

August 27, 2017

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?