



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

*Program
Study Guides*

For

November 2014

“The Called Out Body”

Acts 2:37-41

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

Did you know that the _____ is the called out body of Christ? Today we're looking at how the church was called together to _____ the Lord Jesus. The Lord wisely established His church because He knew what a _____ it would be for everyone. When people follow the wise _____ of Jesus in Scripture, the church acts as the body of Christ on earth today. The Scriptures show kindness, teach the saving _____, help the poor, care for the children, and _____ the young to live Godly and spiritual lives. Jesus calls people to be His disciples and to do His _____. Every person who wants to do something meaningful with his life can do no _____ than to follow Jesus.

Our English word “church” is the normal _____ for a Greek term *ekklesia*. The word *ekklesia* literally means “called out” and refers to an assembly or a congregation that's been called together for a _____. The church is made up of the Lord's people called out from the _____, disciples who have denied themselves and taken up their crosses to follow Him. The church consists of those who have been washed in the _____ of Jesus Christ. When a person is baptized for the forgiveness of his sins, the Lord _____ him to the church, His body. So, the church is made up of the saved who _____ their lives in service to the Lord.

We must be _____ to distinguish popular religion from genuine devotion to the Lord. Some religious groups focus on some _____ leader rather than on Jesus Christ. Others have turned their _____ into a religious enterprise, complete with entertainment. Still others have turned to opinions and traditions of men and have _____ the Word of God. What is the called out body of Jesus like? You may search and find the _____ church in Scripture.

Our reading today comes from the book of Acts 2:37-41. The New Testament _____ the church as the “called out” people who believe and obey the Lord. When the Scriptures use the word “church” in the singular, it refers to everyone who has _____ the one, true gospel and whom the Lord has added to His body, the church. The church began in Jerusalem, but because of persecution _____ throughout Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:4). As new congregations developed in the places where they traveled, they didn't _____ new denominations with different names and creeds. They built new congregations around the inspired _____ that they had learned from the apostles.

The gospel was good news to them, and they would not _____ from what they had learned. The Lord Jesus in The Gospel According to Matthew _____ the apostles to teach others what He had taught them. **Read Matthew 28:18-20.** They didn't teach what people _____ Christianity should be; they preached the Word of God! Disciples _____ from their Master; they _____ what their Master taught.

They remembered what Jesus said, "Why do you _____ me 'Lord, Lord,' and not _____ what I tell you?" (Luke 6:46). They didn't want to add to His words or take away from them; they simply wanted to _____ the Lord. They trusted Jesus to be their Lord and to know what was _____ for them to do. Colossians 1:18 says, "He is also _____ of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have _____ place in everything." The church uniquely belongs to Jesus and Jesus _____. No group can vote Him out or overrule what He teaches or what He instructs; and He is the one that gives the church what to _____ and what to _____. Our _____ may change with the times, but the Lord doesn't change His _____ to suit the times. If He were following us, then He would be our _____, but that's not the way things are. He is the _____; and our task is to deny ourselves and to follow Him.

Jesus said, "If you _____ in my word, then you are truly disciples of mine, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you _____" (John 8:31-32). The early Christians wanted to be _____ disciples and to be free, so they remained within His teaching. Many people today follow the traditions of men or the thinking of the time and they _____ of what Jesus actually taught.

When people move away from the Word of Jesus, they cease to be His _____. When people develop their own "churches," designed after their own opinions and their human traditions, they cease to be _____ of Jesus. **Read what the apostle Paul warned Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-4.** You might attend a congregation that you really _____ and one that perhaps entertains you with ideas that you want to hear; but, if that congregation teaches you things that are untrue, things that are different from what the Word of God teaches, it will do you more _____ than _____. Only the _____ can set you free!

The called out body of Christ must be _____ to the truth. The Lord, in the early days, appointed _____ whose purpose was to spiritually _____ every member of the body. **Read what God gave these leaders to do in Ephesians 4:12-13.** Jesus didn't appoint men to _____ their own doctrines but to bring the church to the _____ of the faith; that is, to all follow the _____ belief. Following the true doctrine and knowing the truth about the Son of God causes people to _____ spiritually.

Paul said, “Him (speaking about Jesus) we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature (or complete) in Christ” (Colossians 1:28). When people mature in their faith and in their knowledge of Jesus, they can _____ the trickery and lies of the devil. The apostle Paul explains the value of this maturity; he wants us to be mature “so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (Ephesians 4:14). Every silly and crafty religious doctrine fills our society; and people who don’t _____ the Scriptures get caught up in its deception. Don’t be fooled; the truth _____. Wouldn’t you rather have the _____ of God than the _____ of men?

When we mature spiritually, we’ll be _____ to distinguish the good from the evil, the true from the false, and right from wrong. Sadly, some folks in the early church didn’t _____ in their knowledge of God and His Word like they should have. **Read the criticism of some people in Hebrews 5:12-14.** I fear many today are in the same shape; they need someone to teach them the _____ of Christianity. Because they study _____ by humans and not the _____, they often cannot distinguish true Christianity from a corrupted religion.

God wants His people to _____ the truth and to _____ the truth. **Read Ephesians 4:15-16 – we must avoid deceitful doctrines.** Devotion to Christ means that we’ll speak the _____ in love. Devotion to Christ unites people and gets them _____ and _____. The love of Christ causes people to love each other and to build up one another. The church that loves the Lord, works for the Lord, and loves each other will _____ and _____.

The Christian life in the body of Christ is one of _____ development and growth. **Read how God encourages us in Colossians 3:1-4.** We are called to set our _____ on Christ and the things above; He is our life! When we give our lives to the Lord here on earth, we can go to live with Christ in glory in _____. Our task is not to please people here but to _____ on pleasing God.

As a body, we are called to _____ and to serve the Lord. The Lord wants us to offer up spiritual _____ that God can accept (1 Peter 2:5). He wants us to worship as people devoted to the Lord with our hearts, those hearts that are _____ before God. In the church that Jesus built everyone is a priest and everyone has a responsibility to worship and serve God.

When the _____ church assembled together they sang hymns; they communed in the Lord’s Supper; they prayed; they collected money to support the works of the church; and they listened to the preaching of the Word. Paul’s epistle to the Colossians was designed to be _____ to the assembled congregation or church (Colossians 4:16). Paul said, “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and

hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (Colossians 3:16). The early church was to _____ psalms and hymns to God, teaching and admonishing one another, letting the Word of Christ richly dwell within their hearts with thanksgiving. Notice that the _____ in this passage is on what is sung, not on what sounds _____. They were to teach and admonish one another, not _____. They were to give thanks to God, not _____ for each other. There’s no suggestion of using an instrument in this passage.

The early church also assembled to _____ the Lord’s Supper and to commune with Christ. **Read what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.** The church _____ the Lord’s body and blood given on the cross each Lord’s day by partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

Whether we are assembled or not, we ought to _____ God, and do as He wants us to do. **Read Hebrews 13:15-16.** Our focus must always be on loving _____ and loving one another. **Read Colossians 3:14-15.** Are you pleasing God? Are you living in such a way that you _____ His commandments? Jesus called His people out through the _____ of the gospel to live loving and godly lives, to worship Him, to do good to others, and to share the gospel with others. Let’s follow the _____ of the apostle Peter. When several didn’t like what Jesus taught and _____ from Him, Jesus asked His apostles, “Do you want to go away as well?” Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the _____ of eternal life, and we have _____, and we have come to _____, that you are the Holy One of God’” (John 6:68-69). Jesus Christ _____ has the words of eternal life, so we must turn to Him and His teaching.

The Lord expects us not only to believe His teaching , but also to get involved in His _____. Hebrews 10:25 warns us not to _____ “our own assembling together, as the habit of some is, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” The New Testament church always appeared in identifiable congregations who _____ regularly on the first day of the week to _____ and to _____ for one another. If you can assemble with the saints, you should. It will _____ you to be a part of the church that follows Jesus.

To become a member of the Lord’s church, to be saved, and to become a Christian – all that takes place at the same time – you must be _____ to His Word. Peter told the guilty at Pentecost to “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins” (Acts 2:38). Acts 2:41 says, “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were _____ about three thousand souls.” The Lord adds those who repent and are baptized, and are saved, to His church. Wouldn’t you like to be part of God’s called out body of believers? Obey the Lord, and He will add you to His church today!

The Devil's Schemes

Ephesians 6:10-13

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

Some question whether the devil _____ or not, but the Bible reveals all the _____ that he brings to this world. God's Word gives us _____ and _____; it teaches us the way to eternal life. It also _____ us from the lies and the schemes of the devil. Your Bible can help you _____ what the devil will say and do to try to pull you away from God and from His _____. The psalmist said, "Your word I have treasured in my _____, That I may not sin against You (Psalm 119:11). The more we know God's Word, the better we can stop the devil from taking us _____ to sin. We need to know the _____ of God's Word, so we can say no to the devil.

Peter warns us, "Be of sober spirit, be on the _____. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring _____, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Just like a lion prowls around for its prey, so the devil _____ out people he can deceive and devour. The devil may _____ to like you, but he's only interested in exploiting you. He may promise you all kinds of _____, but his promises fail in time.

Read James 4:7-8. If you draw _____ to God, the devil will not _____ you. God promises us a way of escape so that we may _____ and escape the strategies of Satan who wants to _____ our souls (1 Corinthians 10:13). If we're to defeat the devil we must learn _____ the devil works.

Our reading today comes from the book of Ephesians 6:10-13.

Someone says, "Well, I'm just not _____ there is such a person as the devil." Jesus _____ in the devil, and in fact He met him face to face, as is recorded in Matthew chapter 4. He found out that Satan _____ through lies and through deception. **Read what the Lord Jesus told some unbelieving Jews in John 8:44.** People get _____ by lies because they think that what is a lie is actually true. The devil fools them and the devil realizes that if he tells a lie long enough and loud enough, gullible people will come to _____ it.

Satan is a cunning adversary who _____ his real intentions. **Read Paul's warning about false apostles in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.** These false apostles _____ error and exploited the people for their own _____. They didn't care how their lies affected anyone as long as they satisfied their _____.

How do you _____ a counterfeit? Counterfeits try to _____ as much like the real thing as possible, but there are always _____. People who handle cash _____ genuine bills. They know every _____ about a bill, so that when a fake, counterfeit bill comes, they can see its _____. In the same way, the Bible provides us with the _____ of what is genuine, so that when the devil introduces a counterfeit religion or a counterfeit church, we can spot it for what it is! Let's look at some of the devil's counterfeits.

First, the devil does his best to _____ God from the next generation. He's urging them to take their _____ off of God and what the Bible teaches. He _____ them the Bible is old-fashioned, judgmental, and mean. In reality, the Bible is utterly relevant to today's world; it's truthful about what hurts; and so it's utterly _____. When people forget the Bible, they _____ for all kinds of lies and errors. The Bible _____ us. **Read Ephesians 4:11-14.** Jesus first gave apostles and prophets and then the written word to _____ us the truth and to _____ us from the devil's schemes.

The Bible provides an infallible _____ of truth and righteousness. It teaches everything _____ to know for salvation and eternal life. It distinguishes truth from error, right from wrong, and the devil likes to _____ that truth with error to keep people from knowing God's will. If they don't know it, they can fall _____ to his wicked schemes and end up in great misery. **Read what the Lord said through the prophet Hosea, in Hosea 4:6.** When people _____ to know God's will, the whole society _____ for it. Though Bibles are available everywhere, many have such little knowledge of God and the Bible that they don't even know when they have _____.

Second, the devil would like to convince us that sin doesn't _____. Our culture sees almost _____ as sinful. They don't understand that sin _____ everything it touches. People live for the _____ and for their own _____ with little thought to the consequences of their choices. They forget that God calls certain behaviors sinful because He has seen the _____ they do. When parents forget God and set ungodly _____ for their children, children grow up as selfish and irresponsible. Some wonder _____ their lives are so miserable and so full of drama. They never consider it's because they've shut _____ out of their lives and they've shut His _____ completely from them. If you forget God day after day, you can _____ misery to surround you. If you fail to spiritually _____ your children, you can expect the devil to _____ them his ways.

When people quit reading their Bibles, quit going to church, and _____ God out of their lives, they're going to follow the ways of sin. The devil will _____ them of their love, their faith, their consciences, and their hope. He'll _____ them to sin that hardens their heart and makes them evil. **Read what the Hebrew writer warns in Hebrews 3:12-13.**

Recent polls reveal that Americans are _____ more and more away from the teaching of Scripture. For instance, the devil loves to deceive people into believing that they don't have to _____ in Jesus Christ. Jesus isn't just _____ moral teacher or prophet. He's the one and only Son of God, and unless we believe in Him as the Christ, we'll _____ in our sins and be lost _____ (John 8:24).

The devil has convinced people that God won't _____ them for sin, but the Bible says otherwise. **Read Galatians 5:19-21.** You can't _____ in sin and go to heaven. God will _____ sin.

The devil loves to _____ broken lives and broken homes that were destroyed by sin. He doesn't want you to see the _____ of what sin will do. He loves to _____ sinful behavior "fashionable" and "acceptable." He'll tell you sin will make you feel _____, will make you feel _____, and make you look good in front of your friends. He'll make you think your _____ will last forever. Of course, He's _____. His promises _____ good but always fail. He'll tell you people don't _____ on sin anymore. He'll make every _____ to keep you doing what he knows will cost you your soul.

God loves us, and it breaks His heart to _____ people for their sins. God doesn't want to condemn us; He wants us to _____. But don't fall for the devil's _____ that God won't punish sin. If we _____ Him, He will punish us. **Read what God told the Jews through the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 18:30-32.**

Third, the devil loves to plant _____ in our hearts. The devil would love nothing more than to _____ our faith in Christ. The devil knows that without faith, it is _____ to please God (Hebrews 11:6). **Read how the Bible describes faith in Hebrews 11:1-3.** Faith assures us that what we hope for is _____; we're convinced that God's Word is utterly trustworthy. God _____ what we cannot see and _____ what we cannot know. We must _____ to trust Him and to be faithful.

Read Proverbs 3:5-8. Faith in God has _____ itself for many, many centuries; but doubt leads only to foolishness and failure. Doubt leaves a person in confusion, chaos, and uncertainty. A person without faith in God has no _____ for distinguishing truth from error or right from wrong. He must assume a standard that arises from his own _____, a standard as flimsy as the passing of time. He can never be _____ of anything, and he must live with hopelessness and an uncertain morality. Doubt makes people selfish; and a selfish world with selfish standards will inevitably lead to _____ chaos and misery.

The devil wants to _____ doubt in what we believe. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:1-2.** The devil will _____ with God's Word just enough to make it say what he wants it to say

and what people want to hear. The devil deceives people by _____ God's will to fit the times and giving people his warped version of the truth.

If Satan can get us to doubt what God says, He can offer us his _____. He causes doubt by suggesting God has _____ us out of happiness. Satan suggests the way to _____ comes from following his alternative way. The truth is that the devil just wants to enslave us with sin and steal our _____. So the devil loves to _____ an "alternate" truth or an "alternative" lifestyle. He'll do everything he can to keep you from _____ God's will.

Fourth, we need to _____ that the devil hates, and slanders, and persecutes anyone who disagrees with him. **Read John 15:18-19.** The world _____ Christians and the will of God because the Bible shows the _____ of their ungodly and worldly ways. Our culture punishes anyone who is _____ enough to call sin "sin." But if we are faithful to God, we must take _____ of the consequences of sin. Please, please, don't be fooled by the devil.

There is one last thing the devil will do to cause you to be lost. He'll tell you that you have _____ of time, time to repent, time to come to Jesus. The devil knows that if you put off repentance now, it will be even _____ to change later. The devil will do anything to _____ you from leaving the way of sin and following the way of Jesus Christ. The Lord's main _____ to every village where He went from place to place was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). Jesus _____ condoned or overlooked sin. He despised sin so much that He was willing to _____ the cross to atone for our sins, so that we could be reconciled with God and live eternally. Have you considered how much Jesus _____ for you? He loved you _____ to take the punishment for your sins.

You are either choosing to follow a liar, that's Satan, who schemes to _____ you of your soul or to follow the One who loves you enough to _____ you the truth and to forgive you. The first, Satan, will lead you to eternal _____; while the Other will lead you to eternal _____ and joy. You can follow the truth or follow deception. You can follow your greatest _____ or follow your greatest _____. What will you do?

The blood of Jesus is _____ to our souls when we're willing to put our trust in Him, repent of our sins, confess His name before others, and be baptized into Christ. Baptism is an immersion in water for the _____ of sin. The devil says you _____ have to be baptized, but we must listen to what the Lord Jesus said. He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). That is talking about baptism. You can't be saved unless you're _____ of water and the Spirit, and that happens when you are baptized. Won't you be baptized today?

Doctrine Matters Galatians 1:6-9

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

You've probably heard the old saying, "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're _____." Is that true? Today we will see _____ what we believe matters. The Lord Jesus _____ what He had to say very, very highly. **Read Luke 9:26.** Jesus said that when He returns in glory He will be ashamed of those who are ashamed of His _____. This seems _____ to many today who don't think it matters what you believe, but the Lord Jesus takes what we believe very seriously.

We live in a confused age that speaks of "_____ truth" and "_____ truth." Many today believe that all truth is _____ and there are no absolute truths. In a postmodern society, truth isn't as _____ as getting along with people. If you disagree with your friend's beliefs, today's version of love dictates that you must unconditionally _____ their beliefs as an alternate version of the truth. Some assume if you _____ with anyone about anything that you're mean-spirited. But is it loving to remain _____ about the truth? Did Jesus remain silent about the truth?

Paul once asked, "So have I become your _____ by telling you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16). Paul knew the truth was _____ to have a right relationship with God and that a lie would cause them to be lost. Because he loved them, he wanted them to know the truth that would _____ them, rather than believe a lie that would _____ them. Doctrine matters because the _____ matters.

Our reading today comes from Paul's epistle to the Galatians 1:6-9.

The word doctrine simply means _____. Many who don't like "doctrine" nevertheless want teaching from God. Here are some reasons why doctrine or teaching is very, very important. First, doctrine is _____ if you want to know God and know about God. To know God, we must listen closely to what He _____. God gave us His _____ in the Bible so that we may come to _____ Him. The Bible _____ God's history with mankind from the beginning and how God will deal with us at the end of time. It tells of His steadfast love towards those who _____ and _____ Him, His providence for all our needs, and His utter holiness. The Bible reveals that He _____ all things and He rules over all things. From the Bible we _____ that we're accountable to Him and His will and that we'll be in judgment before Him at the end of time.

What we believe matters because beliefs and doctrines have _____. What we believe, what we tolerate, and what doctrines we demand determine our _____ and the direction of our lives. When beliefs and doctrines change, our _____ and behaviors change. What we believe about God, about creation, about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, about sin, about salvation, about worship, and about the church matter because they _____ our choices and our relationships with God and with other people. Have you taken time to _____ your beliefs? Churches change when their _____ change. The question is whether they are growing _____ to God or _____ farther away.

Some religious groups _____ constant messages on positive mental attitudes and unconditional grace. Some never call people to _____ their sins. Some may _____ this kind of preaching, but change has devastated authentic Christianity. We've become a broken people because we've _____ listening to the whole counsel of God. We've found teachers who preach what people _____ to hear. As Paul predicted in 2 Timothy 4:4, they have bought into myths and turned their _____ away from the truth. Many have chosen to live as idolaters who design their _____ God rather than follow the God of the Bible. If we don't know the doctrine of the Bible, we cannot _____ the Lord Jesus.

Second, doctrine is utterly _____ to Christians. **Read what Paul told Timothy of the value of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:15-17.** Scripture gives us the foundational teaching that we need to _____ God. It reproves us when we're deceived or sinful, so that we may _____ ourselves. Then God's Word works in our lives to _____ us out of ignorance and sin into the truth and into righteousness. The inspired Word also _____ us for righteousness; it teaches us how to do every good work. God can transform our lives and turn us into people who _____ everyone around us if we'll let Him, but we have to let Him.

Third, Jesus taught doctrine because He wanted us to _____ the truth. If we believe Jesus is the resurrected Son of God, and He is, what He teaches is _____. To deny His doctrine or teaching is really to deny _____. We can't _____ Christ from His teaching. Jesus once asked, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46). If we want to go to heaven, then we _____ follow the teaching of Jesus.

Doctrine is necessary to know the truth and to distinguish the truth from _____. The world is _____ about the truth. Some think that there's no such thing as absolute truth; and others believe that each person can manufacture his own _____ of the truth. The Lord Jesus made two important statements about the truth in The Gospel According to John. First, He said, "I am the _____, and the _____, and the _____; and no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6). Jesus is indeed the truth, and He has _____ that truth to us. If we truly wish to know the truth, then we must _____ to Jesus. Second, He

told those Jews who believed in Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32). It’s only by abiding in the words of Jesus that we can know the truth, and only by abiding in His words can we truly be His disciples, and only by abiding in His words can we truly be _____!

When people _____ to know the truth in God’s Word, the Bible, they easily fall for _____ teaching. The best way to _____ ourselves from lies, myths, and falsehoods comes from knowing the Scripture. It’s noble to examine the teaching that we hear _____, to examine it very closely, and then to _____ it with what the Bible says (Acts 17:11). The Bereans listened intelligently; they didn’t simply swallow whatever Paul _____. They _____ him out. God considers it _____ to examine, to evaluate, and to distinguish the truth from error, the right from wrong, and the Biblical from the human. **Read 1 John 4:1.**

The chief priests and the scribes challenged Jesus often while He was teaching, and they wanted Him to _____ the question, “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?” Jesus responded, “I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?” Matthew 21:24-25. That’s a great question to ask about any doctrine or practice. Does it come from _____ or from _____? Many religions are filled with doctrines and practices that are _____ in origin. Christ never taught these doctrines or instructed His people to _____ these things. What some people _____ Christian is actually foreign to Christ, but people don’t know it because they’ve never taken time to _____ their beliefs and practices in the Scriptures. Just because some church believes something or practices something doesn’t mean that it came from _____.

The Lord Jesus criticized the church at Thyatira because they didn’t take action against a lady who taught _____ (Revelation 2:20). The Lord _____ teaching evil! When people teach others to _____, they are teaching something that is evil. Thyatira _____ Jezebel’s teaching, and the Lord held that against them. When people teach false doctrines, they _____ the Lord. This is why we must know the Lord’s teachings well enough to distinguish _____ from _____. The forces of evil have never been _____. Since the beginning, evil has always _____ the truth; it has always promoted falsehoods, always invented new doctrines and practices, and tried to advance human doctrines that lead people away from God. Evil teaches people to be selfish and unfeeling, to give into their desires and pleasures, to stop worrying about the future, and to resist making any judgments about anything. When people _____ judging anything as right or wrong, they irresistibly start permitting what is wrong to _____ their lives. When people _____ knowing the doctrine of Christ, they fail to realize that the devil won’t sit silent. He will take _____ of them and step in with lies and falsehoods.

Read how Paul challenged Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-4. The gospel of Christ _____ the way to righteousness, and the way to salvation, the way to truth, and the way to heaven. That's why we _____ preach the Word. Someone says at this point, "Phil, don't you know that doctrine _____?" Is it really doctrine that divides, or is it the _____ of man in rebellion to the teaching of God? Galatians 5:20 lists rivalries, dissensions, and divisions as works of the _____. Is God's Word _____ of causing sin? No! Division comes from selfish ambition, from jealousy and rebellion. From the beginning people have challenged God's ways and _____ their own. God's Word stands as good and right; and Satan will never be _____ to follow God but will lead people in rebellion to God.

Fourth, doctrine matters because what we believe determines how we _____ morally. What we believe about sin and what we recognize as sin _____ our hearts and our conscience. Scripture teaches us what is right and what is wrong, but it also _____ our souls. When people _____ and _____ to the Lord, they will not accept or practice sinful ways. When people understand that they're created by God rather than an accident of evolution, they recognize a _____ for morality. They realize their accountability to a higher _____. Doctrine helps people to _____ right from wrong (Hebrews 5:14). In ancient times, the Israelites ceased to follow God and they ran after _____. Their idolatry led them into moral _____ and gross immorality. They forgot the Word of God. **Read Hosea 4:6.** The moral and spiritual _____ of our day come from rejecting God's way and from following our own ways.

Fifth, doctrine matters because hearing and _____ the teaching of Jesus affects our relationship to Him. Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will _____ My commandments" (John 14:15). If we ignore doctrine, how can we _____ what the Lord's commandments are? How can we demonstrate our _____ for Him? Doctrine is essential to a _____ relationship with God. **Read Luke 8:19-21.** Would the Lord _____ you one of His relatives?

Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-27. Wisdom is _____ and _____ what the Lord says. Foolishness is hearing but doing something else, something that isn't in His _____. Will you be wise or will you be foolish?

One day we'll all give an _____ of ourselves to God (Hebrews 4:12-13). God's Word will _____ us one day. Shouldn't we _____ God's will and _____ it?

To become a Christian _____ with all your heart Jesus is the Christ, turn from sin which hurts and divides, _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be _____ or immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. This is what God teaches. Wisdom says listen and do what God says. God's Word is simple and plain. Doctrine is important because it's Christ's doctrine; and Jesus is Lord.

“Give Thanks”

Psalm 100

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

This coming Thursday, many will tell what they're _____ for. Today we're going to see how counting your _____ will make a difference in your life. Because God is good and righteous we can _____ to His Word. We can be assured that God's Word will _____ us the truths we most need to hear; how to be His people, and show to prosper. (Psalm 19:9). I'm thankful God loves us so much and blesses us every day.

Psalm 92:1-2 says, “It's good to give thanks to the LORD, And to sing _____ to His name, O Most High; To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, And Your faithfulness by night.” During the Thanksgiving holiday, we _____ our blessings and express our thanks to God for them. Thanks should be on our lips _____ . We can never say thank you _____ to family, friends, and especially to God. Thanksgiving is not just something that we do to be kind; it also _____ us. When thanksgiving becomes an integral part of your life, you'll find that your attitude and your life _____. You'll become _____ positive, gracious, loving, and humble.

We're all utterly dependent for _____ upon the God who created us. He provides all our _____. The fine tuning of our universe which allows us to breathe, to have fresh water, to have food, and to have night and day is not an _____. God made this _____ for our blessing. We need to _____ God for all that He has done and to be thankful. The act of giving thanks leads to _____ hearts, minds, and lives. Giving thanks will also _____ us to take God and His ways seriously. Nothing is more important!

Our reading today is Psalm 100, a Psalm of thanksgiving.

God has always _____ His people to be thankful. Paul encouraged the church in Colossae to, “Devote yourselves to _____, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2). He had already given the reason for this; it's because of what the Lord Jesus has _____. **Read Colossians 2:6-7.** Walk as you were instructed and overflow with _____. Do this and it will make your life _____ and _____. You'll be right with God and it will _____ your life with joy.

The Christian life should _____ with gratitude. How do we do this? **Read Colossians 3:15-17.** Let Christ's peace be your _____, sing with thankfulness in your heart, and do everything in His name while giving thanks. These changes will lift your _____,

they'll encourage your _____. Your focus determines your attitude and your _____. Hebrews 13:15 says, "Through Him (that is, Jesus) then, let us continually offer up a _____ of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name."

It takes _____ to keep focusing our minds on God. Life is _____ changing, distracting, and often unfair. Our changing world is _____ fast in morality and faith. We may even think all is _____. We can't _____ what misfortunes may lie ahead, but we can count the blessings we now enjoy with confidence. We can remember that we are victorious in _____. We can be certain that God will keep His _____ for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

We must follow God's _____ in 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18, "pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." In everything? Yes, in everything. In _____ times and in _____, give thanks. When life is _____, give thanks for what you have in Christ. Even if you _____ for the name of Christ, give thanks! **Read 1 Peter 4:12-14.** The "here and now" isn't everything; the Lord will _____ those who love and serve Him.

Our struggles in this life _____ us for something better, so be thankful even for struggles. **Read the counsel in James 1:2-4.** God is shaping and molding us for _____, so don't despair when you face a struggle. Learn to be thankful for everything. Why?

First, when you're thankful you'll _____ complaining and grumbling. Throughout their journey in the wilderness, the Israelites grumbled against God. God counted their grumbling as a lack of _____; First Corinthians 10 regards grumbling as great a sin as idolatry or immorality. **Read Philippians 2:14-16.** When you complain, you take your focus off of what _____ the Lord has done for you. Don't do that.

Second, when you're thankful you'll stop _____ so much. **Read Philippians 4:4-7.** When we rejoice in the Lord and when we take our _____ and _____ to Him, He blesses us with _____. The Lord truly gives us an abundant _____.

Start rejoicing over the things that God has done for you, and life will _____ more positive and joyful. Proverbs 15:30 says, "Bright eyes gladden the heart; Good news puts fat on the bones." Count your blessings, focus on the good, and _____ in Christ! Put away the _____ and focus on the good. Philippians 4:8 says, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there be any excellence, if there be anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."

Third, when you're thankful you'll become more _____ and less prideful. Remember God is the _____ of every blessing (James 1:17). This is why the Lord asks us to _____ to God, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). You may work a job and think it all _____ on you, but remember God is at the source of every blessing.

Read what Moses reminded the Israelites as they were about to enter the promised land in Deuteronomy 8:11-14. Pride leads to forgetfulness. He urged them in verse 18, "But you shall _____ the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day." God is the source of all that we possess, all that we _____, and all that we _____ to be. First Corinthians 4:7 asks some arrogant people, "For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not _____? And if you did receive it, why do you _____ as if you had not received it?"

Some folks _____ on themselves, their own abilities, and their own righteousness. When a person gives thanks to God merely for what he possesses within himself, he's actually _____ about himself more than thanking God. The Lord Jesus contrasted the arrogant person with the person who recognizes his utter _____ for God. **Read Luke 18:11-14.** Gratitude to God, a recognition for our utter need for God, removes our _____.

Fourth, when you're thankful you'll be _____ to be more gracious to others. The Lord Jesus taught us to pray, "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). Giving thanks for God's grace _____ us to be willing to forgive other people. **Read Ephesians 4:31-32.**

Fifth, when you're thankful you'll express your _____. We're thankful the Lord Jesus willingly and lovingly _____ Himself upon the cross. First John 4:19 says, "We love, because He _____ loved us." Giving thanks helps you and me keep our focus on the Lord and on what really _____. Gratitude for what Jesus did is at the _____ of our conversion. Gratitude leads us to be committed disciples who want to _____ the Lord in all we do. We cannot look deeply at the _____ and walk away as if nothing matters. Our thankfulness will not let us.

Does the cross matter to you? Surprisingly, some people _____ as if the cross didn't matter. **Read Luke 17:12-16.**

When people _____ to remember God, or honor Him, or thank Him, they lose sight of the blessing of living as God's people. An ungrateful person will _____ apathetic and callous toward God. When people lose sight of God, they also lose sight of their morality and the truth. They don't realize that when they _____ honoring God, they _____ dishonoring themselves.

Romans 1:21-24 described the pagan Gentiles this way: “For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.”

Giving thanks _____. When you love God, you want to _____ Him with all your heart. Psalm 50:23 says, “He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving _____ Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.” Truly, giving thanks comes from our _____ and shows in our lives. Thanksgiving leads to thanks _____. Are you thankful? More than anything else, I look forward to going to _____ and seeing Jesus. The first thing I want to do is to look into His eyes and say to Him “Thank you for _____ for me. Thank you for shedding your _____ to cleanse me from all my terrible sins, so that I could live with you.” I don’t have to wait till I go to heaven to _____ my thanks to God. I can do it now by getting right with Him and by _____ Him. I don’t want to _____ a single Lord’s Day, the first day of the week, without prayer and singing praise to Him. I don’t want to miss a single Lord’s Day without gathering around the Lord’s table to _____ of the Lord’s Supper, remembering the Lord’s body and blood which were given for me.

The word “thankful” actually comes from an old English word “think-ful.” Being thankful comes from being think-ful. When we realize how blessed we are, we should _____ to the love and goodness of God. How often people today want and want from God, but never _____ to give their praise, their thanks, or their hearts to Him. Have you?

Will you follow Jesus and _____ the One who loves you? God’s goodness leads us to _____ and obey the gospel. If I love God and I’m thankful to Him for His grace, I’ll gladly follow and _____ Him. God’s love makes us want to _____ in Him, to repent of all our sins, to _____ His name, and to be _____ into Christ. According to Romans 6:3-7, we _____ with Christ in baptism, we’re _____ with Him in baptism, and we’re _____ with Him to walk in newness of life in baptism. God wants you, your heart, your life, and your soul. Won’t you serve Him and follow Him always. Thankfulness begins when people keep the Lord Jesus in their hearts everyday and serve Him. We hope you’ll not wait another day to put your Lord on in baptism.

Do You Believe?

John 11:20-27

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

When the Lord _____ in His Word, do you believe Him? Today we're going to see that believing God means believing what He _____. We search the Scriptures for God's will because we know the Lord speaks the _____. We don't want to settle for anything _____ than the truth. The Lord's character, wisdom, and power reveal that He is _____ of our complete trust. Jesus is indeed the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He came to bear _____ to the truth. Let's _____ in Him.

Read what Solomon said in Proverbs 3:5-7. God asks us to trust Him with all our _____. Trust means setting aside our _____ understanding and embracing what the Lord says. Our trust arises from our acknowledgment that God _____ more than we do. He knows what we don't know and _____ what we cannot see.

Mankind has always had a rebellious streak that wants to challenge God's _____, His ways, and His morality. God told Adam not to _____ from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "for in the day that you eat from it you will surely _____." But the serpent contradicted God and told Eve, "You surely will _____ die! For God knows that in the day that you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil." Eve believed the devil _____ than God; she ate of the fruit and gave the fruit to Adam. In sin, Adam and Eve brought _____ and suffering to us to this very day. What and whom we believe _____.

Our reading today comes from The Gospel according to John 11:20-27. I hope that you believe that, _____. Jesus asked a question that we too should _____. Jesus asked, "Do you believe this?" Martha's answer _____ that her faith in His words and promises come from her belief in Him. To believe in Jesus Christ means we believe what He _____ is true. When you challenge what Jesus teaches is true, you're actually questioning whether He is the _____ of God. You're saying He really isn't what He _____ to be.

Believing in Jesus Christ means trusting His Word to be _____, even when we may not understand the details or know how His promises will take place. Jesus is the resurrection and the _____. We don't know in detail how the Lord will raise the _____; but we do know that since God raised Jesus from the dead, we can _____ in Him to raise us! Jesus asked Martha, "Do you believe this?" Now I am asking you, "Do you believe the Lord Jesus will raise you up one day?" I hope you do.

Do you believe God created the _____ and created _____? Genesis 1:27 says, “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Believing God created you is different than believing that you’re the _____ of evolution, or an accident of nature. What you believe will determine how you _____ yourself and whether you’ll take God’s ways seriously. Do you believe?

When the time came for Jesus to come into the world, God sent the angel Gabriel to announce the _____ to Joseph. **Read what the angel said to Joseph in Matthew 1:20-21.** All this took place to _____ what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet (Matthew 1:22-23). Clearly Joseph believed because he _____ Mary to be his wife and raised the child.

Jesus came into the world to _____ us from our sins. This means sin is your _____ and can cost you your _____, and we need saving from its threat. The Lord Jesus is indeed God _____ us (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus personally, with His own _____, endured being nailed to a cross to make a difference in our lives. The Lord Jesus was willing to shed His _____ to give us life because He loves us so very much. Do you believe this, and does it matter to you? If you believe, you’ll not see sin as some _____, but as a threat to your soul and your enemy.

When Jesus came to this world, He demonstrated His _____ by healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the blind to see, and making the deaf to hear. Jesus walked upon the water, stilled the storm, and fed the multitude from five loaves and two fish. The apostles _____ these miracles because they witnessed them. Jesus performed these miracles in the presence of _____ crowds. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, even the _____ of Jesus realized that He was from God (John 11:47-48). If the enemies of Jesus recognized His power, shouldn’t you?

Jesus predicted that He would _____ and be _____ again from the dead on the third day (Matthew 20:18-19). This is a rather remarkable prediction, one that alarmed and saddened His _____. Predicting that He will die is not hard, but predicting that He will come back alive and on the specific day is something else again. Only God could make this _____.

When Jesus arose from the dead, Acts 1:3 reports that “He also presented Himself _____ after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.” The New Testament records _____ appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. First Corinthians 15:6 says He appeared to more than five hundred at one time. The bold apostles, who were eyewitnesses, were willing to _____ and _____ for telling this truth that they knew. Do you believe?

Jesus promised to send forth prophets, wise men, and _____ (Matthew 23:34). He promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would _____ them all things and would bring to their remembrance all that He said (John 14:26). Jesus promised the apostles that the Spirit would guide them into _____ the truth (John 16:13). Because Jesus arose from the dead and His Word proved _____, we can trust the Lord and we can trust the Scriptures that came through the Spirit. For this reason we can clearly _____ that the Bible is true, God-breathed, and utterly trustworthy. We can _____ every word of every sentence of every verse of every chapter of every book.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised to _____ His church, and His church uniquely belonged to Him. According to Acts 20:28, the Lord Jesus shed His precious blood to _____ the church. In Ephesians 1:22-23, Paul says that Jesus is the _____ of the church, which is His _____. When we obey the gospel and we're saved, the Lord _____ us to His church; the Lord _____ away our sins; and the Lord causes us to be _____ again as children of God. To be a member of the Lord's church brings us great _____. Some think you can be a _____ Christian and not be a member of any church, but to be "in Christ" is to be in His church, which is His family, His body. The Lord distinguishes those who belong to Him from those who do not. Do you believe this?

The Lord Jesus taught how Christians are to _____ in the New Testament. As Lord, His instructions are _____ and _____. He teaches us to pray, to give of our means, to sing from the heart, to commune with Him in the Lord's Supper, and to hear His words recorded in Scripture. He _____ His people to gather on the first day of the week, the day of the resurrection, the Lord's Day, to worship Him. If we believe His teaching, we'll _____ His instructions. We'll not go beyond His teaching but will _____ to what He wills.

Loving the Lord means wanting to _____ Him by worshiping in the way that He teaches instead of trying to please ourselves. Worshiping God doesn't mean entertaining ourselves. Hebrews 13:15 says, "Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name." How can anyone truly believe in the Lord Jesus and not want to praise and _____ Him for all that He has done, and to do it in a _____ that pleases Him?

Do you believe the _____ of Jesus that He's coming again? **Read what the Lord Jesus said in John 14:2-3.** When Jesus comes again, He's coming for His _____. Every faithful _____ of the church is one of His own, and He has a _____ prepared just for them. Is He coming again for you? Hebrews 9:27 says, "it's appointed for men once to die, and after this comes _____." Everyone of us has a soul, and our souls are accountable to God. Each one will give an _____ for how he has lived and will spend eternity somewhere.

One day Jesus will _____ the sheep from the goats, the righteous from the unrighteous. The sheep will go to a place that is _____, wonderful, and comforting. The goats will go to a place that is regrettable and _____. There's a difference! Do you believe this? Are you right with God?

It's not enough to say, "Well I believe," if you are unwilling to _____ your faith.

Read what James taught in James 2:14-19. Dead faith _____, but living faith _____.

Read what James taught in James 1:22-25.

Trusting the Lord means yielding to Jesus' _____ over our lives (Matthew 28:18). We believe in Him not ourselves; Jesus is our _____. The Lord is _____ of our trust and our obedience because He is all powerful, all-loving, and keeps His _____. He's worthy of our commitment because He committed Himself to us in _____. The Lord Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will _____ My commandments" (John 14:15). We show our devotion by trusting and _____ Him. We can do no less.

Trusting Him matters because it means putting _____ into His hands in good times and in bad. **Read what Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:12 while he was in prison and was about to die.** Have you entrusted yourself to God? Have you _____ for Him? Have you _____ Him with all your heart, soul, and mind? If you believe, you will _____ for the Lord.

I don't believe in a _____ of faith, but I believe in resting our faith upon _____. We've talked about the _____ evidence that Jesus arose from the dead and truly is the Christ, the Son of God. The Lord Jesus is worthy of our _____! The Lord believes in _____! God believed in you enough to _____ Jesus Christ to make a difference in your life. Jesus was willing to bear the _____ of the cross; and He did it out of love for you. He believed His sacrifice for your sins would _____ your heart so that you would love Him. Can He trust you to take up your _____ and follow Him?

To love Jesus means we will _____ His commandments. You must believe Him and believe in Him because without faith it's impossible to _____ God (Hebrews 11:6). Following Christ means _____ of your sins. Turn from everything sinful and that's offensive to God and turn to what's _____ and what pleases the Lord. When you _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God and you're baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, that's also an _____ of faith and trust.

Being baptized is an act of faith in the _____ of God. **Read Colossians 2:12-13.** When we're baptized we demonstrate our faith in what Jesus did at the cross to _____ us and what God did in raising Jesus from the dead to give us newness of _____. God saves us when we act by faith in being baptized into Christ. Do you believe? If you do, be obedient today.