returns to the _____ as it was, and the spirit returns to _____ who gave it." God is the _____ of spirits according to Hebrews 12:9. Your spirit is not physical or material, and it's not destroyed by a physical _____.

On the cross, Jesus told the thief, "Truly, I say to you, _____ you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). The Lord clearly says that we'll survive and be conscious _____ this

life. The Lord _____ to see the thief in Paradise. There's an _____ spirit that survives death and is conscious. Life here and now is not _____ there is; there's _____.

Yes, it's appointed for men to die once, and then comes _____. Death holds a lot of _____ for us. The _____, especially judgment, is frightening. We worry whether our after life will be one of _____ or not. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14.** This surprises many who think nearly _____ will be saved and only a few of the worst will be lost, but that's not what Jesus says.

We must consider the afterlife. How we live will determine _____ we will spend eternity. What are we saved by? The shed _____ of Jesus Christ and the _____ of God. What are we saved from? The _____ of sin. **Read what Jesus warned in Matthew 5:29-30.**

The Lord Jesus gives us a _____ of what happens after death in Luke 16:19-31. Let's listen to what He says. "Now there was a _____ man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. And a _____ man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the *crumbs* which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now the poor man died and was carried away by the _____ to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was _____. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in _____, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and he said, 'Father Abraham, have _____ on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and _____ off my tongue, for I am in _____ in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your _____ things, and likewise Lazarus _____ things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great _____ fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and *that* none may cross over from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—in order that he may _____ them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them _____ them.' But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' But he said to him, 'If they do not _____ to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

Many think this story is a _____ or some kind of fanciful story and for that reason shouldn't be taken seriously. But Jesus never speaks about _____ matters. When Jesus uses a figure of speech like a parable, He does so to _____ a point, not to trivialize it.

However one takes this story, people will face _____ very different destinies after they die. One destiny is _____ with comfort and the other with agony. Lazarus and the rich man both _____ where they were. Both could reason and have intelligent conversations. Both could _____ the lives that they lived back on earth.

Sometimes the Bible speaks of death as "_____." This is likely because the physical body after death _____ to be sleeping. This, however, doesn't mean that our _____ are

unconscious or in a stupor. Moses and Elijah, though they had been dead for many _____, had a conversation with the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-5). Death happens to the _____, but death doesn't make our spirits unconscious.

The lives that we live now, whether we're right with the Lord will determine our future _____. The story of Lazarus and the rich man _____ our _____ to what happens when our spirits leave this world. After we die, the angels will come for us to take us to the _____ God has assigned for us. After death comes judgment. This may be a place of _____ or a place of _____.

Scripture uses the word "Hades" to describe the _____. "Hades" literally means "unseen." Hades shouldn't be confused with _____. Hades is a _____ place, where the spirits reside until the Judgment Day; but hell is _____. No one will enter the promised heaven or the eternal hell until _____ the resurrection. Hades is the place where only _____ of dead people reside. At the resurrection, our spirits will return to earth and will be joined to _____, imperishable bodies. Death is the separation of the body and spirit. Resurrection takes place when our spirits are _____ with a changed, imperishable body.

While Hades usually refers to that place of torment, the word can also be applied to the _____ realm, which is divided into both a place of torment and a place of comfort. In Acts 2:27 the apostle Peter _____ David's prophecy in Psalm 16:10 about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He noted that Jesus' soul was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh suffer _____. When Jesus died, his soul went to Paradise according to His statement to the thief on the cross. He said "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

The word Paradise is used _____ times in Scripture and each time refers to that heavenly realm where the righteous go after death. Second Corinthians 12:2-4 says Paradise is equated to the third heaven, that is the place where God _____. Jesus went to that _____ place of righteous spirits where God dwells. And so, the Paradise of God is where the _____ of life is (Revelation 2:7). If Jesus' soul was not abandoned to Hades but He went to Paradise, then Hades must contain a place where righteous souls are _____.

The apostle Paul also _____ us to understand that we will have an existence in spirit form after we die and until the resurrection. **Read what he said in 2 Corinthians 5:6-9.** When the righteous die, they go to be _____ the Lord.

Read what Paul said in Philippians 1:21-23. Paul said he would _____ and _____ "with Christ" when he died. This is the Christian _____, to live with our Lord Jesus forever and ever.

Read the reassurance Paul gives in Romans 14:7-9. We may die physically, but not even death can separate us from the _____ of our Lord Jesus. When Christians die, they go to be with Him that very _____. But when _____ people die, the angels take them to a place of torment.

This is why we must be _____ spiritually. No one else can do that for you. The Bible says, "For we must _____ appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2 Corinthians 5:10). The

saved in Christ go to judgment washed _____ by the blood of Jesus; and their names are recorded in the book of life. They can face the afterlife with confidence that they have an eternal _____ with the Lord. The unbeliever and the impenitent person have no such _____. They must _____ God on their own without their sins being washed away. They will be _____ eternally.

God doesn't want anyone to be _____—He wants everyone to be _____. He wouldn't have sent Jesus to die painfully on a cross if He were looking to _____ everybody. But God won't make people _____ and He won't turn their lives around, and He won't make people believe in Him or love Him. That is your _____. You are a _____ moral agent, and you are deciding whether you will serve Him or you won't serve Him.

God has prepared the way for your salvation in the _____ of His beloved Son, Jesus. By His _____ you are saved. But grace as a gift must be received by _____ and _____. We don't _____ our salvation, but God has determined that those who receive His gracious salvation are people who meet his _____.

The Bible says, "Although He (that is, Jesus) was a Son (that is, a son of God), He learned _____ from the things which He suffered. And having been made _____, He became to all those who _____ Him the source of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:8-9). Your gift of salvation is ready for you if you _____, _____, and are _____. My friend, have you prepared? Death is something that all of us will face one day, and it may come sooner than we think. Are you prepared?

I bought life insurance to _____ my wife and to _____ for my family after I'm gone. I've known people to buy a plot, choose the casket, and arrange the funeral service _____ before the time. How foolish I think it is to be so well prepared for the dying and the death here, but _____ to prepare oneself spiritually for the hereafter. I don't want to be like the five foolish virgins who failed to _____ the oil needed for their lamps. They ran to the dealers to buy oil; and while they were gone, the bridegroom came; and the _____ was shut and they were not allowed in (Matthew 25:1-14). We must _____ now before the time is up.

Don't waste your opportunity to get right with God; once life is over, there isn't any _____ chance. Why not _____ in a new and different direction for your soul's sake and for those you love? Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door and _____. And if anyone _____ my voice and _____ the door, I'll come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

Friend, you can lose your car, your house, your health, or your life and still go to _____. But if you lose your soul, you've lost _____. Make the most important commitment that you'll ever make, that of giving yourself to the Lord by _____ the gospel. Believe in the Lord Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Repent of every sin. Confess the name of Jesus, and be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. When you're baptized, the Bible says in Acts 22:16 that God will wash your sins away. The Lord will add you to His church, and you'll be a child of God with the promise of eternal life. Would you do that?