



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

*Program
Study Guides*

**For
February 2014**

Accountable to God Romans 2:6-11

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

One day, when your life is over, you must give an _____ to God for how you've lived. Hebrews 4:12-13 says, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and the intentions of the heart. And no creature is _____ from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an _____." The Lord gave us His Word not only to tell us of His grace and providence but also to _____ us what He expects us to be. The Scriptures are living and active; they look _____ into our hearts and souls to _____ what kind of people we really are. We can't _____ from God, and one day we'll give an account for how we've lived.

In Matthew 25:14-30, the Lord Jesus tells the _____ of how a master dealt with three of his servants. He gave five talents or money to one, two talents to the second, and one talent to the third. The first two servants _____ their money and received the praise and blessing of the Lord, while the third servant _____ his money in the ground. He was _____ of his master and thought it would please his master just to give him back what he had received. But the master _____ him for being a wicked, lazy slave. Because he did _____, he was thrown out and punished. In the same way each of us is accountable to our Lord for how we've _____. Are you a faithful servant of the Lord?

Our reading today comes from the Epistle of Paul to the Romans 2:6-11.

The Scripture undeniably _____ that we are accountable to God. Hebrews 9:27 says, "it's appointed for men to _____ once and after this comes _____." The Lord Jesus said, "he who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the _____ I spoke is what will _____ him at the last day" (John 12:48). Second Corinthians 5:10 simply says, "For we must all _____ before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." We will indeed give an _____ for ourselves to God.

So we ask the question, by what will we be judged? First, we'll be judged by the things that we _____, and speak. **Read what the Lord said in Matthew 12:36-37.** Our words _____ to God. We'll give _____ for lies, gossip, speaking evil of others, using God's name in vain,

and for dirty jokes. Ephesians 5:4 says, “Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be _____.” We should use our voices to _____ others. Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is _____ for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” Don’t be fooled. You will give an account for your _____.

Second, we’ll be judged by how we _____. **Read what the Lord said in Matthew 5:21-22 and Matthew 5:27-28.** Evil thoughts _____ to evil deeds, and what is in your heart matters to God. God said, “I, the LORD, _____ the heart, I _____ the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds” (Jeremiah 17:10). God _____ what is in your heart and He will _____ you for your ways.

Third, we’ll be judged by how we _____. Proverbs 15:3 says, “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, _____ the evil and the good.” Romans 2:6-11, as we read a moment ago, said that God will render to each person according to his _____: to people who by perseverance in doing good, seek for glory and honor and immortality, He will give eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious, who only think about themselves, and don’t obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, He gives wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation, that’s trouble and distress for every soul of man who does _____, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but there will be glory and honor and peace to everyone who does _____, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. There is no partiality with God.

Many people think they can live as they _____ and escape judgment; but what we do affects other people. How we _____ matters to God. **Read Galatians 6:7-8.** If you were to take stock of how you act, would you be _____ to please yourself or living to please God?

Fourth, we’ll be judged by our _____. In Romans 2:16, Paul speaks of “the day when, according to my gospel, God will _____ the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.” We may be able to hide our actions from other _____, but we cannot hide them from _____. God always knows (1 Corinthians 4:5). The Lord Jesus said, “For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light” (Mark 4:22).

Fifth, we’ll be judged for _____ to do what is right. James 4:17 says, “Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and doesn’t do it, to him it is _____.” If we fail to believe, we’ll be _____. The Lord said, “whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:18). If we fail to _____, we’ll be lost. Again, the Lord said, “I tell

you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). The Lord also said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is _____ of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). This is a reference to _____. Finally, we must _____ devoted and faithful to the Lord. Jesus said, “But the one who _____ to the end will be saved” (Matthew 10:22). The Lord expects us to be fully committed to Him for a lifetime!

Sixth, we will be judged if we _____ God’s teaching for man’s teaching. Paul warned, “See to it that no one takes you _____ by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8). Paul knew people would not always want the _____, but would rather hear a convenient falsehood. **Read what he said in 2 Timothy 4:3-4.** You can’t draw close to God unless you’re _____ to listen to and follow Him. You can’t expect to be saved if you follow _____ doctrines. **Read 2 John 9.** Preaching a false doctrine leads people to believe a _____ and have false hope. That’s cruel to the people who believe it, and it is a wicked deed according to that passage.

Sometimes people loudly reply, “Well, Jesus never _____ anybody.” It’s true that Jesus certainly _____ sinners, and He said, “Do not judge so that you will not be judged” (Matthew 7:1). But Jesus was condemning the _____ judging of the Pharisees. The Lord Jesus also said, “Do not judge according to _____, but judge with righteous judgment” (John 7:24). We _____ make judgments every day about many things. We expect people to _____ the laws and we criticize those that don’t. We don’t _____ being deceived or being cheated. Society judges everything _____ morality and religion. But we excuse immorality and we excuse heresy, because we _____ God won’t judge them. We couldn’t be more _____.

Jesus was full of grace, but He preached _____. He didn’t stone the woman caught in adultery in John 8, but He told her to “go and _____ no more.” The Bible teaches forgiveness, but never without _____ people to repent. Second Peter 3:9 says, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is _____ toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” Repentance implies that we cease the _____ and do what is _____.

Jesus didn’t come to this earth to _____ us where He found us. He came to _____ us an abundant life and to show us a _____ life. Repentance is God’s way of saying to us that we can and must _____ to a life of love, of good works, of blessing others. **Read Romans 5:6-8.** Jesus didn’t come to _____ our sin, or to tell us that sin doesn’t matter. He wanted

something _____ for us! He bore the sin _____ that we should have borne. **Read Isaiah 53:5-6.** Jesus didn't excuse our sins; He knew sin would _____ us. So He went to the cross to _____ our sins, so that we could live righteous lives. He wanted us to _____ above that old sinful life.

When sin is your _____, you have to take a stand against it. When you do, you're actually showing _____ toward those who are in sin. Because Jesus loved sinners, He _____ against their sin and _____ them forgiveness. Jesus spoke against anger, lying, sexual immorality, greed, false doctrines, and laziness. Jesus condemned disbelief, hypocrisy, slander, and betrayal. The Lord loved us enough to _____ for us, but He spoke against these things, because He cared for our _____. **Read how the Lord Jesus stood so strongly against sin in Matthew 5:29-30.** If you love the Lord and you love people, you'll _____ your friends not to live in sin. You will speak about the _____ nature of sin. You'll not only _____ to participate in sin, you'll _____ sin for what it is—an enemy of God, and your enemy too.

God _____ sin, because He _____ you. He sent His Son to die for you, to atone for your sins, so you could be _____ from sin and live with Him eternally. We _____ God so much. It would be tragic to _____ God as if He didn't matter! When we excuse sin, we say to God that we don't care if sin _____ Him. We need to wake up and to see how we are destroying and condemning ourselves by _____. Sin is somehow obsolete and that God won't judge us for it. **Read Isaiah 1:18-20.** Don't suppose that God will _____ you at the end of time. Get right with God!

God isn't blind or deaf; He _____ everything we think and do. **Read Acts 17:30-31.** God will indeed _____ us accountable for what we do. **Read Hebrews 10:26-27 and 31**

We are answerable to God. We'll _____ God one day either with the help of Christ or without it. Romans 6:23 says, "the _____ of sin is death, but the free _____ of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." If we _____ the grace of Christ, we'll have to suffer the wages of sin ourselves. If we come humbly, lovingly, and obediently to the Lord, His _____ will wash us, make us holy, and justify us. If you are not a Christian, become one. Believe with your heart, _____ of your sins, _____ Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus. When you're baptized, the Lord will _____ your sin, cause you to be born again, and make you God's child. Galatians 3:26-27 says, "for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through _____. For as many of you as were _____ into Christ have put on Christ." To be saved, you must be in Christ. By faith we are baptized into Christ. I urge you to get right today.

Freedom in Christ

1 Peter 2:13-17

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

Paul said, “It was for freedom that _____ set us free.” Today we’ll see _____ Christ sets us free. Many people, who don’t understand our faith, think of Christianity as merely a list of _____ telling us what we can’t do and what we must do. While there are rules and precepts in Christ, God gave us these instructions to give us freedom, not to _____ our lives. We can’t buy a new car without also getting a _____. That manual informs us how to _____ for the car and how to get the most pleasure and use out of the car. We’re _____ for that manual. In the same way, God gave us a _____, and the Bible is God’s manual for the soul. He didn’t give us this manual to _____ us but to provide what we needed so we could be free to enjoy life forever. I’m so thankful to God for the Bible.

People _____ to be free from painful and humiliating restraints. Prisoners, tired of walls want their freedom; slaves want to be free from their human masters; addicts want to be free from their enslaving habits; people who are ill or infirmed long to be healthy; and students want to finish school so they can be free to pursue their lives. We love the Lord, and our love for the Lord frees us from the things that _____ us and gives us the opportunity to _____ and bless others. The more we _____ the Lord, the more we want to be _____ Him. We freely choose to _____ Christ because we love Him, and we know that He loves us.

Our reading today comes from 1 Peter 2:13-17.

Galatians 5:1 says, “It was for freedom that Christ set us free.” While Christianity is a commitment to Christ, it’s also a means of freedom for the _____. Christ came to this earth to _____ us an abundant life and eternal life. He came to _____ us in the present and in the life to come. If you’re in Christ, you now have _____ the spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. Treasure those blessings.

When we speak of freedom in Christ, we must _____ that Christ sets us free from many things that will harm us. When people decide to follow _____, they inevitably fall into ruin. They hurt themselves and usually hurt those they love. The Lord Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, that everyone who commits sin is the _____ of sin” (John 8:34). We might call this an addiction or a _____, but it’s really enslavement. Sin is controlling and makes people do things they don’t _____ to do. **Read Paul’s explanation in Romans 7:14-17.**

When people find pleasure in sin, that pleasure _____ them to do wicked things that they regret and brings them shame. It _____ their thoughts and actions and only leads to ruin. **Read Romans 8:5-8.** Because he had sinned, Paul _____ himself as wretched and he longed for the freedom that came in Christ! **Read what he said in Romans 7:24-25.** Maybe you've felt that way, you felt _____ by sin and you longed for forgiveness. Paul wanted to live that righteous life that would _____ God, and be free from sin. Paul knew sin – not God – but sin – was the real _____ that enslaves us and makes life miserable. The Lord Jesus came to this earth to set us free from sin and to give us _____ and _____. He came to show us a _____ life and a better way of life and to give us the opportunity to live it.

How sad that some Christians _____ to the very sins from which they were delivered. They've forgotten the _____ that Jesus paid to free them from sin. They've _____ how sin traps them, and shames them, and ruins their lives. They let their eyes, their flesh, or their pride lead them _____ from God and back into misery. They put their souls at great risk. **Read what 2 Peter 2:20-21 says.** Dear Christian friend, don't let sin back into your life.

The forgiveness and freedom that we have in Christ does _____ for us than the Old Testament Law could do. **Read what Paul told the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia in Acts 13:38-39.** The book of Galatians tells how some Jewish Christians were trying to _____ circumcision and the Law of Moses on the Gentile Christians. **Read what Paul wrote in Galatians 2:15-16.** We find our freedom from sin by faith and obedience to _____, not by the works of the _____. Galatians 5:6 says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor un-circumcision counts for anything, but only faith _____ through love."

The freedom that we have in Christ is not merely freedom from the things that hurt us; it's also a freedom to _____ the things that build us up and bless others. **Read Galatians 5:22-23.** God is at work in our lives to _____ some wonderful qualities, and there's no limit to how much of these things we can enjoy and share with others. The more we _____ of the grace and love of God, the more we _____ and the more we want to share it. **Read what Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:18-19.** The more we know the love of God, the more _____ we are for it!

Christ's love leads us to a _____ inexpressible and full of glory! In fact, though he was in _____ and fearful of losing his life, Paul urged the church, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Life can give us many miseries, but it _____ snatch from us our joy in Christ, the joy of a home in heaven.

As the Spirit works in our lives through the _____, we find peace. The Scriptures are filled with the _____ of God in black and white. In Christ we can live free from _____,

because we know our Father in heaven provides for us, hears our prayers, forgives our sins, protects us from evil, and gives us an inheritance. We can sleep at night with the assurance that God _____ for us and is with us.

When we read of _____ patience in Scripture, it leads us to be patient. Patience is the ability to _____ emotionally calm and assured in the face of frustration or misfortune and to keep from complaining. We see how Christ endured the cross without taking vengeance, and it gives us the inner _____ to endure whatever hostilities we may face.

Because God has been so kind to us, we are free to _____ kindness towards others. We are free to _____ others in times of trouble, to _____ others, and to give freely of our time and energy to _____ others. That's a wonderful gift. There's no law against kindness.

Read what the Lord Jesus said in Luke 6:38. God's _____ of generosity leads us to pursue a life of goodness or generosity. We know that we can _____ out-give God. **Read Galatians 6:9-10.**

The Spirit, through the Scriptures, also _____ to us the faithfulness of God, which leads us to be faithful. Jesus fought for hours through the _____ of the cross, the mocking, and the shame. All of those things happened when He was crucified. The Lord Jesus _____ the cross to the end and He never gave up on us. The Lord Jesus said, "I am with you _____, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). We can count on the Lord, and that assurance leads us to be _____ to Him and to never give up living the Christian life.

Since God is gentle with us, blessing us even when we don't deserve His blessing, we _____ to be gentle with others. Paul said, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). Our loving _____ in heaven is the God of all grace, the God of all comfort, and the God of all hope. Because God treated us gently in saving us, we can _____ others when they trespass against us.

Some people think to be self-controlled is to _____ freedom, but the truth is that no one can be free who lacks self-control. When people can't control themselves, their passions _____ them to their desires and their lusts. Addictions enslave, but self-control _____ us out of slavery. Self-control allows us to pursue what is _____, to say no to sin, to pursue what is healthy and to stay away from what is unhealthy. That way, we can _____ from feeding some evil habit that enslaves us.

The _____ of Christ frees us from sin and frees us to pursue Christian love and service; but to have this freedom, we've got to _____ in Christ. Our freedom is _____ Christ, not outside of Him. The Lord Jesus promised, "If you continue in My _____, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will _____ the truth, and the truth will make you _____" (John

8:31-32). Staying within the words of Christ found in Scripture is how Jesus distinguishes His _____ disciples from the others.

A train can't go anywhere unless it's on the _____! The very tracks that _____ it are the tracks that make it _____, and it can travel for mile after mile and carry heavy loads. In the same way, let's _____ to Christ; only Jesus has the words of eternal life. When we move away from the _____ of Christ, it's like moving away from those tracks. Whenever we move away from the teachings of Christ, we move away from _____. Second John 9 says, "Anyone who goes too far and does not _____ in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, (the words Jesus gave) he has both the Father and the Son." If we want to have the Father and the Son, we must _____ in the teaching. We must _____ what the Scripture says and we must _____ the scriptures.

Why does this matter? The Lord's words teach the truth, the truth that _____ us free. It keeps us free from false _____ and free from the _____ that the devil tells. The words of Christ provide a means for us to be able to tell right from wrong, it gives us a _____ where we can distinguish what is real from what is imaginary, and the word of Christ gives us a firm foundation to build our lives on. True freedom comes from staying _____ the boundaries that God gave to us, from abiding in His word. To go beyond those boundaries does not free us; it just tangles us up in _____ doctrines. This is why we must examine the _____ of God and examine _____ to see if we are abiding in the words of Christ.

The Lord Jesus said, "So if the _____ makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). I'm so thankful for the Lord's _____ to set me free from sin and spiritual death. God can give us hope that we can _____ and become the people that God would have us to be. We don't have to be trapped and enslaved by sin. God gives us something better. **Read Romans 6:16-18.** Here were some _____ slaves of sin who _____ the Lord Jesus, they were set free from sin, and became the servants of righteousness.

You can become a Christian by being _____ with Christ. To be one with Christ you must put your _____ in Him as the Son of God, _____ of your sins, _____ Him before others, and be _____ into Christ. Galatians 3:26-27 says, "for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Baptism is that time when those _____ of Christ are united with and come _____ Christ, where His forgiveness and His blessings are. The Lord will _____ away your sins when you are baptized according to Acts 22:16 and He'll unite you with Christ according to Romans 6:4-5. Come to the Lord today!

What Have You Done? Psalm 15

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

How would your _____ describe you? Would they say you were a _____ person or a rascal? Today we're asking people to _____ at themselves to see how they've lived. When life is over, we'll look back at our lives wondering what we've done that _____. Did we please the _____ or did we please ourselves? Were we a _____ to the people around us or did we bring them _____? Many spend their entire lives pursuing _____ paths, but the one who is faithful to God pursues righteousness. What have you done with your life? What will people _____ about you?

Many Christians are content to be Christians in _____ only. They want to wear the name, but they aren't willing to take their _____ seriously. My friend, Steve Higginbotham, recently wrote about some misplaced _____ of people today. He said, "We want a Savior, but we don't want a _____. We want a crown, but we don't want a _____. We want a _____, but we don't want to sow the seed. We want to go to Heaven, but we won't go to _____. We want to grow spiritually, but we don't want to feed on his _____. We want Hollywood to 'clean up its act,' but we don't want to stop _____. We want the _____ to pray, even in school, but we don't want to pray. We want the Ten Commandments posted, but we don't want to _____ by their moral principles. We want to love God, but we don't want to abhor _____. We want to die the death of the righteous, but we don't want to abandon the lifestyle of the _____." People want to go to _____, but they don't live as Christians should. What about you? What have you done with your life?

Our reading today comes from Psalm 15.

The Bible gives some interesting assessments of people's lives. Genesis 5:24 says, "Enoch _____ with God, and he was not, for God took him." We learn from Hebrews 11:5, "By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see _____, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having _____ God." Walking with God pleases Him. James 2:23 calls Abraham "the _____ of God." Are you God's friend? God said, "I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my _____, who will do all my will" (Acts 13:22). Are you doing all the _____ of God?

Then, there is the evil King Jehoram who _____ all of his brothers with a sword. When he died, 2 Chronicles 21:20 says of him, "And he departed with no one's _____. They

buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.” In the New Testament, we find Judas Iscariot, who stole money from the money bag and _____ the Lord Jesus with a kiss. We also find Demas. Though Demas had once been faithful, 2 Timothy 4:10 says, “For Demas, in _____ with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.” Were you once faithful, and have you _____ away from the Lord? The Bible teaches that we’ll be _____ according to our works, whether good or bad. Jesus promised, “For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person _____ to what he has done” (Matthew 16:27). Jesus said, “And all the churches will know that I am he who _____ the mind and the heart, and I will give to each of you according to your _____” (Revelation 2:23). How we live matters. Our works tell what’s in our hearts, and the Lord will judge us by whether we have _____ Him or not.

The first thing God looks for in people is whether they _____ (Hebrews 11:6). A faithful Christian believes the _____ and knows the love of God. His faith is not merely a belief, but is a way of _____. He takes Whom he believes and what God _____ seriously.

There are different _____ of faith. Some people believe intellectually, they say God exists and His way is right, but their belief doesn’t influence their _____. They are believers in their _____ but not in their _____. God wants our faith to be _____ than that. He wants us to believe on the involvement level, that is, our faith should impact how we live and our _____. We ought to do more than just believe Christ Jesus rose from the _____. We live in obedience to Him, because we understand that He will _____ us up one day. We ought to do more than believe that Jesus is Lord; we ought to _____ Him as our Lord.

Unless our faith matters enough for us to _____ it, it’s not any good. We must _____ on what we believe. We must move from a _____ faith to a _____ one. **Read James 2:14-16.** We want a living, active faith that makes a _____ in our own lives and blesses the lives of others.

Someone asks, “Aren’t we saved by faith _____?” While it’s true that we’re saved by faith, to talk about “faith alone” is to talk about a _____ faith. **Read James 2:18-19.** Saying that you have faith, but are unwilling to demonstrate that faith makes you no better than the _____ who believe so strongly that they shudder at the thought of God. What are you doing with your faith? **Read James 2:20-24.** When God tested Abraham, Abraham demonstrated his faith by _____ his son Isaac upon the altar. Of course, God didn’t allow him to slay his son; God was _____ him to see if he would _____ Him. Many years earlier, God told Abraham to _____ his home and family and go to a strange place. Hebrews 11:8 says, “By faith Abraham _____ when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Faith obeys! A dead faith _____ a good game, but a living faith _____ what it believes.

John the Baptist said, “whoever believes in the Son has _____ life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the _____ of God abides on him” (John 3:36). God never speaks approvingly of a faith that will not _____. The disobedient can expect one day to see the _____ of God. A believer who will not obey will never enjoy God’s _____. **Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.** God loves everybody, but His grace and favor is extended to those who _____ and _____ Him.

Because of this, we must _____ from being spectators to being participants. Some say, “I love Jesus, but I don’t want to be in the _____.” The church is the _____ of Jesus, the _____ of Christ. If you love and want to be _____ Jesus, then you must be _____ of His church. The church was and is His idea and it’s His _____. Faith in Christ and worshiping with the church is not like going to a basketball game where we can sit in the stands and _____ others on the floor. God _____ each of us to sing, to pray, to listen to the Bible, to commune with Him in the Lord’s Supper, and to support the work of the church. Living for God means I am _____ producing fruit every day, working for His cause, carrying my cross, sharing the gospel, and blessing the lives of other people. The Lord Jesus said, “By this is My Father glorified, that you _____ much fruit, and so _____ to be My disciples” (John 15:8). Don’t _____ your faith, live it, live it out every day.

Ralph Grant in his book, Letters to the Seven Churches, told the story of the Franks during the Dark Ages. When the gospel came to Northern Europe, large numbers of these savage tribes were being _____. These people had been warriors for generations, so teaching them the ways of _____ was difficult. They were not _____ they wanted to give up their savage fighting, so they went into the waters of baptism holding their battle-axes up out of the water. They would say, “This _____ has never been baptized!” They were willing to make a commitment to Christ in some things but would not _____ their fighting.

Of course, one is either _____ baptized, or he’s not really baptized at all. There’s no such thing as baptizing “everything but the hand.” God only accepts us on His _____; and He will not accept anything less than a _____ commitment. God doesn’t want some parts of you; He wants _____ of you. This is one reason baptism into Christ is an immersion of the _____ person in water; baptism is a total commitment to God. The whole person is _____ and raised with Christ, the whole person has all his sins _____, and the whole person rises from the water to walk in _____ of life (Romans 6:4).

We sing the hymn, “All to Jesus I Surrender.” Have you _____ surrendered all to the Lord Jesus? Are you totally committed? Listening to the way some Christians talk, I wonder if their _____ were ever baptized? Some continually _____, and others constantly _____. Some tell dirty jokes, while others take the name of the Lord in _____.

Christians _____ half-truths, and others are given to slander. Taming the tongue is difficult, but becoming a Christian means keeping a close _____ on our mouths. James sadly said, “from the same mouth come both _____ and _____. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way” (James 3:10).

The selfish and evil thinking of some Christians makes you wonder if their _____ were ever baptized. Some are full of _____, while others are full of _____. They think _____ of others and they step on others to get an advantage. Becoming a Christian means putting Christ first, others second, and ourselves _____. **Read Philippians 2:3-4.**

Considering what some people watch on television or at the movies, you’d wonder if their _____ and their _____ were baptized? Some Christians have grown callous to sinful words, nudity, violence, anger, and _____ of immoral behavior. Years ago, people expected the movie industry to maintain some moral _____. If a movie contained ungodly language or behavior, people _____ and told the theater managers they didn’t care for such indecent movies. Today, one can hardly go to a movie or watch a television program that doesn’t have indecent language or behavior. What are you letting into your _____?

How some people treat others makes you wonder if their _____ were baptized? Some people simply don’t know how to be _____ with others or how to _____. They seem to have _____ the words of our Lord, “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12). Many people live with anger, fear, or hatred in their _____. **Read Ephesians 4:31-32.** How are you _____? Do you _____ God?

God sets the bar high for those who would follow Him. **Read what he Lord Jesus said in Luke 14:26-27.** God expects us to love Him _____ than anything else, and to put Him first. Someone asks, “Aren’t we saved by _____?” Yes, and that grace is a precious _____ that can’t be _____. Because the gift is precious, God _____ our lives to see whether we have genuinely received the gift or took it for granted. The Lord Jesus out of love paid a very high _____ to save us from sin. The Lord will _____ us according to our response to His grace. Have you lived in a way that _____ that you love the Lord?

To enjoy the gift of salvation, we must lovingly _____ to His grace by faith, by repenting of our sins, by confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and by being _____ into Christ. When we love the Lord, we don’t argue with the Lord about what to do but simply _____ Him. We obey _____ we believe, and our obedience _____ our faith. Acts 2:38 still says, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Won’t you do that today?

Be Wise Psalm 1

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

When people begin thinking wisely, their lives begin to _____ dramatically for the better. Today we're going to look in the Bible to see how God wants us to _____. We know God's word _____ God's wisdom and His character. God's way is _____ and _____. God's way is _____ of love and kindness. God's word _____ us to forgiveness and to an inheritance in heaven. God's word _____ us how to enjoy eternal life. The wisdom of God, the morality of God, and the ethics of God, can be _____ in His Divine Word. We only _____ ourselves if we don't study and follow God's teachings found in the Bible.

Wisdom is considered by many to be simply the _____ of learning how to succeed in life. The real essence of wisdom is _____, for life is more than just living by a set of rules and being rewarded in some physical manner. Undoubtedly, wisdom comes from _____. Solomon said, "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his _____ come knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6). Wisdom involves observation and instruction. It really begins with God and one's _____ in Him as Lord and Savior.

Solomon said, "the _____ of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Now, fools _____ wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). The difference between a wise person and the foolish person is how they _____ God and His Word. The Bible says, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from _____ is understanding" (Job 28:28). God _____ men intimately. He knows the good and the evil that's in them; He _____ what blesses and what curses. It just makes sense to _____ to Him.

Our reading today comes from Psalm 1.

Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs as a _____ writing to his _____. He wanted to instruct him how to _____ moral and spiritual problems and to be successful in life. If you want to be _____, read the book of Proverbs again and again. **Read Proverbs 1:1-7.** When people give _____ to God in every aspect of their lives that's the beginning of wisdom.

The Bible _____ wisdom as if she were a person crying out to people; and she yearns to be heard. **Read Proverbs 1:20-33.**

The Bible _____ foolishness to godlessness. Psalm 14:1 says, “The fool has said in his _____, ‘There is no God.’” The fool doesn’t so much _____ God as he ignores God’s existence. He doesn’t _____ if God exists or what God says. He intends to live the way he _____ regardless of what God says, because he’s _____ to live without God. Isaiah explains, “For a fool speaks _____, and his heart inclines toward wickedness: To practice ungodliness and to speak _____ against the Lord” (Isaiah 32:6). In the Bible a fool is any person who _____ like there is no God or _____ God’s commandments make no difference.

We think of a fool as someone who _____ intelligence or common sense. But when the Bible _____ of a fool, it’s not speaking of a mentally deficient person. Rather it’s speaking in a moral or religious _____. Foolishness is a _____ issue rather than an intellectual one. This _____ may come from a rebellious or insolent spirit, a quick temper, acting impetuously, or insisting on one’s own way. Proverbs 22:15 says: “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; and the rod of _____ will remove it far from him.” Foolishness is often characterized by an obstinate person who insists on making _____ that lead to destruction.

This kind of fool _____ to learn and to practice what is right. He fails to fear or respect the Lord, because he thinks he knows _____ than God. He closes his _____ against God, against morality, and against reason. Fear of God is a _____ respect and awe for God. It regards God as God and gives Him the _____ and _____ that are due to His name. This relationship provides the necessary foundation for _____ about life, about behavior, and about attitudes. The basic _____ we make in our moral and spiritual lives reveal our wisdom or they reveal our foolishness. The book of Proverbs 12:15 says, “the way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man _____ to advice.” Jeremiah 10:23 says, “I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that it’s not in man who walks to _____ his steps.” The fool won’t _____ to God.

In the New Testament, a fool fails to perceive _____ correctly because he or she has failed to take God and His will seriously or to see things from God’s perspective. Jesus called the Pharisees fools for focusing on externals and ignoring their _____;

they were warped with greed and wickedness. Jesus tells of the foolish rich farmer who had laid up possessions on earth but wasn't _____ toward God. He only _____ of himself and ignored God. Fools distort life and they _____ their accountability to God. Jesus called the Pharisees blind fools for their complete insensitivity to God's _____. They would strain out a gnat and swallow a camel.

Read Job's question and his answer in Job 28:12-28.

We must _____ the Scriptures for God's revealed will. The Bible says, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but _____ what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17). Wisdom comes from God; it's not like the shrewd _____ of men. Only by looking at life from God's revealed word can we _____ those foolish notions about life's meaning. These distorted notions _____ people to live destructive and painful lives. Foolishness causes _____ to the one who is foolish and to those who meet him or her.

God's wisdom _____. Many read everything _____ the Bible. They know movie stars, athletes, and television programs; but they don't know what _____ wills for their lives. **Read Proverbs 2:1-12.**

The Bible is God's _____ of wisdom for us all. It will _____ us if we take the time to read and study it. Psalm 19:7 says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." True wisdom is a gift from God to those who _____ for it. God promised, "But if any of you _____ wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). Every day that we spend time with God, listening to his word and praying to him is a day that we'll grow _____. We'll make better choices, we'll _____ how to avoid evil, and we'll grow to love God more.

Read the words of God in Jeremiah 9:23-24. Real wisdom is in knowing God and His will for our _____. Nothing is more valuable! Not earthly wisdom, not riches, not might! Come to know God, and true, spiritual wisdom will come with it!

Read Proverbs 3:13-18.

A man approached a preacher after _____ and said, “You Christians are all brainwashed.” The preacher replied, “Friend, everyone is brainwashed to some _____. Everybody fills his brains with something. The important thing is that true Christians choose what we want to _____ our brains with.” We _____ God’s love, God’s wisdom, and God’s truth. Those things _____ _____ lies, errors in thinking, selfishness, and hatefulness. They _____ us with good will and good intentions. They _____ us up and make us authentic. We _____ to God, and He is in our thoughts and deeds. We ask, “What does God _____?” “How does God want us to _____?” “How can we be _____ Jesus?” “What is loving?” Proverbs 30:5 says, “Every word of God proves _____; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.” We know this to be true.

Solomon said, “Buy truth, and do not _____ it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding” (Proverbs 23:23). If you wish to be wise, _____ your heart and _____ to God’s Word. Nothing else will _____ your life the way the Bible will. That old book that our grandmothers read is still true and still _____; it still separates the wise from the foolish. It still contains the way to _____ life and the best way to live _____. It teaches what is right and good; it leads to _____ and _____. We need the wisdom, the guidance, the correction, and the _____ found in the Word of God.

The Bible is God’s revealed will, God’s wisdom, and God’s gift to us. This book, no matter what you might first think, is what God will use to _____ your life at the end of time. Buy the truth, know the truth, love the truth, and _____ the truth. To become a Christian you must put your _____ in God out of love. You must _____ that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God, who died for your sins, was buried, and on the third day rose again to be the Lord of all. Out of faith and love, you must _____ of your sins. You can’t love God and keep on living in _____. Love means giving all that sinful life up in order to take up your _____ and follow Him. Along with faith, love, and repentance, the Lord asks you to be _____. The Lord Jesus said in Mark 16:16, “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be _____; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” Won’t you respond to the Lord’s teaching? Today is the best day for you to become a Christian, and we are praying that you will.