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*Program
Study Guides*

For

December 2015

The Battle For Your Soul **Ephesians 6:10-13**

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

You may not realize it, but you—yes you—are in a serious _____ battle. Today we're going to talk about the battle for our _____. We pray that the Lord's will may be _____ on earth as it is in heaven. This means we must take the time to _____ the will of the Lord by a serious and sincere study of the Word of God, and we must _____ what it teaches. Psalm 119:1-3 says, "Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who _____ in the law of the LORD! Blessed are those who _____ his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!" We want God to bless us, and we know that we must _____ to God if we're to please Him.

We live in a chaotic world with many conflicting voices _____ us to believe this or to do that. The voice of God in Scripture will tell us the _____, while the world's many voices will try to lead us _____ from God. Some voices encourage us to leave our faith and follow the _____. Some will tell us "there is no God," or "the Bible isn't true," or "we're the products of evolution," or "Christians are mean." Others will tell us that our _____ don't matter. If we believe the _____ that the world tells, we can be led astray just as Eve was in Genesis 3. We're facing an ideological battle and a _____ battle for our souls. I hope this gets your _____! Whether we believe and follow Christ or believe a lie and follow the world will determine how God will deal with us in _____. Are you committed to Christ? Are you listening to His Word? Are you winning or losing the battle for your soul?

Our reading today comes from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians 6:10-13.

We're at war with the _____; and he's a formidable opponent. He's had many centuries to exploit human weaknesses so that he can lead us into sin and _____ us. This battle is a _____ one, like hand-to-hand combat between two soldiers. At the end of such a fight in ancient times, one soldier was standing and the other was _____. This battle is like a wrestling match where two people are personally involved eye to eye. You cannot _____ this battle off to somebody else; you must _____ the devil yourself. He has watched you and he _____ your strengths and weaknesses. He'll use every _____ he knows to defeat you. He has no qualms about cheating, lying, or using dirty tricks to _____. He's serious about defeating you and he intends to _____.

This spiritual battle isn't just for your _____; it's for your soul and the souls of your loved ones. It's the most _____ conflict that you'll ever face. If you're not _____ that you're in a fight, you will surely lose. If you don't have the _____ to fight, you will most certainly lose. If you're not _____ to fight, you cannot win. If you fight but you don't give it _____ that you have, you can still lose your soul. Your enemy, the devil, will do anything,

anything, to _____ your soul. If that means trickery, he'll lie and he'll _____ God's Word to suit his purposes.

Read how the apostle Paul particularly warned Christians to hold to the truth in 2 Corinthians 4:2-4.

The devil _____ people to the truth, so they'll believe a lie and be lost. When people leave the Word, they leave the truth. So, the devil twists and tampers with the _____. To _____ with the Word of God is to distort it or make it appear false by deception. Satan tampers with the Word to make it _____ something that it doesn't actually say. The person who uses God's Word cunningly just to _____ his agenda is in Paul's eyes disgraceful and underhanded.

Scripture reveals how Satan's schemes follow a common _____. If we understand the way that he operates, we can _____ for Satan's challenges. Satan, first, loves to ask questions that create _____ in the Word of God. In the Garden of Eden, the devil asked Eve, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" (Genesis 3:2). Satan knew what God had said; he wasn't asking the question to _____ the truth or to do the will of God. Rather he asked the question to _____ doubt in God! He wanted Eve to _____ God. Doubting the truth is the first step to _____. The devil will always give you all the _____ you should not do the will of God. He wants you to forget doing things God's way, and to think for yourself, and to do what you think is _____ for you. He wants you to think you know _____ than God.

Satan, second, _____ what God says. When Eve told Satan that she would die if she ate of that fruit or even touched it, the devil said, "you shall surely _____ die" (Genesis 3:4). The devil has no qualms about lying to achieve his _____. Satan always wants people to place their confidence in him, not God. Satan claims that God has _____ you, but he knows what is really true. This desire to know Satan's secrets and to be one of the _____ has led many unfortunate souls down the path to perdition. He appeals to the _____ in people: their flesh, their eyes, and their pride. He makes them feel God is holding them down and _____ them out of some pleasure or some knowledge.

The Lord Jesus told some Jews who followed Satan, "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and doesn't stand in the truth because there's no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). All you have to do to promote a lie is to tamper with the truth just a _____. Rat poison is 98 percent corn meal and only two percent poison. If it weren't mostly corn meal, the rats wouldn't eat it; but two percent of poison is enough to kill the rat. A little _____ can still keep you out of heaven. Buy the truth and do not sell it.

Satan appeals to what you want to _____ and he makes you feel so good. Eve was deceived by Satan's lie. The devil likes to turn things _____ down. He makes what is evil appear good and appealing, and he makes what's good appear evil and ugly. God said, "Woe to those who

call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20). Have you noticed how our world has _____ anything righteous as being wrong, while things that are evil are all of a sudden made attractive and enticing? That's the devil's scheme.

Satan, third, produces an _____ version of "truth." He enticed Eve with these words, "For God knows that when you eat of it (that is, of this fruit) that your eyes will be _____, and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). The devil's alternative _____ truth with error. There is enough truth to _____ persuasive, but his message is full of misrepresentations and distortions. Add it all up and the bottom line is that it's just a _____ lie. Satan wants everyone to believe he has a _____ way, that God is trying to fool you, and that God is not your friend but is cheating you out of something really _____. His strategy is to get people to rely on him for real "_____." His alternative ways sound appealing, but, in the end what they do is to _____ those who follow it.

Satan, fourth, despises and persecutes anyone who _____ him. **Read what Jesus explained in John 3:19-20.** Jesus knew that if the world hated Him, it would also hate his _____ too when they preach the truth about sin. The devil loves to put down the _____ and the truth of the Bible. Peter said, "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, then you're blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you" (1 Peter 4:14). The devil is a _____, but God sees everything and rewards those who follow Him. If you hold to the truth and righteousness, be _____ the devil will despise you and speak evil about you.

Satan, fifth, pretends to be _____. Paul spoke about some deceivers who pretended to be men of God, but they actually served Satan. **Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.** In order to deceive Christians and lead them into his "alternative" churches, the devil _____ to be a Christian leader. There are religions today that pretend to follow the Lord Jesus, but the more you _____ them, the more you realize they're not God's people.

With high-sounding phrases, Satan tries to _____ people that Christianity is like a smorgasbord of ideas, from which you can pick and choose whatever doctrines you like, and throw away the others, of course. There are thousands of denominations in America, each teaching different _____ and wearing different names. It's become popular to follow some man's _____ rather than listen to the Word of God. This is the devil's work. He's the one who provides heresies. Heresies are divisive false teachings that lead people astray and _____ the church.

If you listen to the devil, you'll come to _____ that there's no such thing as heresy, that every view is equally good. When you believe that, you've fallen into the _____ of the devil. He tried to convince Eve to _____ listening to God and to _____ her own reasoning. When people ignore the Bible, the Word of God, and start listening to the beliefs of men, they fall _____ to the devil's schemes. Their eyes become _____ to the truth. God's ways and man's ways are not the _____. You can't ignore God's Word and build your house upon

_____, and expect everything to be all right between you and God. Eve was deceived; she lost sight of God and did what she _____ to do. If we're deceived and lose sight of God and do what we want to do, then we too will have to _____ the consequences of sin.

Number six, Satan _____ on the weak and the ignorant. **Read 1 Peter 5:8-9.** The devil is looking for _____ people who will fall prey to his immoral lifestyle and his disobedience to God. He uses false _____ and false _____ as alternatives to the truth. He whispers to our consciences that we can sin and not be _____ by it. He is deceptive!

No matter how appealing his message is, the devil's _____ is your spiritual death. So... resist him, _____ in your faith. Pay close _____ to the Word of God. Keep your eyes focused on the _____. God hasn't left us _____ to fight the devil. **Read what Paul said in Ephesians 6:13-17.**

These things will help you in your _____ for righteousness. Whenever you have this righteousness, the gospel of peace; when you have faith; when you have salvation; and when you have the Word of God, this _____ will protect you from the devil's weapons; the sword of the Spirit, God's Word, is a formidable weapon. It has the _____ that pierces hearts and souls. The best thing that you can do is to _____ Satan, and to do it you've got to know the Word of God. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by _____ word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Oh, how we need the Word of God and nothing else; nothing else will do.

When people follow their own desires rather than listen to and obey God, the devil _____ and they _____. My friend, what about you? Is the devil tricking you? If the Lord and His Word doesn't _____ in your life, you'll have a _____ who lies to you to take your soul away. If you follow the devil, he'll take you where you don't _____ to go. Let Jesus be Lord of your life. To get right with God and to overcome the devil, you need the Lord's _____. You can't win by your _____ strength. When Christ is in you and you are in Him, He'll give you the help and the strength that you need to overcome Satan. Ephesians 6:10-11 says, "Finally, be _____ in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to _____ firm against the schemes of the devil."

To become a Christian, _____ with all your heart that Jesus is the Son of God, our Savior and the risen Lord. Out of love, _____ of every sin and start living as God teaches. Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Be _____ or immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins will be forgiven. Galatians 3:26-27 says, "For you are all sons of God through _____ in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were _____ into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Live the Christian life. Get involved at church. The closer you are to God, the easier it becomes to _____ the devil. Do it for yourself, and do it for those that you love. Your strong faith will lead others to place their faith in the Lord as well. Don't let another day go by till you have made your life right with the living God. Why not be obedient to Him today?

Designed by God Psalm 139:13-16

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

Is this world designed by an intelligent and loving _____, or have we come into being by accident or chance? Is there _____ of an intelligent designer, or did we evolve from non-living matter? Since the Bible is divine in origin, it teaches us the _____. We want nothing _____ and nothing _____ than the truth. We “buy the truth” and aren’t willing to _____ it.

A person’s _____ of the beginning affects his whole outlook on life. We must all deal with questions such as: Who am I? Where did I come from? Does my life have a _____? Am I of any _____? What we believe about our _____ will determine how we see ourselves and our place in life. If we consider ourselves merely as a complex _____, which evolved from a one-celled creature, we’ll have a pretty uncertain view of life. But if we consider ourselves unique individuals made in the image of God with an _____ destiny, then there is great reason and meaning to our existence.

Charles Darwin taught that man _____ over time from other species through the process of natural selection or what is better known as “survival of the fittest.” A biologist who followed Darwin’s thinking said, “man is the _____ of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind.” The Bible, however, teaches in Genesis 1 that God _____ the world and all of the creatures within it. Male and female, they were to reproduce after their own kind. God specifically says in verses 26 and 27 that He made man in His own _____ and gave him dominion over all the earth. These views are very far apart and cannot both be _____. So, what we believe about how we came to _____ makes a great difference in how we see ourselves.

Our reading today comes from Psalm 139:13-16.

Genesis 1:1 says: “In the beginning God _____ the heavens and the earth.” The word “created” means “to call into being something that _____ previously existed.” God simply _____ and something came into existence. God created the _____ and everything that’s in it, every plant and every animal. Last, He created _____ in His own image. The Bible says, “By _____ we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible” (Hebrews 11:3).

Believing God intelligently created the world and everything in it is not a _____ leap of faith. It’s built on _____ all the order and purpose that’s evident in the world. Proverbs 3:19 says: “The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens.” God purposefully _____ the world and all His creatures with wisdom and understanding. The more we study this world and the human body, the more we realize the _____ and the _____ that God put into everything that He made.

But those who _____ faith in God suggest a different way to explain the existence of life. Some claim that life _____ from non-living matter; but if we rule out God, then the origin of life is a _____. It’s a great _____ of faith to assume that life could come from non-living matter. They think there was a gradual development of complex molecules from the basic elements until they finally became molecules that could reproduce themselves and are assumed to be living.

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Evolutionists once spoke of the primordial soup that spawned life, but many now question that since they learned of how _____ life really is. The basic building blocks of life are proteins that make up our DNA. The DNA provides the information or intelligence _____ to reproduce the proteins which give us life. Each protein is quite complex. It doesn't just _____. Protein molecules are made up of a complicated _____ of amino acids that are ordered by the various genes in our DNA. Sir Fred Hoyle, one of England's prominent scientists, _____ that the chance of higher life-forms emerging accidentally from non-living matter is comparable to a tornado making a Boeing 747 jet out of a junkyard.

Living cells use over 75 special kinds of proteins and RNA molecules to make _____ protein following DNA's instruction. What we know about airplanes convinces us that their flight is the result of _____ design. What scientists know about the way living cells make protein suggests just as clearly that life also is the _____ of creative design.

In 2004 prominent British philosopher and proponent of atheism, Professor Antony Flew, _____ his atheism. Why? He said because "the argument to intelligent design is enormously _____ than it was when I first met it. It now seems to me that the findings of more than fifty years of DNA research have provided materials for a new and enormously powerful argument to _____." Flew had to admit he "had to go where the evidence _____," and that's to believe in a Creator.

Evolutionists once believed that man had vestigial organs, body parts that _____ all or most of their original function. There were supposed to be _____ such vestigial organs in humans. This list included such things as the tailbone and the appendix, even parts of the ear and eye. Now, that list is almost _____. Medical science discovered that these organs played essential _____ and were not "useless."

What these organs teach us is that God had a special _____ behind everything that He has made. **Read Psalm 139:13-15.**

Evolution, according to Darwin, is in a continual state of _____, with gradual change happening over long periods of time. He believed the fossil record should be filled with _____ of transitional forms from one species, or one kind of animal into another; these forms go from less complex to more complex. But paleontologists didn't _____ these transitional forms. They found _____ in the fossil record. There was no evidence of transformational intermediates _____ documented fossil species

Many people forget the number of hoaxes that evolutionists have posed to _____ their theory. They put forth "missing links" between _____ and men. They believed the fossil records would show how one _____ of animal evolved into another, but none of the fossils ever showed a transitional link between one creature and another.

Instead of gradual change as evolutionists expected, what they found were sudden appearances of _____ species and the overlapping in time of species. One evolution scientist, S. M. Stanley, admits, "Species that were once thought to have turned into others have been found to _____ in time with these alleged descendants. In fact, the fossil record does not convincingly document a _____ transition from one species to another."

The first fossil hoax was Java Man found in 1891. Evolutionists said they found a missing _____; and what was the evidence? They found a skullcap, three teeth, and a femur or thigh-bone. They found the thigh-bone 50 feet from the skull a year later, and it didn't come from the same individual. The skull came from an ape, while the leg bone came from a human.

Second, Neanderthal man was found in France in 1908. Neanderthal man was thought to be ignorant, ape-like, stooped and knuckle-dragging. But the evidence proved that Neanderthal man was just as

_____ as we are, and his stooped appearance was because of arthritis and rickets. Neanderthals are now recognized as skilled hunters, who believed in after-life, and even were skilled surgeons.

Third, there's Piltdown Man who was found in 1912 in a village named Piltdown in England. It was no missing link; it was merely an _____ human. The evidence came from a human skull and a jawbone of an orangutan. This deception lasted forty years before it was proven to be a hoax.

Fourth, there is Nebraska Man who was found in 1992 in western Nebraska near Snake Brook. Some scientists said this was the missing _____ until they discovered the fossil was only the single tooth of an extinct wild pig.

Fifth, there is 'Lucy,' this is the popular name given to a famous fossil skeleton found in 1974 in Ethiopia by American anthropologist Donald Johanson. To many, Lucy is regarded as a certain link between ape-like creatures and man and supposedly proves evolution. But "Lucy" was not human at all; she was a chimp-like animal, very _____ from humans.

Rather than look to fossils for imaginary missing links, perhaps we should look to the amazing _____ that's right in front of us. This purposeful design all around us argues for an intelligent designer. That designer is _____. He's the only one with the unlimited power and wisdom to _____ us. Revelation 4:11 says, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

Microbiologists tell us of the utter complexity of a single, living _____. Benjamin Miller and Ruth Goode said, "The cell has been likened to a power plant, a furnace, a chemical laboratory. In its reproductive functions, it's been described as a factory complete with manager's office, files of blueprints and plans, intercommunication system, assembly line with foremen and workers."

They said, "None of these fanciful analogies does _____ to the living cell. All of these man-made systems put together, however ingenious and efficient, could not reproduce the functioning of this single unit of _____ that's too small to be seen with the unaided eye." My friend, Wayne Jackson, in his book, *The Human Body—Accident or Design?*, asks, "If the living cell is more 'ingenious' than any 'man-made system,' who made it? Are we to conclude it just _____? That's wholly illogical."

The human body is an engineering _____. It's indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. We have trillions of cells in our bodies, and they're marvelously designed and show their _____. For instance, the human red-blood cells are saucer-shaped and fairly flat, permitting the transfer of oxygen and carbon dioxide throughout the body. Nerve cells, on the other hand, "have long, thin extensions to transmit messages." Hebrews 3:4 says, "For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God." These exceptionally complex cells didn't just _____! God designed and _____ them for their functions. And only a _____ God could make them!

Charles Darwin in the *Origin of Species* said, "If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory (that is, the theory of evolution) would absolutely break down." Then he added, "But I can find _____ such case." However, on page 167 of the *Origin of Species*, Darwin spoke of the eye and said, "To suppose that the eye...could have formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, _____ in the highest degree possible." Even then, Darwin _____ himself. He did not know in 1859 what we know today about the eye.

You are watching me because God gave you _____ and you are listening because God gave you _____. Bioengineer John Lenihan said, "The eye is an exceptionally sensitive optical instrument

displaying many striking _____ of design and performance; even the windscreen washers and wipers (that is, in your eye) have not been forgotten.”

Your eye can see moving images by the thousands as they _____. Your eye makes adjustments to the amount of _____, to distance, and to angle automatically. Every camera we own was patterned after the eye. Wayne Jackson argues, “If the function of the camera demands that it was ‘made,’ doesn’t it stand to _____ that the more complex human camera, the eye, must also have had a Maker?”

Likewise, the ear is a marvel. Using membranes like the eardrum, small bones, muscles that amplify the sound inside your ear, and 25,000 auditory receptors, the brain is able to receive these vibrations and interpret whether they come from thunder, or a voice, or from thousands of other tones that we hear.

One authority says, “Amazingly, the inner ear, although no bigger than a _____, contains as many circuits as the telephone system of a good-sized city.” Can you believe that a city’s telephone system could design _____ or just happen by accident? Your ear is far more sophisticated than this microphone that I’m wearing. Did this microphone just happen or did someone make it?

You’re watching me because God gave you a _____ that can understand sights and sounds. How did material things by themselves ever _____ consciousness? How did we ever become _____ of ourselves and of other things around us? How did material things by themselves ever produce _____? Language demands the organization of _____ and symbols that are understood by more than one mind. How did language _____ from one person to another? You’re listening and reasoning about what I am saying. How did you gain the _____ to reason? Where did your _____ of right and wrong come from? Surely you didn’t get that from material things.

The Bible says, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20). Let’s be _____ for all God has done in giving us this marvelously designed world and life. Every bone, muscle, organ, and tissue _____ that God made us in His image.

The fossil record doesn’t give us any “missing links” or intermediate forms showing the _____ from one species to another. The body itself shows us an incredible _____ of design. These facts make it reasonable to believe that we’ve been created, not products of _____ selection. It takes _____ more faith to believe that non-living matter produced life than it does to believe in God. It takes far more faith to believe a reptile could gradually become a bird than it does to believe in _____. It takes far more faith to believe an eye or an ear were accidents of nature than to believe God designed them.

This world contains everywhere the _____ of an all-powerful and all-wise Designer, and that Designer is the one and only God. He is your God. He made you, gave you life, loves you, hears your prayers, and wants you to live with Him in _____ for eternity. You can learn all about Him in the _____. He gave us this precious book to _____ our most important questions of life. It’s the _____ book that will tell you where we came from, why we’re here, and what will happen to us after we die.

To enter into a spiritual relationship with the Lord, _____ in Him with all your heart, turn away from sin and follow His Word, _____ the name of Jesus as the Son of God, and out of love be _____ into Christ. When you’re immersed into Christ, you’re baptized into His death. At that time the Lord will _____ away your sins by His blood (Acts 22:16) and He will add you to His church.

Nothing you can do is more important than getting into a right relationship with the One who created you. We hope you'll do that today, and let us know about it.

Why Jesus Came John 1:14-18

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

No one knows _____ when Jesus came into the world, but today we're going to learn from Jesus' own Words and from other Scriptures the reason _____. For centuries people have celebrated the _____ of Jesus, some during December and others in January, even though no one really knows what month Jesus was born. The Bible doesn't instruct us to celebrate the birth of Christ; this is merely a _____ of men. Though we don't know the time of His birth, we're so grateful that He _____ us enough to make Himself known to us as the Son of God. He gave us hope, forgiveness, love, peace, and eternal life. I'm so thankful that the Scriptures _____ us about Him.

Our God got involved! He didn't _____ us and stay in heaven. Our God didn't leave us _____ to wonder where we came from, why we're here, or what will happen to us when we die. We have Jesus who came to _____ and to _____ the lost!

If Jesus had remained in the carpenter's _____, we'd have never known Him. However, Jesus became the _____ of the world. His sacrifice on the cross for our sins touches each of us and offers us _____ and eternal _____. His sterling example challenges us to live holy lives of _____ to make the world a better place. His teaching _____ us to be more giving, more loving, and more kind. Because He forgave us, we also _____ how to forgive others. He brought Jew and Gentile together; He is indeed the Prince of _____. We thank God that Jesus came into the world!

Our reading today comes from The Gospel According to John 1:14-18. Read John 1:1-4. The Word was God, and He is _____. He's always been and will always be. There's never been a time when the Word, that is Jesus, didn't _____. He came into the world to bless us with _____ and _____, and we can be thankful for that.

To find out what God is like, _____ Jesus. Jesus is indeed Immanuel, "God _____ us" (Matthew 1:23). What do we see when we look at the life of Christ? We see God's _____ and glory. He had power over nature, sickness, sin, and death. We see amazing love, meekness, gentleness, holiness, justice, compassion, grace, mercy, loving-kindness, anger at sinful behavior, patience, and authority. We see God calling us to _____ and to do His will.

The Bible says, "And the Word became _____, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Jesus has always been Divine, but He became flesh and dwelt among us. The word for "dwell" has the idea of pitching a _____, that is, a temporary dwelling place. Since our flesh is temporary, Jesus became one of us and took on temporary flesh. Jesus felt pain, got hungry and thirsty, grew tired, and

experienced physical _____. We see His glory in that in spite of the fact that He was God, He was willing to _____ Himself to bless us.

Jesus, as God's Son, was still full of two divine characteristics: first, _____; and second, _____. The Bible says, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was _____, yet for your sake he became _____, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). The Lord Jesus humbled himself and became _____ to His Father's will. He did this to save us from _____ and to give us life. This is amazing grace!

First Timothy 1:15-16 says, "It's a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to _____ sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." Jesus came to save every person who comes to Him in _____ and _____ His will. He is patient with us and gives us an opportunity to make _____ in our lives.

Out of grace and love for us, Jesus came to do the _____ of God. Hebrews 10:4-7 says, "For it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when Christ comes into the world, He said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not _____, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.' And then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is _____ of me in the scroll of the book.'"

When Jesus _____ at Gethsemane, "Not my will but Yours be done," He was saying to His Father that He was willing to drink the cup; that is, to _____ on the cruel cross. Such grace and such _____ is astounding! The Bible says that Jesus 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).

You remember that Scripture that we _____ when we were children. John 3:16-17 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten (or His only one of a kind) Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus are in the saving business. Jesus didn't come into the world to _____, but to save the world from the evil that _____ brings. The Lord knew that we needed saving from sin and a path away from a sinful life. He _____ us and showed us the way out of evil. He lived a sinless life and showed us how to _____ and how to _____.

The book of Galatians says that those who practice the works of the flesh or sin "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21). But Christ came to _____ us out of that evil, fleshly life to a better life. Verses 22 to 24, the next verses, say, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; and against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." Jesus came to show us a _____ way of living than that old sinful way that hurts everybody.

The Lord Jesus didn't merely come to give life, but to give it in _____. The Lord said, "The thief comes only to steal and to kill and destroy; but I came that they may have _____, and have *it* abundantly" (John 10:10). The life that Christ gives lifts people up, and gives them _____, gives them _____, gives them _____, and teaches them to _____. First John 4:19 says, "We love, because He first loved us." We're transformed into new people by the _____ of Christ. He gives us new life and a chance to start fresh as _____ people.

The grace of God not only saves; it also _____ and trains us. **Read Titus 2:11-14.** God's grace turns cold _____ into warm ones. It turns people who were once foolish and ungodly, and had those desires that were ungodly, into people who _____ sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age. Their hearts don't wallow in the _____ and ugly life that they used to live. They're now _____ of that life. They think about the coming of Jesus and live to _____ other people. They look for opportunities to do _____ deeds. Wherever it goes, the grace of God enlarges people's hearts and _____ their lives to become compassionate and righteous.

The Lord doesn't leave people in the _____ condition where He found them. God shows them what they can _____ in Christ Jesus! Jesus Christ first gave us grace to save us from sin and second, he gave us the _____ to teach us how to live this victorious and abundant life! Jesus graciously tells us the spiritual truths that we _____ to hear, not simply stories that we _____ to hear. God had only one Son, and He was a _____. He gave us the truth that sets us _____ (John 8:32). Jesus showed a great sense of _____ to preach repentance and truth to people.

The Bible _____ this urgency. **Read Luke 4:42-44.** So, He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea. The Lord Jesus wanted everyone to _____ His message. He spoke to anyone who was willing to _____. To God every person is important. Jesus wants to save every soul.

Read Mark 2:16-17. Jesus came to make a difference in people's spiritual lives, to help the spiritually _____ become _____. Jesus knew that both grace and truth were _____ to make a difference!

Jesus came to bring the _____ (John 1:17). In fact, Jesus could say to His disciples, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; and no one _____ to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6). We can know the truth by listening to Jesus Christ. In John 18:37, Pontius Pilate asked Jesus, "'So You are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.'" Whose _____ are you listening to? Where are you turning for spiritual truth? I hope you're listening to Jesus by _____ the Scriptures.

If you want to know what is spiritually true, _____ what Jesus said. Read the _____ of Jesus in the New Testament. Learn what He _____. We're hearing many _____ ideas in the religious world today. John said, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see

whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). The very best test of right and wrong; the very best test of truth and error is still _____ in the teaching of Jesus. If the Lord Jesus doesn’t teach it, don’t _____ it. He is the _____ of truth.

Some people think the words highlighted in red in their Bible are the _____ words that Jesus spoke. He certainly said these words, but the _____ of the New Testament also contains the words of Jesus. Jesus made a _____ to the apostles. **Read John 16:12-13.** In fact, _____ of the New Testament comes from the Lord. Every word of it is God-breathed and utterly _____.

I would hate for anyone to miss the _____ of Jesus Christ by missing the _____ of Jesus Christ. These two things, grace and truth, are intertwined; they’re _____ together and they are inseparable. You can’t find the grace of Christ by ignoring His truth, and you can’t find the truth of Christ by ignoring His grace. If we are to _____ the grace and promises of Christ, we must find them in Scripture. Some people want grace from Christ, but they don’t want His _____. You can’t have one without the other. You need both.

Since Jesus came to seek and save the lost, we can have _____. Your salvation in Christ came at a very great _____. You weren’t redeemed by silver or gold, but by the _____ of Jesus. That baby born in Nazareth so many years ago came to earth for the _____ of offering His body on the cross so that we might have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. His birth was marvelous and miraculous, but His death _____ our hearts and our souls. By His _____ we are healed.

Since God raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him on the throne in heaven, far above all rule and authority, wouldn’t it make sense to _____ Him? He came to find you and to _____ you. Will you let Him? He’s inviting you to have an abundant life here on earth and an eternal life in _____. No one has ever loved you to the extent that Jesus loves you. He was willing to _____ the utter pain, humiliation, and punishment of the cross so that your sins might be forgiven.

If you want Jesus as your Savior, you must also take Him as your _____. You must trust Him and _____ what He says is true. If you cannot trust Jesus, but think He’s mistaken in what He teaches on morals or doctrine, how can you trust His _____? You can’t re-write Jesus’ teaching on one point and then trust Him on another point. When you do that, you really don’t believe in Jesus at all. You believe in yourself and in your own _____. God wants us to trust in Jesus Christ in every step and decision we make. When we do, His grace and truth surround us.

Have you come to Christ in faith, repentance, and baptism? Why not come to Him today? Believe in Him with all your heart, turn away from the evils and danger of sin, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Acts 22:16 says, “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.” Won’t you do that today?

I Am Resolved Colossians 3:1-4

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

God has wonderfully given us this _____. What have you _____ with it and what will you _____ with the coming new year? Today we're going to find ways to draw _____ to God. When you consider how much God _____ us, it's only fitting that we give Him the full measure of our love and devotion.

As we think about this past year, let me say _____ to each of you, our viewers. Your encouragement, prayers, and kind words have truly lifted our _____. You've made this year wonderful and we expect nothing but _____ in the coming year! Each day we live is God's _____ to us, and how we use our days is our gift to God. God didn't create us to _____ our lives in things that don't matter. He wanted to _____ us and to be close to us. He wanted us to _____ His love and _____ His grace. He opens His heart to us so that we might have forgiveness of _____ and the peace that passes understanding.

This time of year, people make resolutions or commitments to _____ their lives. Some vow they will lose weight; some change their diet; and some _____ bad habits or start good habits. The best thing we can do to make life _____ is to go back to the basics of drawing close to God. I want to challenge you today to _____ yourself and rebuild your spiritual life if you need to. Build your _____, build your _____, and build your _____! Make this a year of growing _____ to God!

Our reading today comes from Paul's Epistle to the Colossians 3:1-4.

As we think of this year coming to an end, it's fitting for us to examine our _____. Do we _____ the Lord? Do our words and lives _____ Him? Can we say that we're _____ to the Lord today than we were this time last year? **Read 2 Corinthians 13:5-6.**

We first need to honestly look at _____. Let's put aside pretense and look _____ into our hearts. We'll probably _____ things there that we don't like, sinful thoughts and behaviors for which we're ashamed. It's time to put away our pet sins and to _____ from our hearts. Those who are outside of Christ need to become Christians by _____ the gospel; and those who are members of the Lord's church but have strayed away need to come home, asking for forgiveness from the Lord.

Once you've made your soul right with God, and we'll talk about how a little bit later in this program, you need to _____ some spiritually healthy habits. The second thing is to begin _____ your Bible every single day. Sadly, many Christians have _____ read the Bible all the way through. The Bible says, "Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of

the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you've tasted the kindness of the Lord" (1 Peter 2:2-3). Reading the Bible is how we _____ to God, how we come to know Him, and how we learn the way to _____ Him. If you follow the yearly Bible reading guide that we have online at searchtv.org, you can read the whole Bible within one year.

Reading the Bible will build your _____ in Jesus Christ. **Read John 20:30-31.** The more you study God's Word, the _____ your faith will become. Faith still comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, or the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17).

Read Psalm 1:1-3. I hope you understand that God's Word is not merely a _____ to right and wrong; it's also the _____ to blessing. God teaches us what is _____ in order to bless us and to prosper us. God knows what's best, and He gives us the Word to _____ us in the way that brings blessing.

Third, begin _____ again. Pray humbly, fervently, and regularly. First Thessalonians 5:17 says, "pray without _____." This is not suggesting that we pray _____ hours a day; nobody could do that. The Bible here says here we should not _____ praying. Some people quit for days on end. They pray on _____ or when they're with others, but they've ceased praying on their own. Your Father in heaven wants to _____ from you. Don't stop talking to Him.

Jesus, the Son of God, needed _____ with the Father. The Bible says, "But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray" (Luke 5:16). God wants to hear from you, too. You don't have to _____ Him to listen to you. Prayer was God's idea. Some religions think God is too _____ to listen, but God is like a father who _____ about every aspect of His children's lives.

Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:7-11.

Prayer is how we give _____ to the Father. It's how we, as Christians, ask for _____. Prayer is how we seek _____ from the Father for ourselves and for our loved ones. Prayer is how we pour out our _____ to the Father when we're hurting or afraid. Prayer is how we grow intimate with God. If you want to transform your prayer life, take a few _____ before you pray and think about the One to whom you are speaking. You're talking to God, the _____ of the Universe, who made you, loves you, and cares deeply about every aspect of your life.

When you pray, ask in _____. I don't believe in my praying; I believe in God's _____. I believe in the _____ of God who hears my prayers. **Read what the Bible says in James 1:5-8.**

Fourth, start attending _____ regularly. **Read what the Bible says in Hebrews 10:22-25.** We need the _____ of brethren to keep our faith and our love strong. Worshiping God at church regularly keeps our hearts _____ on God. We take the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day to _____ what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross,

sacrificing His body and blood for us. Singing, and praying, and hearing the Word preached helps us to _____ God in our hearts and to learn of all His love. Giving of our means allows us to demonstrate our _____ to God. Worshiping with the church is _____ to keep our faith and our love strong! Oh, how we need to do that!

Fifth, let's live with moral excellence or _____. We don't hear much today about virtue or moral excellence, but God _____ moral purity and righteousness. Living sexually pure lives, paying our bills, keeping our word, and treating others as we wish to be treated, these are all _____ of faith and devotion to God. Christians live godly lives because they love Christ and they want to do what is right.

The Bible urges us, "For this very reason, make every _____ to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge" (2 Peter 1:5). Romans 1:29 teaches us to "Abhor what is evil; and to _____ to what is good." The Bible teaches us to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; _____ from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22).

First John 2:15-17 says, "Do not love the world or the things that are in the world. And if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that's in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." How we live matters to our souls because _____ is offensive to God; it's always been offensive to God, so let's live as people who love God and show it by our _____ lives.

Number six, let's imitate Jesus Christ by _____ others. The Bible urges us to "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and to weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15). We should be loving and compassionate to those who are in _____. Galatians 6:9-10 says to the churches of Galatia, "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will _____ if we don't grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to _____ people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

The world identifies us as followers of Christ by the _____ that we show one another. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in John 13:34-35.** Acts of love and kindness open the _____ of faith to unbelievers, and that's why we need to do this. When we are able to give love, and they see our love, they become _____. They're more willing to _____ about Jesus Christ.

The Bible points us to our _____ over death and sin in the resurrection and urges us, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the _____ of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58). When we're _____ serving God, God smiles on us. Our labor isn't _____. God

_____ those who put their trust in Him and serve Him by serving others. Christians serve because they know the goodness of God and they want to be _____ Him.

Seventh, let's _____ others to serve the Lord Jesus. Nothing you'll ever do tomorrow will be more important than _____ the gospel with someone who is outside of Christ. One way that you can do that, of course, is by encouraging them to _____ the SEARCH program. There are many other ways, but this is one of those ways and we hope that you'll _____ your friends to watch the SEARCH program.

Christians are responsible for _____ the gospel of Jesus Christ to others. **Read Matthew 28:18-20.**

That's why we _____ the good news about Jesus Christ. That good news about Jesus Christ is too _____ to keep to ourselves. We've got to tell everybody, everywhere about His _____ and His _____. Jesus died on the cross for our sins to _____ His love and grace to everyone. God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead to give us a living _____ and to demonstrate once and for all that He is the Son of God. Christians tell the great story of His death, burial, and resurrection because they know the gospel is what people _____ most in life.

Money won't last and youth vanishes, but God's _____ last forever. You can count on them. Only the blood of Christ can _____ you from sin; only the Word of God can _____ you to righteousness; and the Lord's way is the _____ way that leads to heaven. So let's follow Jesus.

;Build your faith; build your hope, and build your love. Do this to make the coming year the _____ it can be! **Read what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3.** Can these words be said about you? Can those who know you well _____ that you have faith, hope, and love? Do they _____ God for your work of faith, your labor of love, and the steadfastness of your hope in our Lord? Do your friends see Christ _____ in you? Do they _____ the love of Christ, the joy of your salvation, the peace that passes understanding, and the hope of heaven in you? Have you spiritually matured _____ in the last year?

How you nurture your _____ this year will make a difference in your relationship with God and in how you live your life. Will 2016 be a year of spiritual improvement or decline?

If you are not a Christian, you can become a committed one today. Believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Turn your heart and life from sinful ways to living for Christ; that's what repentance really is! Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God in the presence of others. And be baptized, immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism is when the old man of sin is crucified with Christ, so that you may be free from sin (Romans 6:3-7). So live every day faithful and devoted to the Lord. And don't let anything come between you and the Lord.