

**A New Spirit
Romans 6:16-18**

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

Do you ever wish that you could start over and _____ your past behind? Today, we're going to talk about what God can do to give you a _____ start. God, the Father, is the God of _____ and _____. He's the one who causes us to be born again to a _____ and _____ life. We don't have to be enslaved to _____ and feel ashamed of ourselves. The greatest _____ to our self-respect doesn't come from our appearance, or our education, or our health. No! What _____ our self-respect arises from sin. We lose respect for ourselves when we realize that we're the kind of person who could do _____ things. God offers a way to _____ and to have a clear conscience, which gives us peace and hope!

Even though some people _____ like there's no such thing as sin, they must live with their choices in life and the sin that corrupts the heart and mind. Titus 1:15 says, "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled." A defiled conscience _____ and makes one feel small and unworthy. Even those who don't know God know the _____ of a guilty conscience.

Since we cannot go back and change the past, God has provided the way of forgiveness that allows us to overcome our past and to set a _____ course in life. We don't have to _____ enslaved to bad habits and evil ways that condemn us. God can set us _____ from sin and _____ the way to heaven, to peace of mind, and to self-respect. If you look in the mirror and you don't like what you see, God offers you forgiveness and the opportunity to be born again with a _____ conscience!

Our reading today comes from Romans 6:16-18.

There's a Native American fable about a young brave who happened upon a nest of golden _____ eggs. Deciding to have some fun, he took one of the eggs and he placed it in the nest of some prairie _____. The egg hatched and the changeling eagle grew up with the brood of prairie chickens. Believing himself to be _____ everyone else around him, the eagle behaved accordingly. He clucked and cackled and scratched in the _____ for seeds and insects to live on. He never flew more than a few feet off the ground since prairie chickens don't _____ any higher. Time passed and one day the young eagle was scratching along with one of his older prairie chicken brothers when a fleeting _____ passed over them. They looked and saw, high in the sky, the soaring form of something _____ on the currents of the wind. "What a beautiful bird!" the young eagle exclaimed. "That's an eagle," the older brother informed him, staring upward. "A golden eagle. And he's the _____ of the air. No bird can _____ with him." Then he lowered his gaze and added, "But don't give it a second thought; you could _____ be like him." Back to scratching they went. Indeed, the young eagle _____ gave another thought to that soaring sight. According to the fable, he _____ as he _____, never rising any higher than a

prairie chicken.

Tragically, we see this same story repeated in too many lives. The devil whispers in our ear, “You _____ change. You’ll _____ be what you are now.” My friend, that’s a terrible lie; it steals our _____. If I could stand on the highest hill and speak with the loudest voice, I would tell everyone you can change! Frankly, people change every day!

The Bible gives us opportunity and hope that we can _____. When Paul spoke to a group of Stoics and Epicureans, philosophers in Athens who knew nothing about God, he urged them to repent. Paul said, “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will _____ the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31).

Repentance is not a punishment or impossibly _____ to do, though it’s sometimes difficult. Repentance provides an opportunity to _____ what we long to be. Repentance is a change of heart that _____ to a change in behavior. The more one loves and trusts the Lord, the more _____ he is to change his life. Love for God and for others is a powerful motivator to do what is _____. When we consider our sins and how Jesus suffered for us, it causes us to grieve over sin. That grief also leads us to _____ our ways. Second Corinthians 7:10 says, “godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and without regret.” When I grieve over sin and want to do right, I don’t regret changing and leaving the _____ life behind.

The Bible emphasizes our opportunity to become _____. This newness is not just a new point in time; it’s also a point of _____. It is new and different with different promises and different results. We can change, and we know from Scripture that people caught up in sin changed their _____. **Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.**

How do we become new? First, our spiritual life begins with a new _____. John 1:11-13 says Jesus “came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were _____, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Jesus spoke of this new birth to Nicodemus in John 3:3-5. Jesus said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the _____ of God.” Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is _____? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of _____ and the _____ he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” The new birth is a birth of water and the Spirit; this refers to being _____ into Christ Jesus.

Second, because we are born again, we have a new _____ of life. Through repentance, I _____ to sin; and through baptism, the Father buries and raises me up with Christ to walk in _____ of life. **Read Romans 6:3-7.** I’m no longer a _____ to sin and no longer living like I used to live. I have a new life in and with Christ.

God gives me this new life. The Bible says, “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through _____ in the powerful working of God, who raised him

from the dead. And you, who were _____ in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made _____ together with him, (that is, with Jesus) having forgiven us all our trespasses” (Colossians 2:12-13). God takes a person dead in sin and makes him alive by _____ him with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. Oh, we truly are raised up in baptism to _____ in newness of life.

Third, when a person has a new life, he is a new _____. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation (a new creature). The _____ has passed away; behold, the _____ has come.” When one is a new creature, all the old life is _____! Paul explains, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the _____ of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, (God works on us) created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10). As new creatures, we have been _____ by God in Christ for good works rather than the old ways of sin. Paul said, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer _____ who live, but _____ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by _____ in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Faith in Christ changes everything!

God promises us that we can have a new _____. God said through the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 18:31-32, “Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no _____ in the death of anyone who dies, declares the Lord GOD. Therefore, repent and live.” Our new heart and spirit now loves God; it _____ God reverently; and it wants to do God’s will. When you have such a heart you no longer _____ to obey, but rather you _____ to obey. With a new heart, you don’t see God’s commands as something that you ‘ought to do’ but something that you ‘get to do,’ and ‘want to do.’

Fourth, as new creatures we have a new _____! Christians are described, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous _____. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Peter 2:9-10). God doesn’t see us the _____ now that we’re in Christ, and we don’t see ourselves the same way. Everything is changed.

Fifth, with a new identity we also have a new _____. Philippians 3:20-21 says, “But our citizenship is in _____, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform (change) our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the _____ that enables him even to subject all things to himself.” As children of God, we are citizens of heaven. We have the hope of everlasting life. That is our _____ and our _____: to love God.

So, no matter who you are, you can repent and you can change. God will _____ you make those changes in your life. “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised” (2 Corinthians

5:14-15). Love motivates us to change our lives and to live _____ lives.

John said, “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be _____ children of God; and so we are. The reason why the _____ does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He (Jesus) appears (when He comes again for the second time) we shall be _____ Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus _____ in Him purifies himself as He is pure” (1 John 3:1-3). That’s what I hope for each of you. I hope first of all you’ll see the love of God and that will make you want to live _____ and _____ lives. I hope that you will give up a way that makes you ashamed and start living a life that you know _____ your Creator and your Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:1-4 makes this promise, “If then you have been raised with Christ, _____ the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on _____. For you have died, and your life is _____ with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in _____.” Hope gives the _____ to purify our lives and our souls. When we begin looking to things above, our life will _____. Our desires and our values will change. We’ll wonder how we could have _____ our life with the old ways. We’ll take the greatest _____ in the new life that God has given us. I cannot think of any greater joy than knowing that I am right with God and will live with Him through eternity. What is your joy?

When we tell ourselves “I can never change,” or “That will never happen,” we presume too much and believe too little. We can change! God would not have asked us to _____ if it were not possible. Our own weaknesses tell us we cannot change, and presumptuous thinking says that we’re hopelessly stuck in sin. But, when we _____ the Lord Jesus, God opens closed doors; God takes away the old man of sin; He brings resurrection; He reveals possibilities; God reclaims the lost; God liberates the cursed and possessed; and God changes the unchangeable.

Let’s not sell God short. He can do _____ things in our lives. We can repent and change. We can _____ what God made us to be. David earnestly cried out to God, “Create in me a _____ heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). God heard David’s cry, _____ his sin, and gave him that clean _____. Do you need a clean heart and a right spirit?

Having a clean heart starts with _____ in Jesus Christ, who died for you so that you can have the forgiveness of sins. A look at the cross will cause you to love the Lord Jesus, to trust in Him, and to turn away from sin. You can’t change your life without faith in Christ, and you can’t have a new life until you _____ of your sins. Once you have confessed your faith and repented, you’re ready to be _____. In baptism, the Lord causes you to be born again, added to His family, the church. In baptism, that’s an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ, God washes away your sins (Acts 22:16). If you want a clear conscience and you love the Lord, be baptized into Christ. Don’t wait!