

Hearing the Gospel

1 Peter 1:22-25

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

God gave us ears to hear, but are we _____? Today we're going to explore the importance of listening to God. We want everyone to _____ and to _____ the Lord. We know that the true way to know the Lord is through a thorough _____ of His Holy Word, the Bible. We can't count on _____ or the _____ of men. We want to hear God _____ for Himself, so we go to the Scriptures.

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. People will stagger from sea to sea, And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find it” (Amos 8:11-12). For many today, there is a _____ for the Word of God. I fear what happened to Israel in the eighth century before Christ is happening _____.

While the Bible is still the number one _____ of all time, and while 82 percent of Americans revere the Bible as sacred literature, they simply don't read it and don't know what it actually teaches. In a recent report by the American Bible Society, 79 percent of the people believe that they are knowledgeable about the Bible, but only 45 percent could _____ the four gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Sadly, many people know very little about God's _____ on sin, the soul, salvation, or the judgment. If we want to live with God eternally in _____ with joy and peace, then we must hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our reading today comes from 1 Peter 1: 22- 25.

Proverbs 1:5 says, “A wise man will hear and increase in _____, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel.” From our earliest days in school, our teachers encouraged us to listen and to follow _____. Listening, really listening, may be one of the _____ tasks of life. We can hear words, but have we _____ to listen and to receive the message that we heard? Have we sought God and treasured up His Words in our _____? The Bible everywhere emphasizes the _____ of listening.

Read what the psalmist sang in Psalm 119:10-16. Some say they don't like _____; I hear that a lot, but the psalmist _____ in the ordinances or rules that God gave. In fact, he set his _____ to delight in them, to store them up, to meditate upon them, and to consider

them significant, so he would not forget them or wander away from them or sin against God. I hope that you _____ the Lord with all your heart and that you love God's Word like that.

Every parent who loves the Lord wants to see his children _____ God's ways and wisdom. **Read what Solomon said in Proverbs 2:1-5.** Solomon knew how important, how utterly important knowing God and His Word was to his children. Do you know? Have you made the Word of God a _____ in your home, mothers and fathers?

The Lord Jesus more than once said, "He who has _____ to hear, let him hear" as He did in Matthew 13:9. In the book of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, we can read seven times: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." God wants and demands to be _____. God spoke from _____ on the Mount of Transfiguration about Jesus. He said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased. Listen to Him" (Matthew 17:5).

Matthew, Mark, and Luke record one of the Lord's parables. Some call it the parable of the _____, and others the parable of the _____. It really describes how _____ respond to the teaching of Jesus. **Read Mark's account of this parable in Mark 4:14-20.**

In this parable, the _____ is the Word of God, the gospel. The first group is like the soil beside the _____. Matthew 13:19 explains, "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and he doesn't understand it, the evil one comes and _____ away what's been sown in his heart. And this is the one on whom the seed was sown beside the _____." Just as the seed never quite breaks into the soil, so the Word never quite breaks the _____ heart. Some never take the word seriously, never believe, and they _____ their opportunity to become Christians.

Read John 1:11-13. Satan came and _____ the Word from them, so they never heard what was necessary for them to know the _____ and so be saved. Many today never have the Word planted in their hearts, never truly hear the gospel, and never know the truth about Jesus.

The Jesus that they _____ they know and the Jesus that is _____ in Scripture are really for them two different people. Why? Because Satan is a deceiver. He doesn't want people to have the truth in their hearts, and so he _____ a mythical Jesus for the real one. This is a Jesus that never _____ them, that's Satan's Jesus; that never _____ anybody, that's Satan's Jesus. Oh, He's very attractive, but He's _____. He's not the Jesus of the New Testament.

Then, there's the rocky soil. These folks hear the message and they believe quickly; but when _____ comes, they fall away because they lack the deep spiritual roots that they need. Their shallow, superficial _____ isn't strong enough to sustain them. They only believe for a while. Trials or persecution cause their faith and their commitment to Christ to

just _____. They heard the good news of salvation, yes; but they didn't _____ it up in their hearts, so they leave their faith behind.

Third, Jesus tells of the _____ soil. They hear the word, but they let other things _____ the Word of God out of their hearts. They have a little _____ in their hearts for God, and a little for His Word, but because of the cares of the world, because of their delight in riches, because of the pleasures of this life which become their focus, the Word of God gets _____.

Read Colossians 3:1-4. That's where our hearts must be, where we must remain if we wish to _____ with Christ in glory. The psalmist said, "With all my heart I have _____ You; do not let me _____ from Your commandments" (Psalm 119:10). We need that way of _____; otherwise we too might have hearts filled with distractions that take us away from God.

The fourth soil is made up of "good and honest _____." Oh, they hear and they _____ the Word. Rather than _____ with God, they accept it and they hold fast to it. In the end they bear _____ with patience, some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold. A good and honest heart is willing to be in subjection to God because God _____ Him and he's willing to be honest about himself. Many hearts _____ to themselves about their need for God or about their need to change and repent. Many hearts would rather argue about what is and is not _____ than really to listen to what God actually says. An honest and good heart will listen to God and make then the needed _____.

God is able to produce fruit in a good and honest heart because His Word is firmly _____ there. If you're not willing to listen to God, God cannot _____ you; but if you're willing to listen, God can do great things in your life! Many want to claim the _____ of God in the Word but they're unwilling to let God's Word be the moral and spiritual _____ in their lives. But you can't have the promises of God if you're unwilling to _____ the rest of what God says. God is God, and we are His _____. We don't _____ more than He does. We're not _____ than He is. We must listen to Him rather than think that we can tell Him what we ought to _____.

Listening to God means that we regard His written Word as the _____ authority. Instead of going with our "gut feelings" or listening to other _____ that are in this world, we're going to listen to Him in the Word. Listening means that we quit trying to _____ what the Bible says, quit trying to remake God in our own image, and quit thinking God is subject to our _____. God is God! He was God before He _____ the world, and He'll be God after this world comes to an end. He doesn't change, and His Word doesn't change. Psalm 119:89 says, "Forever, (forever) O LORD, Your word is _____ in heaven." What was

true when Jesus spoke it in the first century is settled in heaven and has not _____. The Lord Jesus said in John 10:35 that the Scripture cannot be _____. That is, you can't change it; you can't edit it, or dispose of it. It stands _____.

The book of Galatians _____ us that there is one, unchangeable gospel. The gospel of Christ is not a cafeteria, where people can _____ what they want and _____ the rest. No, the Lord determines what the gospel is, and our task is to hear and to be _____. **Read Galatians 1:6-9**. We must _____ the one, true gospel. We must not imagine any other gospel will do.

The one, true gospel _____ to Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, and raised from the dead. **Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.**

Why is all this important? It's important because we can be _____, and frankly many people have been. If we believe a gospel that has been _____ with, we'll be following a lie. We must _____ and _____ the one, true gospel. The Lord Jesus said, "Take _____ what you listen to" (Mark 4:24). A false gospel will only _____ those who follow it. The devil likes to counterfeit the gospel and _____ people. He likes to make people think they are _____ even when they're following a lie. We must be careful not to fall into his _____ and lose our souls. We're going to spend this month looking at what God desires from us to obey that one, true gospel. So, please study with us each week this month.

Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-27. The Lord Jesus _____ a wise man as one who hears and does what He has said. He doesn't _____ to the gospel, or doesn't _____ from it. He doesn't _____ what God has said, or try to rewrite the gospel. He simply _____ and _____ the words he heard. On the other hand, the foolish man hears, but he _____ do what he heard. He does something else. He builds a house yes, but not a house built on the _____ foundation of the Words of Jesus. So, when the time of testing comes, the one who listens and obeys _____, but the one who ignores what he hears and does what he wants to do, that person is going to be _____.

Hear the Lord and obey Him; become a Christian today! Put your _____ in Christ and _____ Him, _____ of your sins, and be _____ into Jesus Christ and into His death. When you're baptized, the Lord will wash away your _____ (Acts 22:16) and He'll raise you up to walk in _____ of life (Romans 6:4). Today is the best day for you to hear the Lord and respond to His message.