

Consider Matthew 7:13-20

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

Can you consider for a moment the possibility that someone has told you something that's _____? We value the truth of God's Word! We want to measure all we believe and practice by the standard of the scriptures. God's living Word is imperishable and will remain forever.

The Lord Jesus lived among people who were heavily burdened by the _____ traditions of the Pharisees. These traditions had numerous _____ that you couldn't read in Scripture. The Pharisees claimed that these traditions came from Moses himself, and were part of an _____ law that was passed down. Sadly, the people believed what they were _____, even though the Lord, Himself, never taught these things. It was simply a tradition of men. People can repeat an appalling _____ for so long that a populace will believe it. People can pass down ideas from one generation to the next until people never imagine that _____ produced it rather than God.

Jesus told these Jews who were caught up in human traditions, "You are of your _____ the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a _____ and the father of lies" (John 8:44). We all can fall to the temptation of believing things that may not be _____. This is why we must study the Word of God! "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be _____, rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). That's what we strive to do! We want to hear what God teaches, we want to believe it, and _____ it.

Today's reading is the Words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7:13-20.

The crafty, old serpent, Satan, loves to plant _____. He did it with Eve in the garden when he asked her the question, "Did God actually say, 'You shall _____ eat of any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you _____.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will _____ surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your _____ will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:1-5). With stealth and evil, Satan _____ doubt into a lie. The woman _____ the lie and ate of the fruit and even urged Adam to eat. Adam knew the truth, but gave way to the _____ of his wife.

First Kings 13 tells of a man of God who _____ out against Jeroboam and Israel. God told him that he was to neither _____ bread nor _____ water on his trip and that he was to return by a different way. There was an old prophet who _____ this man of God, telling him that God had spoken to him and he was to come to his house to eat and drink; but the old

prophet lied to him. When the man of God listened to the lying prophet, he _____ God and was punished for it. We must be _____ about what we hear. First Thessalonians 5:21-22 says, “but _____ everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” What God says matters.

Jeremiah 23 tells of false prophets who _____ to speak for God. “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with _____ hopes. They speak visions of their own _____, not from the _____ of the LORD’” (Jeremiah 23:16). Then Jeremiah explains, “I did not _____ the prophets, yet they ran; I did not _____ to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my _____ to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds” (Jeremiah 23:21-22).

Does truth really matter? Yes! Jeremiah 23:32 says, “Behold, I am _____ those who prophesy lying dreams, declares the LORD, and who tell them and lead my people _____ by their lies and their recklessness, when I didn’t send them or charge them. So they do not _____ this people at all, declares the LORD.” Believing a lie will not be of any _____ to you. It may soothe your conscience today, but it may _____ you tomorrow. You cannot bury the truth deep enough that it will not surface again!

The Lord Jesus said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by _____ word that comes from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4). We need God’s Word to live spiritually; we need to hear it, to believe it, to love it, to memorize it, and to practice it. Nothing else will assure us that we are truly _____ with God. Feelings will fade; human traditions will wilt; false gospels will fail; and false promises will fall short. The Lord Jesus said, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be _____ up” (Matthew 15:13). That’s God speaking, not my opinion!

The New Testament lists several prophecies of men _____ away from the truth and believing a lie. The Lord Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their _____” (Matthew 7:15-16). He explains in verses 21 to 23, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who _____ the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works and we did that in your name?’ I’ll declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’” Lawlessness takes place when people go outside the Word of God and follow their _____ ways and their own desires. You cannot ignore the will of God and please Him at the same time.

Read what the apostle Paul warned the elders of the church at Ephesus, Acts 20:28-32. One of the strategies of the devil, is to _____ the truth just enough to deceive people. Of course, when people follow the devil they _____ the ways of God. **Also, read what Paul warned the young man Timothy about false teachers in 1 Timothy 4:1-3.** Some people

have no conscience; they will deceive the unsuspecting; and they'll lead them into _____ that God never commanded nor wanted.

Paul was concerned that the truth _____ through the generations. **Read Paul's challenge to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-4.** I'm amazed at how some have bought into religious and secular myths that have no _____ in Scripture.

Where in Scripture does it teach someone other than Jesus is _____ of the church? Where is sprinkling taught for _____? Where is _____ baptism ever mentioned? Where are the instruments of music in Christian _____? Where is evolution? Where is purgatory? Where do you read of _____? Where is Ash Wednesday? Where are women preachers or women bishops? Where are the prophecies of _____ prophets? Where do you find salvation by faith _____ or once saved, always saved? There are many other things just like this. If they are not in Scripture, they are humanly produced, and destined to be uprooted.

Read what the apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 2:1-3.

Jude, the brother of Jesus, wrote, "Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to _____ for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who _____ the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 3-4). God gave us the faith only _____, and He did it in the first century. He wants us to contend for our faith, and this is to show why what we believe is true and why what is false is wrong.

When Paul faced some Jewish Christians who were trying to bind the Law of Moses and circumcision on Gentile Christians, he said: "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to _____ the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel _____ to the one that we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9). The truth matters! When people preach something other than what God teaches, they put their _____ at peril.

The inspired apostle John faced opposition as well. He wrote, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works" (2 John 7-11). Abiding in God's Word, staying in the Word, keeps us _____ with God; but when we go beyond the Word, beyond the Bible—whether it's this specific teaching

about Jesus coming in the flesh, or some other essential doctrine, we _____ to have a relationship with God. Don't support something that's false.

No one likes to _____ he or she has been deceived, but the devil has been a deceiver and a pretender for a very long time. Paul faced some _____ apostles in his day, and there are pretenders today as well! He wrote, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of _____. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds" (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). They'll be lost. If you wish to keep from being deceived, my friend, study, study, study the Scriptures, study thoroughly! The Scriptures are a _____ to our path to keep us from straying into error and falling for a counterfeit religion.

Why does this matter? When people stray from the truth, they want everyone to _____ with them, and then they try to justify themselves. They'll teach others, who teach others. As time passes, later generations never even consider the possibility that they've followed someone into _____. Lies that are passed down through the ages can be the most dangerous, because by this time the deceived will swear that they believe the _____. The devil laughs, because he's fooled them. He's hidden the truth and _____ their souls. When that happens, the Lord weeps. The Lord wants all people to be _____ and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding." We want nothing _____ and nothing _____. We must hold to the truth found in God's Word. We need to be like the Bereans! Acts 17:11 says, "Now these Jews were more _____ than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures _____ to see if these things were so." Have you checked what the Word of God says? Have you examined what you believe and practice? Have you compared those things to God's Word? You might be surprised at how _____ you are to the faith once delivered to the saints. Can you consider for a moment the possibility that you believe something _____?

The Lord Jesus promised, "If you _____ in my word, then you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you _____" (John 8:31-32). Don't settle for anything less or more than the _____. Don't ignore what God says and don't add to what God says. Simply _____ and _____ the Word of God!

To become a Christian you must believe and confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God. You must leave sinful ways and embrace the Lord's way. There is no salvation without repentance. When out of love you have repented and confessed, obey the Lord by being baptized in water for the forgiveness of your sins. Peter told the guilt-stricken people at Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). When you're baptized, God washes away your sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and He adds you to the church.