



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

*Program
Study Guides*

**For
April 2014**

Loving God James 4:7-10

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

Of all the tasks of mankind, nothing is more _____ than loving God. Today we're going to _____ the subject of loving God. The Scriptures teach us how much God _____ and _____ for us, but they also challenge us to love God to give Him our hearts. Christianity is first and foremost a relationship through Christ with our Father in heaven who hears our _____ and meets our _____. Without the love of God, this world would indeed be a _____ and _____ place. The brightest things in _____ come because of the love of God. The Bible helps us to _____ what love is and how love matters in life. That's why we turn to God's _____ for understanding and guidance.

Imagine you've awakened in a world _____ love. It's a world where _____ don't care — and they don't care that they don't care. It's a world where offenses begin _____ and _____, because there is so little tolerance. It's a world where people are _____ ambitious, stepping on others and climbing to the top, abusing others merely to survive. It's a world where the _____ of old people and the unborn are cheap, where _____ are nothing as long as you get what you _____. It's a world where people hardly _____, and those that do rarely stay that way. It's a world where _____ fend for themselves. It's a world where people sit silent when _____ takes place, where protecting the weak is unimportant. A world without love would be a world without _____ and filled with all the ugly substitutions that people find to take love's place. Part of what makes hell so terrible is that you can't _____ any love there.

Our reading today comes from James 4:7-10.

First John 4:19 simply says, "We love because he _____ loved us." Among our greatest _____, none surpasses the love of God for us. We _____ love through knowing God.

Read 1 John 4:7-9.

We often like to _____ about how God loves us, but this month we're focusing on how we should love God. We're not focusing on how we want to love God, but on how God _____ to be loved. Loving God means learning how to _____ Him. We want to please God, so it's important for us to take our _____ off other things and focus on Him. That's not as easy as it sounds, since there are so many things competing for our _____. We must be careful not to _____ away from God.

We choose what we love, and many things _____ for our affections. The Lord Jesus said, "No one can serve _____ masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will

be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot _____ God and money (or mammon)” (Matthew 6:24). What’s true of money is true of many things; at some point we must _____ whether we will serve God or not.

Read 1 John 2:15-17. We can’t hold onto worldly _____ and hold onto Christ at the same time. We must _____ between the two. We must decide whether we will take our _____ seriously and truly devote ourselves to God.

Read the prediction the apostle Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, made in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. This passage speaks of mankind at its _____, people who pretend godliness but have no _____ for the Lord or anyone else in their lives. When the choice is made, they’re going to do what they _____. They cannot _____ the Lord Jesus and say, “not My will but Yours be done,” because they love themselves.

They are lovers of _____. They want the _____ that money gives them. **Read 1 Timothy 6:9-10; five observations will follow, based on this passage.** Some who blame God for their _____ ought instead to look in the mirror, for they bring many of their _____ on themselves. People who will do anything to get rich often find themselves _____ with heartaches and regrets.

The passage says, they are “lovers of _____ rather than lovers of God.” They think _____ makes them happy, but sin always _____. Sometimes I hear people justify their sins with “God _____ me to be happy!” Yes, God wants to _____ us; but God doesn’t bless people by blessing their sins. God’s blessing comes from righteous _____, not from following fleshly desires. Peter warns us to “abstain from fleshly _____ which wage war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11). Sinful lust enslaves us and hardens our hearts; it robs us of true _____, and true peace, and love. It never _____. “The world is _____ away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives _____” (1 John 2:17).

People in the last days will fall into the _____ of “not loving good.” They no longer want to be _____ and _____; they don’t want anyone else to be, and they don’t want to even hear about it. They’re so given to sin, they can no longer _____ righteousness. The Lord Jesus said, “And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people _____ the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil” (John 3:19). Some today know _____ about zombies, and vampires, and witches than they do about the apostles. Their hearts are _____ away from God.

When people fail to understand the love of God, they eventually _____ heartless and unloving. They cease to care even for their own _____. They have _____ their hearts. The Lord Jesus predicted, “And because lawlessness is _____, most people's love will grow cold” (Matthew 24:12). For this reason, they _____ unappeasable or

irreconcilable. You can't satisfy them or make friends with them, because they are so given to _____. People begin losing their love for God when they stop _____ their blessings. They become ungrateful, as if the world _____ them whatever they have. They cannot be _____ with what they have and appreciate it, because they _____ what others have.

What can we do to _____ our love to God while we're surrounded by a sinful and secular world? **Read the answer in James 4:7-10.** First, we must _____ ourselves to God. We must choose to make the Lord Jesus the _____ of our hearts. To do that, we must take _____ off the throne. **Read Romans 6:16-18.** No matter what our past has been, we can _____ God from our hearts and make changes to our lives. Submitting to God isn't _____; submitting to God _____ us from the sin that ruins us. God gives us _____!

Second, we must _____ the devil. The passage says if we resist the devil, he will _____ from us. The devil is _____ and _____, but he is not stronger than the Lord Jesus. **Read 1 John 3:7-8.** Jesus triumphed over the devil when He bore the _____ to forgive sin and rose from the dead to overcome death. Christians can gladly _____ Jesus, for "he who is in you (that is the Lord in you) is _____ than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Many find it _____ to flirt with the devil and play with sin; but we can't get close to God while we're flirting with the devil. We must get away from the devil in order to _____ to God. We have to _____ we won't run with the devil any more, and we won't run with his crowd any more. We have to decide we're not going to play his _____, and we're not going to do his bidding. When we finally get the _____ to resist the devil and tell him to get lost, we'll see the devil flee. He won't _____ to be around us! He knows he cannot _____ when we have the Lord on our side. We must decide to resist; and with the help of God we'll overcome.

Third, we need to _____ _____ to God, and when we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. The Father in heaven and the Lord Jesus want to be _____ to you and to _____ you. Jesus died on the cross to demonstrate His _____ for you. The Lord Jesus said, "I tell you, there will be more _____ in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). God's heart is _____ to you, pleading for you to return to Him and to serve Him. **Read Isaiah 55:6-7.**

Fourth, the passage says _____ your _____, you sinners. We must make a clean _____ with sin. We've got to _____. We can't draw close to God while we _____ on to our sins. **Read Isaiah 59:1-2.** Sin _____ you from God, so get rid of the sin and draw close to God. When Adam and Eve realized they had sinned and were naked, they hid in the bushes, and they were _____ and _____ of God. Sin fills us with _____

and _____. Repentance _____ the heart, and it opens the door to forgiveness, and it sets a person in a new direction that allows fellowship with God and how it can be restored.

Fifth, purify your _____, you double-minded. We _____ a clean heart and a clean conscience. This demands coming clean with God, confessing our _____ to Him. Proverbs 28:13 says, “He who conceals his transgressions will not _____, But he who confesses and forsakes them will _____ compassion.” Likewise 1 John 1:8-9 says, “If we say that we have _____ sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we _____ our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” As long as we have issues with God we’ll find it _____ to draw close to Him. God loves you. Being right with God opens up that door to eternal life and the _____ of God that He gives forever. Remaining in sin will only _____ you heartache and ruin. Love the Lord! Love God! Love Him _____ He first loved you. Don’t let _____ come between you and God – not sin, not money, not pleasure, not your own _____. The more you love God the more _____ and _____ you’ll find. Get right with God!

Draw near to _____, and He will draw near to _____. Have you entangled your life in other things and drifted away from Him, or is your heart _____ to God? God calls us to open our _____ to Him. The Lord Jesus told lukewarm Laodicea, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; and if anyone _____ My voice and _____ the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he will dine with Me” (Revelation 3:20). The Lord wants a _____ friendship with us. There’s a famous painting showing Jesus _____ at a door. In the painting, the door has no handle on the _____; the door can only be opened from the _____. He knocks, but He won’t _____ the door. He knocks, but you must _____ your door and your heart to let Him in.

Love calls for a _____. It’s not enough to be loved by God; we must love in _____. Jesus said, “If you love Me, you will _____ My commandments” (John 14:15). Love doesn’t argue; it _____ by trusting and obeying. The gospel is the good news of God’s love and Jesus’ _____. So don’t be ungrateful for that love; _____ by trusting and obeying the Lord. If you know and love the Lord, you’ll have no _____ trusting Him or His teaching.

If you love Jesus, you can’t remain in sin, which _____ Him. Love leads us to _____ sin behind. Love means telling the world that you belong to Him, _____ Him to be the Christ, the Son of God, and being _____ into Christ. Galatians 3:26-27 says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Baptism is the time when God _____ away our sins (Acts 22:16) and saves us (1 Peter 3:21). So, open your heart to the Lord! Love and obey!

Loving God Totally

Mark 12:28-31

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

Can you truthfully say that you totally _____ to the Lord? Today we're going to explore what it means to _____ all to the Lord. The Bible _____ God's love for us and the kind of love He _____ from us. God doesn't want part-time _____ or people who are only fond of Him. God expects His people to be totally committed to Him and to His _____. The Lord did not show us a half-hearted love, but gave everything so that we might be _____. It shouldn't surprise anyone that He _____ that we surrender all to Him.

The apostle Paul said, "But far be it from me to boast except in the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14). Paul knew the Christian life is the noblest and _____ life, but living for Christ is challenging in a world that doesn't understand or appreciate devotion. Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ. It's no longer I who live, but _____ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by _____ in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Our _____ today is to live by faith in Christ. When we are crucified with Him, we no longer belong to _____; we belong to Him.

Christianity is more than a _____ to wear; it's a life. Because we belong to the Lord, we surrender every _____, every _____, and every _____ to the will of God. Like Christ, we pray, "Thy _____ be done on earth as it is in heaven" and "not my _____ but Yours be done." Do you love God totally?

Our reading today comes from The Gospel According To Mark 12:28-31.

What did Paul _____ when he said he was crucified with Christ? He wasn't at Calvary; he didn't _____ on a cross. Paul isn't speaking of a _____ cross and nails. He's speaking figuratively. Crucifixion was a means of _____. It was cruel, slow and painful, designed to make the person _____ as long as possible. Crucifixions, in ancient times, publicly _____ the criminal to keep others from committing a crime. Our crucifixion with Christ is a _____ identification with Him. We are _____ with Him in His death, burial and resurrection when we are baptized according to Romans 6:4-7. We are crucified with Christ in order to put to death the old self of _____ and to be _____ again. We can't have _____ of life until the old man of sin is dead. When we're baptized into Christ, He begins _____ in us. In being crucified with Him, we take a _____ with Christ for truth and for morality. We say to the sinful and worldly things "So far as you're concerned world, I'm _____ to you and

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you're _____ to me. You have no more _____ over me than you have over a dead body.” Paul said, “those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the _____ with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24). This is a thorough, lifelong, and _____ commitment. When we come to Christ there is _____ turning back.

Since we belong to Christ, we can say with Paul, “So then, brothers, we are _____, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will _____, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will _____” (Romans 8:12-13). Our eternal _____ is dependent on whether we choose to live for the Lord or we choose the flesh. We choose to _____ Christ by coming to Him and loving what is good.

We want to _____ God. **Read Romans 6:8-11.** Christians are _____ to give up that old way of life so they can _____ their love for Christ.

When we're crucified with Christ, we _____ our behavior and our thinking. This change gets specific. For instance, Jesus' _____ were crucified. They crossed His feet upon the upright beam of the cross and drove the long _____ into them. That driven nail _____ through His flesh. We can only imagine the _____. Our feet should be crucified, too. What do we _____ by “crucified feet?” We must _____ where our feet take us and never let them lead us into a place that will dishonor Christ. Peter said, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an _____, so that you might follow in his steps” (1 Peter 2:21). Being “crucified with Christ” means we give Him _____ in our lives. Because our feet _____ to Him, we go wherever He _____ us. God had a _____ for Isaiah to do. Isaiah 6:8 says, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I _____, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am __. Send _____!’” We need that “Here am I; send me” _____. Some people _____ their lives foolishly and selfishly. They never give a thought to how they may _____ anybody else. The greatest thing that anyone can do is to take the saving _____ of the gospel to people who are lost. **Remember what Jesus said in Mark 16:15-16.** There are people lost and dying in _____ because no one ever _____ them about Jesus. Will you tell your friends about Jesus?

They not only nailed His feet; Jesus' _____ were also crucified. They _____ his hands down. Our hands are crucified, too. They are not nailed down, but we must not _____ them any way we wish. We must be _____ what we handle. They should never handle anything that will _____ them with sin or wrong. The hands of Jesus were laid upon suffering human beings to _____ them, but can you imagine Jesus holding anything sinful in those hands? Be careful what you _____. Paul said, “Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up _____ hands, without wrath and dissension” (1 Timothy 2:8). People in the early church lifted their hands up to God when they _____. They were wanting God to know that they _____

Him as they approached Him. But Paul was telling them that when we _____ God, we need to pray to Him with holy hands, not just lifting hands. Don't lift your hands up to God if you are full of _____ at your brother or you're fussing with him. God has never accepted _____ from people who have sin in their _____. **Read what Isaiah wrote by inspiration in Isaiah 1:15-17.** God wants our lives _____ with holiness when we worship Him. When we choose to follow Christ, we can't _____ whether we will treat people kindly or whether we will live a moral life. We must take hold of God's will in _____ aspect of our lives. We can't pick and choose when we will _____ the Lord and when we won't. When we say _____ to God, we are rebelling against Him. It's at that very point where we _____ God; we are withholding our love and obedience from Him. We must give our _____ selves – body, soul, and spirit – to the Lord. Use your hands for good and _____ the Lord. Paul said, "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do _____ to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). We serve the _____ by doing good for _____.

This may at first sound silly to you, but you know a Christian should crucify his _____ – not in the literal sense. He should put to death or give up whatever he _____ that might keep him from serving Christ. If our ears are crucified, we'll be careful about what we _____ to. There are voices all about us and some voices will _____ us to sin. If we belong to _____, we won't listen to them. **Read how Jesus called himself the good shepherd in John 10:3-5.** Some of these strange voices say, "Don't go to _____ to worship. Why you've been _____ all week. Have a good time _____ of going to church." That's the _____ talking. Some say, "Put yourself _____. Indulge in whatever _____ you. Make more _____. Forget what the _____ says. You must look out for _____." The devil is always interested in _____ us from Christ and from the will of God. Crucified ears won't _____ to such compromise. Other times people say, "It doesn't matter what you _____ as long as you _____ Jesus." If you really love Jesus, you'll _____ what He has to say, and you'll distinguish His words from the words of men. Jesus said, "Everyone who is of the truth _____ to my voice" (John 18:37).

Because what we say _____, we need to put to death any speech that does not follow the will of God. James said the tongue is uncontrollable and cannot be _____. If we use our tongues for Jesus, we will speak _____. We won't _____ and we won't _____ the gossip we hear from other people. Solomon said, "He who goes about as a slanderer _____ secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip" (Proverbs 20:19). Again Proverbs 10:11 says, "The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of _____, But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence." Peter said, "The one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must _____ his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit" (1 Peter 3:10). Some people delight in

_____ others with their words. They criticize or falsely label, and their words _____. Our _____ should be soothing and not cutting. Colossians 4:6 says, “Let your speech always be with _____, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

Along with our hands, our feet, our ears, and our tongues, we must also put to death the things in our _____ that offend God. The old man of sin in our hearts must be crucified so that we can _____ a new life filled with love for God. Jesus’ heart felt the full _____ of his crucifixion. He came to His own and His own _____ Him not. The sin of the _____ was upon Him. God, the Father, for a time _____ Him. As He died they thrust the _____ into His side, and water and blood gushed out. His _____ was devastated by crucifixion. Is your heart crucified? Is it _____ to sin and evil? Is it a _____ upon which Jesus lives? Does He have _____ place in your life, or is your heart _____ between the world and Jesus? **Read James 4:4.** Are you like that? Do you give _____ of yourself to Christ and _____ the other part? Do you hang onto the world and its _____ with one hand, and hang on to God with the other? Remember God sees what we are doing. We can’t serve God and _____ or God and _____. We can’t serve God and _____. We can’t serve God and _____. If we are crucified with Christ, our _____ heart belongs to Him. That means our whole _____ belongs to Him too. **Read what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.** When you become a Christian, God becomes your _____; and you belong to Him. Do you belong body, soul, and spirit to God? When you were baptized, they immersed _____ of you. When you love the Lord and die to self, you should be ready to take up your _____ and _____ Jesus.

How do we die to self and take up our cross? Romans 6:4-7 tells us, “We were buried therefore with him by _____ into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in a _____ like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to _____. For one who has died has been set free from sin.”

Do you _____ in Christ? Have you _____ and _____ the name of Christ before others? Have you been _____ into Christ? When you do so, you’ll receive the forgiveness of sins, and you’ll be _____ to the Lord’s church, and you’ll become a _____ of God. When you die and are buried with Christ in baptism, that old man of sin is crucified, and you start walking in _____ of life. You are _____; you can enter the kingdom. Put your trust in Jesus and obey the gospel. Die to yourself and take up your cross today and live for the Lord from this day forward.

April 20, 2014

Love and Law Mark 3:31-35

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

Can love and law _____? Can people _____ God's law lovingly? Today we're going to see how loving God and keeping His laws can work _____. The psalmist said, "Open my _____, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law" (Psalm 119:18). We too need to open our eyes and our _____ to the law of God that we may behold wonderful things. Verse 24 says, "Your testimonies also are my _____; They are my counselors." When we take time to read and meditate on Scripture, we find wisdom and counsel that _____ us. No wonder this psalmist cried out in verse 97, "O how I _____ Your law! It's my meditation all the day." Is the Bible your delight and your meditation?

Read what the Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees when they followed their traditions and ignored God's law in Matthew 15:7-9. The problem with the Pharisees and with many Christians is that by making human traditions they lose _____ of God. Their hearts are so concerned with themselves that they have no _____ for God. People who focus on the instructions God gave us, however, are _____ their love and respect for Him. God gave us His laws to show His love for us and to _____ us. The law of God isn't a burden or grievous; it is God's _____ of telling us what is evil and harmful. Love and law can coexist!

Our reading today comes from the Gospel According To Mark 3:31-35.

The Lord Jesus _____ that by keeping the Lord's commandments, we show our love for Him and for the Father. The Lord said, "If you _____ Me, you will _____ My commandments" (John 14:15). That seems so _____, and yet our society questions what the Lord says. People try to distance the _____ to obey from love. They think if someone keeps a commandment, they are merely observing a meaningless _____ or trying to _____ salvation. It seems they may not understand obedience the _____ that the Lord Jesus understands it. Jesus understands obedience as a means of _____.

Read what the Lord said in John 14:23-24. The Father and the Lord Jesus make their _____ with those that they love, and they love the people who love them enough to keep their words. Love _____ enough to obey. When people _____ to keep those words, they show that they don't love the Lord. These words aren't merely the words of Jesus; they belong to the _____.

Remember today's reading in Mark 3:33-35.

The Lord Jesus also sets the _____ for us in how to love the Father. **Read what Jesus said in John 15:8-10.** We must _____ the Lord's example and _____ our discipleship by keeping the Father's commandments.

Authentic Christianity, real Christianity, authentic obedience, real obedience is always motivated by the _____, by the love that we have for the Lord Jesus Christ. We can't _____ that simply because someone obeys and insists on obedience that he is legalistic or a Pharisee. **Read what the apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.** The love of Christ motivated _____ to live for Jesus. There are no _____ or self-serving motives here, but _____ and authentic love for Christ. That is what God _____ – love that keeps God's commandments, His laws.

Read 1 John 2:3-6. To know the Lord in this passage means to have a _____, loving relationship with Him. That relationship is determined by _____ commandments. Complete love for God means one is devoted to keeping the _____ of the Lord.

For the _____ or nominal Christian, keeping commandments is burdensome; it's a drudgery; but the authentic Christian _____ in keeping God's commandments. **Read 1 John 5:2-3.** True Christians find delight in God's commandments, because they know that every commandment of God is for our _____ and our _____. They realize that the words of Jesus _____ to eternal life and to living abundantly.

Some say that a law of Christ doesn't _____, but the Scriptures speak differently. They've read some passages which speak a truth, but it doesn't give the _____ truth. For instance, they might cite Romans 3:28, where Paul says, "For we maintain that a man is justified by _____ apart from works of the Law." They might cite Galatians 2:21, where Paul says, "I do not nullify the _____ of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly." But the context of both of these passages is speaking of the Law of God given by _____. The Law of Moses surely does not _____ anyone today under Christ. We should not _____ the Law of Moses with the commandments found in the New Testament that come from Jesus our Lord. **Read what other people cite in Ephesians 2:8-10.** Truly we cannot _____ our way to heaven, you can't and I can't. No one can say that we've done so well that God _____ us salvation. We shouldn't, however, confuse _____ to Christ with some effort that earns salvation apart from the grace of God. We do not earn our salvation, but we must _____ to grace. Faith and obedience are _____ to receive the gift.

Let's say that I have placed a treasure worth millions of dollars in your back yard, and I tell you about it. I say, all you have to do is to go out there and dig it up, and you have to go to that exact location where I placed it. If you fail to dig or you dig in the wrong place, you won't

enjoy the great gift. You must _____ directions to enjoy the blessing. Who would imagine that because you did a little digging that you earned that treasure? Why, you didn't earn the treasure; you simply met the conditions of the gift. So it is with obedience and God; obedience is the proper _____ to the gift so that one may enjoy eternal life. Our salvation is a treasure beyond our ability to pay, and no one can work hard enough in a lifetime to earn an eternity with God; but if we _____ to follow the Lord, we won't be able to enjoy His blessing.

Obedience is a _____ to the grace of God, not some work of merit that earns us salvation. While the grace of God is unmerited and undeserved, it's by no means _____. While God offers His grace to every man, not everyone _____ that gift. Many choose to serve the world and they lose sight of the _____ Jesus paid to save us.

The Scriptures do indeed speak of the law of Christ, and God expects faithful Christians to _____ Christ's law. Listen to the inspired word of God. **Read what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:19-21.** Paul was _____ the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby _____ the law of Christ."

Like Paul, James also _____ that Christians are under a law. **Read James 2:10-12.** Yes, the law of Christ is a law of _____.

Obedience to the Lord is not an _____; it's a necessity to please God. John 3:36 says, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not _____ the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." When people _____ to do as God instructs they cannot expect to have eternal life. Instead, they can expect to face the _____ of God. Everything that is in the _____ points to faith and obedience. Paul said that he "received grace and apostleship to bring about the _____ of _____ for the sake of his name (that is the name of Christ) among all the nations" (Romans 1:5). He wanted people not only to _____ but also to _____. In fact, the apostle Paul, in the book of Romans, tells how a slave of sin is _____ from that sin and becomes a slave of righteousness. Our transformation into children of God is not by faith alone but includes our _____. Romans 6:17-18 says, "But thanks be to God that though you were _____ of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been _____ from sin, you became the slaves of righteousness." God set these slaves of sin _____ from that sin, when they became obedient from their _____ to His teaching. If you believe the gospel, you will _____ the gospel. Your _____ comes when you become obedient!

The apostle Paul wrote, "and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who _____ the gospel of our

Lord Jesus. These will pay the _____ of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Jesus sets the _____ of obedience for us. Jesus obeyed the Father so that we can be _____. Hebrews 5:8-9 says, “Although He was a Son, He _____ obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who _____ Him the source of eternal salvation.” Jesus wasn’t a legalist or a Pharisee; He was obedient because He _____ the Father. In fact, Jesus said, “but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do _____ as the Father commanded Me” (John 14:31). He did just as the Father _____ Him. He didn’t _____ to the instructions or _____ from them. He _____ did exactly what the Father told Him to do. Doing things carefully and precisely as we’re _____ shows conscientiousness, carefulness and love. It means we take the Lord seriously and lovingly, just as Jesus did His Father.

Why does keeping the law of Christ matter? Because if we _____ Jesus, we’ll _____ His commandments. We too can say, “but so that the _____ may know that we love the Father, we do exactly as the Father commands us.” Do you love the Father? Are you keeping His commandments? If you choose not to _____ in Christ, you cannot be saved. The Lord said, “Go into all the world and _____ the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be _____; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16). If you love the Lord, you’ll trust in Him and believe the _____. You can’t refuse to believe and be saved. That’s His teaching.

If you choose not to _____ of your sins, you cannot be saved. The Lord said, “unless you repent, you will all likewise _____” (Luke 13:3).. If you love the Lord, you’ll _____ your sins (Matthew 5:30). If you aren’t willing to repent, you’ll perish. That’s His teaching.

If you choose not to _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God, you’ll be cast aside by Christ. The Lord Jesus said, “Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32-33). That’s the Lord’s teaching!

If you refuse to be _____ into Christ, you can’t have forgiveness. Acts 2:38 says, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 22:16 says, “Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and _____ your sins, calling on His name.” That’s Scripture. If you love God, you won’t argue with God; you’ll obey His Word. And you’ll obey quickly!

April 27, 2014

Do You Love Me John 21:15-17

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

God loves us, and He _____ each of us to love Him. Today we're asking the question, "What does love _____ me to do?" We know God is gracious and loving; He provides for us every _____ of life. We're so grateful to God for life and every good thing, that we feel the need to _____ to Him. The Scriptures _____ us how God has provided for us and how we should respond to Him. Everyone who gives love wants to be loved in _____. When Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself upon the _____, He showed to us an undeniable love. We shouldn't be _____, then, that the Lord Jesus wants our love and commitment.

I became a Christian _____ of the love of Jesus. His love, His power, His teaching, His wisdom, His truthfulness, His compassion _____ my heart and my loyalty. I became a Christian because of the grace and forgiveness Christ _____. I knew that I needed His _____. I wanted to go to _____ and I didn't want to be lost eternally. Jesus Christ bore a cross to demonstrate His love, and He gives _____ a cross to bear as well. Christianity is a _____ commitment to the cause of Christ. The Lord Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must _____ himself, and take up his cross daily and _____ Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what is a man _____ if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?" (Luke 9:23-25). Have you made a loving commitment to the Lord?

Our reading today comes from The Gospel According to John 21:15-17.

Some people today _____ in a "designer Christianity." They think they can _____ their own blend of religion, and God will be satisfied. Some think God ought to be _____ with anything that we offer to Him. It's almost as if God _____ us and He ought to be happy that we give anything to Him in the way of service or worship. Many _____ that God created us; we didn't create Him. They forget that we're dependent upon _____, but He's not dependent upon us. They forget that Jesus died for our sins to _____ us from sin and spiritual death. Christianity isn't something that we design as we like; it's a _____ faith from God that we should follow. We owe our very soul's _____ to God. Our soul is _____ more than the whole world. Let's get serious about our faith.

What do we _____ Jesus? First, you and I owe Jesus our _____. After Peter denied Jesus three times on the night that Jesus was taken into custody, Jesus later _____

Peter. **Read the Bible record of their conversation in John 21:15-17.** The Bible teaches us how we're supposed to _____ our love for Jesus. The Lord said, "If you love Me, you'll _____ My commandments" (John 14:15). I can't _____ to love the Lord and _____ against the things that Jesus teaches. I can't claim to love the Lord and then make _____ of the will of God or claim the Lord doesn't teach the _____. How I love the Lord is by _____ to his Word and _____ it.

If I love the Lord, I'll draw close to Him and I'll _____ Him. I can't claim to love the Lord if I never take _____ to worship Him. **Read what the Bible says in Hebrews 10:24-25.** How can you say to the Lord that you _____ love Him if you never worship at church. What does that say to God? You might be pleased with _____, but is God pleased with you? You can't love God on your own _____ and never consider what God wants or desires. What kind of love is that?

Our worship must be _____ and come from our hearts. God knows our hearts. Some people go to religious _____ and they think they've worshiped because they _____ something religious coming to them. But no matter how moving a concert is God, wants something _____ from you. What He wants is your heart, your lips, and your life, not as a spectator but as a _____. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in John 4:23-24.** Genuine worship comes from our loving hearts and it _____ the God of heaven. We must never _____ religious entertainment with worship. Genuine love _____ to honor the Lord.

Second, I owe Jesus my _____. Since I belong to Him, I ought to wear His _____ and never be ashamed to own Him as my Lord. Colossians 3:17 says, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." As church members, we're the _____ of Christ and we ought to wear His name. I don't understand why some _____ the name of Christ from the church. We're _____ to wear the name of "Christian" and to be a member of the church that belongs to Jesus Christ. Jesus _____ the church; He purchased it with his own _____; and He serves as the _____ of the church, and is the _____ of the church. Why wouldn't the church want to _____ his name? Why wouldn't a Christian honor Christ in every aspect of his _____?

The Lord Jesus said, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26). Some folks are simply ashamed to _____ that they are Christians and that they go to church. They'd rather stay silent than to be ridiculed for their _____ by the world. What kind of loyalty is that? The apostle Paul who died for his faith, said, "I have been _____ with Christ; and it's no longer I who live, but Christ _____ in me; and the life

which I now live in the flesh I live by _____ in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Galatians 2:20). We need that kind of loyalty! Jesus needs to live in our hearts and in our lives.

We can't accept the world's morals and _____ loyalty to Jesus. Our lives must show our _____. **Read what the Bible says in Ephesians 5:15-17.** Unfortunately, some Christians live like they've never _____ of Jesus or _____ a Bible. Their mouths are full of ungodly words and their actions show that they don't _____ about Jesus Christ. First John 2:6 says, “the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk (that is to live) in the same _____ as Jesus walked (or lived).” If we're to be _____ to Christ, then let's live lives worthy of the name of Christ, and really be “Christians.”

The Lord Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he'll be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (or money)” (Matthew 6:24). Some people live to make _____, and nothing else matters. If you make money your _____, then Jesus won't be. This is true of anything. You can't serve _____ masters faithfully. You'll _____ to follow one and reject the other. If you wear the name of Christ, then _____ Him. Don't let _____ come between you and the Lord. **Read what the apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:9-10.** Do you please the Lord Jesus Christ?

Third, I owe Jesus my _____. Jesus was willing to _____ everything in order to accomplish the will of His Father. **Read what Jesus said in John 10:17-18.** Jesus willingly laid down His life for our sakes because He received the commandment from His _____. He didn't _____ with His Father; He didn't ask to be excused; and He didn't recommend someone else go to the cross. His Father loved Him for it, and the Father loves us when we _____ Him from a pure and loving heart.

Jesus asks us to obey him by taking up our _____. Jesus himself knows what it is to sacrifice in order to _____. Obedience is necessary if we are to _____ God. Jesus once asked, “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I _____ you?” (Luke 6:46). If we _____ Jesus as our Savior, we must also recognize Him as our Lord. If we recognize Him as Lord, then we ought to _____ whatever He commands, _____ wherever He sends, and _____ whatever He asks. Obedience means we _____ our will to His will. We don't _____ ourselves from our duty; we don't act on our own without God's authority. We don't _____ with God; we _____ Him. Obedience means I'll follow Christ and keep His teaching regardless of the _____. I'll follow Jesus because I _____ Him to save me and to lead me in the right path. I'll follow Jesus even when I don't _____. I don't know everything; and God sees and knows things I'll never know. I trust God, and I trust my

Lord Jesus. I'll follow Jesus when it's _____ and I'll follow Jesus when it's _____. The straight and narrow road may not seem easy, but it's the _____ road to eternal life. My friends may not go with me; they may even ridicule me for following Jesus, but I won't take any other _____ than to follow my Lord.

Fourth, I owe Jesus my _____. Jesus didn't _____ His life at the cross; He _____ it purposefully. He gave His _____ to a crown of thorns, He gave his _____ to a terrible scourging, He gave his _____ to a spear; He gave his hands and feet to the nails; He shed his _____ for our sins; and He yielded up his spirit to God. Jesus _____ what it was to give of Himself. The Bible says, "For you know the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Again, 1 Peter 2:24 says, "He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might _____ to sin and _____ to righteousness. For by his _____ you have been healed." Jesus made a very personal and very costly sacrifice so that we could have forgiveness and eternal life.

Why does all this matter? Because if we _____ the Lord, we'll _____ our love by our worship, our service, our obedience, and our sacrifice. We'll never stop being _____. The Father sacrificed His beloved Son so that we might _____. Many never give that a second thought. Do you? I certainly hope you will.

Have you considered the ultimate sacrifice that Christ made on your behalf? Will you _____ your life to Him to serve Him? To become a Christian one must put his _____ in the Lord and be willing to follow His _____. People become Christians because they come to know the _____ of God through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will _____ all men to Myself" (John 12:32). Be drawn to Christ and His love. Be drawn to leave an _____ life of sin and take on a _____ life of righteousness and love. Be willing to _____ the name of Jesus before others and to wear His name, so that everyone knows who you are and whose you are. Then out of faith and love, be _____ into the death of Christ, where he shed His blood. That's _____ the blood of Jesus cleanses you from sin. Baptism _____ us with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection (Colossians 2:12-13). At baptism, we have a forgiven, _____ life. God raises us up with Christ, and the Lord _____ us to His church. When we're baptized, God makes us his children and heirs of _____ life with Christ. We _____ with Christ in baptism so that we may _____ with him forever. I pray that you will give yourself to Him. I pray you'll put your trust in Him, repent of all your sins, confess Him, and be baptized. Don't put it off. Be baptized today!