



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

*Program
Study Guides*

**For
September 2015**

September 6, 2015

Mack Lyon

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

Hello, I'm Chris Lyon, and this is a Bible study, "In Search of the Lord's Way." As many of you know, my father, Mack Lyon, founder of Search, left this life on August the 5th, 2015. Today this special program will remember him and honor his request to preach for us one more time. We will be sharing some of his lessons that have made a difference to millions of people over the many years of his ministry.

Phil Sanders: Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way! We're excited to have you join us for this special program looking back over Mack Lyon's television ministry. As always, we're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. From my earliest days as a Christian, I saw the need to follow the Scriptures and to be a New Testament Christian. Without the New Testament we wouldn't know what the Lord Jesus is like, what He expects from us, and how we can have eternal life in heaven. Without the New Testament we wouldn't know how the church is to worship or be organized. Without the New Testament we wouldn't know how wonderful and glorious is the grace of God. The New Testament provides for us what we most need to know in order to please God and to enjoy His grace, His mercy, and His blessing. That's why we go back again and again to Scripture.

For more than thirty years you were able to hear Mack Lyon preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ on this program. As we mentioned, he went home to the Lord on August 5th at the age of 93. We miss him, and we know that you miss him, too! He was indeed a great soldier of the cross who loved the Lord and His cause. Mack loved to preach the gospel. In recent years Mack suffered from Parkinson's disease which prevented him from being able to preach. Earlier this year, Mack told me that every night he dreamed of being able to preach again.

Since many of you wanted to hear Mack again, we selected some clips from our library to share with you today. We have sections of three sermons. The first is from 1984, from the early days of the Search program. He'll speak of the power of the resurrection. The second section from 1998 speaks of the need to glory in the cross. Our third clip comes from 2010 and reveals the need for a standard.

This first section comes from 1984, when Mack was only on a few stations in Oklahoma and the surrounding states. Early on, Mack dreamed of reaching the entire state of Oklahoma. God opened doors and ultimately he reached the whole nation. In this section, Mack will be discussing the power of the resurrection. Listen with me.

The essential elements of the Christian's _____ are all confirmed by historical evidence. The birth of Jesus Christ is a matter of historical _____. His life and the fact that He also secured a great following of people during His personal ministry in so short of time is a matter of _____. His _____ upon all of that part of the world can be attested by history. It can be _____ by historical evidence. Not only so, but the fact that Jesus Christ was crucified on a Roman cross outside the city walls of Jerusalem that day is also an historical _____. And that His grave was _____ the next Sunday morning is a matter of history as well. **Read Luke 24:1-9.**

The grave really and truly was _____. The body was gone, but how do you _____ it? Various attempts have been made to _____ the disappearance of the body of Jesus in that three day period. Some have said that the _____ of Jesus came and stole away the body. But surely had that been true, they would have delivered the _____. Only about seven weeks later, the apostles began to _____ that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the _____ of God, and therefore was the Son of God. They would have produced the body of Jesus, and would have silenced those apostles _____ and for _____. Christianity never would have been _____. The Jews then

would have had the _____ over the claims of Jesus Christ merely by having presented the body which they were supposed to have stolen.

Somebody has said, “Well, the enemies didn’t steal away the body, but we don’t know who stole it away because the _____ said somebody stole the body while they _____.” Doesn’t that sound a bit ridiculous to you. If the guards were so sound asleep at the grave of Jesus that somebody could come in and roll away that huge stone and then remove the body, then how would they know _____ it was that stole it? How would they _____ that somebody had come and stolen the body of Jesus. The truth is they couldn’t _____ as to what happened. They wouldn’t be very _____ witnesses.

Others have tried to explain away the empty tomb by saying that the _____ of Jesus came and stole away the body and then went out and said that He was raised from the dead by the power of God. But that isn’t reasonable either, is it? In reality these men _____ severe persecution for preaching the resurrection of Jesus. Some of them were beheaded; some of them were crucified; some were crucified head downward; some were exiled. They were persecuted even to _____. Don’t you know that while they were being persecuted, and while they were enduring all of this suffering, if they knew in their own _____ that they had actually stolen the body of Jesus themselves and they were only propagating the doctrine, a _____ doctrine that He had been raised from the dead, that they would have renounced that? They wouldn’t have continued that even to the _____ of death.

Phil Sanders: In this second section from 1998, Mack Lyon reveals his love for Jesus Christ and the importance of the cross in the life of a Christian. The Lord Jesus said, “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me” (John 12:32). We’ve got to look to Christ and His cross if we would be right with God. Let’s hear what Mack Lyon has to say.

The cross of Christ, the message of Christ’s crucifixion, His burial and His resurrection from the dead is the very _____ and _____ of the Christian message. Paul, the great man of God, wrote to the Corinthian Christians, “I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of _____ or of _____, declaring unto you the testimony of God.” He had not appealed to the _____ of their great wisdom, nor had he exhibited great oratorical _____ before them for he continued, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” It isn’t that He _____ mentioned the church, or obedience, or baptism, or worship, or judgment, or heaven, or hell, or a whole host of other Bible subjects. But, whatever He taught them had meaning only in the _____ of the cross of Jesus Christ. He said, “I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and the power, that (oh now that word that means that here is a statement of purpose) that your faith should not stand in the _____ of men, but in the _____ of God.”

Oh, for more preaching like that today, that your _____ should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The cross of Jesus Christ packs power into the _____. The preacher that thinks he has something _____ on which to build your faith is blinded by his egotism and pride. God forbid that I should _____, save in the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross, the story of the crucifixion of Jesus, His burial and His triumphant resurrection is the _____ immoveable foundation, the truth on which the church would be built. How audacious, how outrageously vain, how conceited, how very prideful and deceitful of any man to start a _____ of his own and to dare to compare it with the one that Jesus, the Son of God, built upon the firm foundation of His _____ stained cross.

“Upon this rock,” He said to Peter, “I will build my _____” (Matthew 16:18). It wasn’t that He was building a stone, like the impetuous sometimes wavering Peter. The church was to be built upon Jesus Christ, who by His death, and burial, and resurrection fulfilled God’s _____ for human redemption. He _____ himself to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4). Jesus, keep your church near the cross.

The church is important to the world only as long as it relates to the _____. The church simply must not permit itself to lose _____ of the cross. Religious traditions are _____ (Matthew 15:1-10), except as they relate to the cross of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:15). Religious rites and ceremonies are meaningless, save as they _____ to the cross of Christ. Innovative changes in church doctrine, in the worship, in the agenda of the church, all is but glitter, except as they draw us _____ to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid that the church should glory in any of that, but only in the cross.

Phil Sanders: In this last section, Mack Lyon says, “Give Me a Standard.” He reveals the need to go to God’s standard in the New Testament in order to obey the Lord the way the Lord wants to be obeyed. How desperately our world needs to turn away from pluralism and come back to the teaching of Christ. Let’s listen again:

We need a _____. A standard by which all of us can _____ what’s right and what’s wrong, and what will be right and what will be wrong everywhere and with all people wherever we go. The pluralism of the prevailing post-modern _____ is just not working. It’s wreaking havoc on our national _____ and _____. Like the merchant who carefully balanced the sack of coffee in his hand until it _____ like a pound. Many people do what they do in religion simply because it _____ right to them, or they feel _____ to do it. They seem not to be _____ of the truth of which the Bible speaks. There is a way that _____ right to a man, but its end is the way of death (Proverbs 16:25). Chaos and confusion _____ everywhere. Anarchy reigns, and we cry “O God, give us a standard.”

Like the old time merchant who _____ his yard of gingham between two notches cut out in the counter by his grandfather or grandmother. He knew that his grandfather was _____ and would never _____ a customer, though he really might have been doing it all along without even knowing it. So, many people today are _____ to the religious beliefs and practices of their honest and good fore-parents. They have no other _____ for being what they are, or doing what they do, but that their grandparents were that, and that’s the way they did.

Oh, how we do need a standard. Something by which _____ can live and be certain he’s doing and believing what’s right. Just as it was before we had a Bureau of Standards of Weights and Measures, when each state had its own. In religion today there is no standard. Each group has its own authoritative _____ or maybe it’s a _____ that defines truth for them. What’s said to be right for one group is not right for others. Each one does what is right in its own _____. The result is confusion and chaos, even unbelief. Oh, how we do _____ a standard.

That one short verse we read for our text aptly describes not only the conditions that existed in a period of some of the formative days of Israel’s history, but it just as aptly describes the conditions in our own period of religious and moral decline in America. It was during the reign of the judges, and the times were difficult because God’s will had been abandoned, and the scripture says “every man did that which was _____ in his own eyes.” God has given us a standard even as He had then. But the people _____ it then as many do now. The Bible is God’s Word. When man _____ it and sets

his own rules for life, he's on the downward course to disaster. Jeremiah cried, "Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man who walks to _____ his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). It's an awesome truth that God has spoken and revealed His _____ to man. It's awesome not only because it's inspired and inspiring and wondrous, but because it's fearful and appalling, and it makes a dreadful demand on man for an appropriate _____. The only such response is _____ to it. It's irreverent and even blasphemous the way some people profess to _____ for God, pretend such camaraderie with Him as to carry on casual conversations with Him, at their own will and at their command. God does not come down and sit on the side of the bed and _____ to these people. He never did. Even _____ was not permitted to do that. God said to Him, "You cannot see My face; for no one shall see Me and live" (Exodus 33:20). Nor, does God speak to us through the traditions of our ancestry, not even through the councils of the best-of-intentioned men, neither in creeds written by the most scholarly of them, but through His Word, the _____. There's our standard!

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. There's our standard. Oh my, we must get back to it!

Of course, there have always been in every generation those who have given short weights and measures for ill-gotten-gain. They flourish and prosper in _____ of the Bureau of Standards of Weights and Measures, and so it is in Christianity. There have always been, and always shall be, the Elmer Gantry's, who _____ upon the unlearned and unsuspecting for profit. That's why the Scripture says, "Be diligent (King James says, "study") to present yourself _____ to God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (Some versions say, "handling aright the word of truth.") It's "the word of truth." Let's not forget that. Let us pray. Holy Father, thank You for the revelation, the translation, the preservation of Your Holy Word, a standard by which we can all live in unison. We pray Your blessings as we strive to walk in its light. In Jesus name, Amen!

How we need to get _____ to the Bible, God's standard for our lives today. Most of the problems that people face today come from their unwillingness to _____ the Lord Jesus. You can't _____ against God and expect God to _____ you. When we study the Bible, we must truly want to _____ our lives and our faith to it and to it _____ as God's everlasting and unchangeable standard. We must always be on _____ against imposing our opinions and prejudices on the Word of God, and trying to use the Bible to justify our preconceived ideas or our selfish desires. We must follow the Lord. Faith in Christ means _____ everything the Lord says in His Word, and conforming our lives to it. If you aren't willing to deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and to follow Christ, you are a Christian in name only. True disciples _____ their faith!

There is still but _____ standard gospel of Christ, and we must _____ that gospel to be saved. To become a Christian _____ in the Lord with all your heart. Out of love _____ of every sin and turn your heart and thoughts to righteousness. Confess your faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be _____ into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism is an immersion in water that _____ us to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We don't sprinkle for baptism because it's not God's standard, and we don't baptize babies because they aren't mature enough to believe and repent. The apostle Peter said, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). That's what we urge you to do today.

And now a final word from Mack Lyon: "Say! We're so glad that you were with us today. We pray you've been blessed. And, we hope you will join us again next week. God bless you now. We love you."

True Religion Colossians 2:6-8

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

Our dear friend and brother in the Lord, Mack Lyon, began this program in 1980 and was its only host for thirty years. Our dear friend passed away August 5th and is now with the Lord. We remember him.

We're here to _____ the Scriptures for God's will. Mack Lyon recently reminded me of Ephesians 4:4-6 "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called in one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." When there is just one, there can't be _____ than one. We want to _____ that one true body, the one true Spirit, the one true hope, the one true Lord, the one true faith, and the one true baptism, and the one true God who is over all.

On September first, 1980, Mack Lyon spoke on In Search of the Lord's Way for the very first time in Ada, Oklahoma on KTEN. Brother Lyon saw the _____ to broadcast the gospel truth to our nation so people could see the _____ between the church of the New Testament and many religious groups today. He wanted people to become _____ Christians and be added to the New Testament church, and that's our desire today; so, we go to the Bible, the Word of God, to find the truth. We want nothing more and nothing less.

Brother Lyon was a genuine Christian. What you remember on television was what he was _____ day! He wanted everyone to _____ and _____ the Lord. He spoke the _____ in _____, and a whole generation became endeared to his kind and humble ways. Because of God's _____ and his hard work, people in every corner of America today can view this television program. We're grateful for the love of God that we saw in his _____.

Our reading today comes from the Epistle to the Colossians 2:6-8. We must live our lives according to the _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Word.

Since this program is entitled, In Search of the Lord's Way, we _____ for the true, genuine, and authentic faith in Christ. We realize that there are many _____ religions in the world; we're seeking the true religion, the true church. We aren't interested in imitations or substitutes; we're not interested in opinions or the guesses that arise out of someone's imagination. We want the truth, unembellished truth, uncompromising truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If we settle for anything more than the truth or less than the truth, we'll find that our _____ has no firm foundation.

The Lord God rebuked Judah more than once because the people would forsake the truth to follow the _____ of the nations surrounding them. **Read what God said through his prophet in Jeremiah 2:11-13.**

Ancient Israel knew how precious water was because they had so _____. Many of their creeks would only run during certain _____ of the year. Living water was flowing and pure; the water in cisterns would often become _____. If a tiny crack formed in the plaster inside the cistern, all the water could eventually leak out, and the cistern would be _____. The Jews _____ a broken cistern in their idols over the living river of water in God. How shocking! Who would do that?

People today have done the same thing! They've _____ the genuine Christianity of the New Testament for pop psychology, for manufactured religions from false prophets, for entertainment-based enterprises, or for a false god that accepts everyone and everything and never judges. They've _____ the truth for a fantasy, for a broken cistern.

Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14. These verses _____ a lot of people; they don't even know the Bible says this. Most people think that almost everyone is going to be _____ and almost no one's going to be _____, but the Bible doesn't teach that. Even people who call Jesus "Lord" may be lost if they _____ to live as God teaches (Matthew 7:21). We're saved by God's grace, but not a grace that _____ people no matter what. God expects His people to do His _____ on earth as it is in heaven.

True religion points to the Lord Jesus; false religion points to the _____ who presume they are an addition to or better than Jesus. Jesus said, "I am the _____, and the _____, and the _____. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Later, Peter told the Jewish Council, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other _____ under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). We have God's _____ in Jesus Christ! If we _____ anything to Him or _____ anything from Him, we have left the truth for a broken cistern. Jesus is Lord; He's the only Lord. He alone paid the _____ for your sins and mine; He alone has _____ from the dead; and He alone will _____ you on the last day. Don't sell Him short; He has no _____.

True religion realizes that we're created in the image of _____; false religion tries to recreate God in our _____ image. Many people don't want God unless He's like us or _____ with what we already think. Many people would rather manufacture a god that suits them than they would to _____ to the true and living God that's revealed in the Scriptures. This is not a new thing; people throughout time, throughout history, have resisted God in order to

_____ their idols. They wanted a god that followed them rather than the one _____ God they had to follow. **Read Romans 1:18-23.**

True religion _____ to the inspired Word of God, the Bible; false religion _____ to the writings of men, or to creeds and councils. True religion _____ the Scriptures to see if these things are so; but false religion swallows whatever people _____. True religion is content to hold to what is written in Scripture; but false religion feels it must _____ what God has said to suit the times. If you want to find the truth, you must _____ for it in the right place. You can't get a _____ understanding of God in the woods, or in space, or in philosophy, or even in people; you _____ God in the Scriptures. The Lord God revealed Himself most fully and most accurately through the _____ word. Paul wrote, "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

This is why Solomon said, "Buy truth, and do not _____ it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding" (Proverbs 23:23). You find that truth by your diligent _____ of the Scriptures; there are no substitutes or shortcuts. The Bible applauds those who _____ themselves to a careful, serious study of Scripture. The Bereans didn't take the word of some individual; they wanted to know what the _____ itself said! (Acts 17:11). The Scriptures settled the _____ for them, and it should settle the truth for you, too!

True religion is poor in spirit; while false religion is full of _____ ambition. **Read how James described the difference in James 3:13-17.** Many religions make their followers their focus, wanting them to do what makes them feel good about themselves. Instead of helping people to become focused on God, they _____ them to become focused on themselves.

True religion sees our utter _____ for God; false religion thinks God has an utter need for us. True religion is about _____ and _____ to God and others; false religion is all about self-esteem and what I feel. True religion longs for truth and fellowship with God; false religion longs for _____. True religion makes one a _____ of the living God; false religion turns a human into a god. True religion loves the truth and grieves at the _____ that men tell; false religion so longs for its own ways that it ignores or dismisses the truth.

True religion appeals to the _____ and the _____; false religion appeals to the _____. True religion is unashamed; false religion must _____ what it really believes. True religion wants righteousness; false religion wants to please _____ or please _____. Many churches today have _____ as moral what God calls immoral in Scripture. They have chosen to _____ the people rather than follow God's teaching. Moses said about Israel, "If they were _____, they would understand this; that they would discern their latter end!" (Deuteronomy 32:29). People will live as they choose, but God will _____ them according to His standards, not theirs (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

True religion calls men to _____; while false religion demands everyone accept them as they are without the need for repentance. True religion understands that repentance is turning away from what God defines as _____ to what God defines as righteousness; false religion wants to _____ what God says about morals. While true religion accepts responsibility and repents; false religion _____ its sins by pointing to the failures of others. False religion says that since everyone sins, we should accept everyone as they are without asking them to _____. False religion says accepting people is more important than accepting God's moral _____. The world expects _____ to change, but God expects the _____ to change. When religious groups leave God's will, they leave God. When churches _____ the truth and the morals of God, God removes them from His grace.

True religion makes every person responsible for _____ while false religion blames our sins on _____. Throughout the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel God says clearly that each of us will face judgment for our _____ actions, not the behaviors of our parents or our children; God will hold each one of us accountable only for our own sins, not for the sins of others.

True religion recognizes that the _____ of God is real, while false religion ignores it. True religion realizes that Jesus will return someday to _____ the world, but false religion acts as if everyone will be saved regardless of their beliefs or behavior. If your sins aren't washed away by the _____ of Jesus, you will face God as a condemned sinner (John 3:36).

Jesus predicted that evil people would hate _____ and hate _____ who followed Him because evil people hate the _____ that exposes their evil deeds (John 3:20). Jesus loved the world, even when the world hated Him. People who love others _____ them the truth even when it _____; but people who remain silent about sin and allow half-truths and lies to be spread, these are people who have no compassion. You may think you're being _____ by being tolerant toward those who are in sin, but remaining silent about the destructive forces of sin is the _____ kind of cruelty! Remaining _____ about sin or false doctrines _____ people of hope and salvation. Jesus loved sinners, but His love for them meant calling them to _____. Jesus didn't _____ people where He _____ them. He didn't leave them deceived about sin or about salvation, or even the church. Jesus spoke out against sin and against doctrinal error because He loved their souls.

If you love your soul, if you love the Lord Jesus, then place your _____ in Him, turn away from every sin, _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be _____ into Christ! You're baptized into Christ when you're immersed in water in His name. In baptism, God _____ you with Christ; He makes you His child; He _____ you to His church; and He _____ every sin. Don't wait another day to become a child of God.

Poor in Spirit Isaiah 1:16-20

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

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Today we’re going to _____ the blessedness of being “poor in spirit.” How we _____ of God makes all the difference in the world. If we love Him and humble ourselves before Him, God will _____ us richly; but if we _____ to give Him our respect and our obedience, we’ll find the blessed life disappear. The more we get away from God, the more the blessings of God get away from us. That’s why we continually go to the Word of God, the Bible, to _____ the truth of God and the blessing of God. You won’t find it anywhere _____. God’s way is the _____ way, the blessed way, and the _____ way.

Nebuchadnezzar was the most _____ man in the world in his day. God allowed him to have this power in order to _____ Israel for her sins. Three times Nebuchadnezzar’s army entered Jerusalem, and the third time completely _____ the city, including the temple. Nebuchadnezzar’s home was the great city of _____, whose hanging gardens were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Chapter four of the book of Daniel tells how Nebuchadnezzar became _____ and said, “Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?” Because he forgot God, and he forgot that God was the true ruler of the world, God _____ him by making him like a beast of the field for three and a half years. He ate grass like _____, and his hair and his nails grew long. Afterwards Nebuchadnezzar _____ and _____ the Most High God. He learned his _____ for God the hard way.

Our reading today from God’s Word comes from Isaiah 1:16-20.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to hear Jesus speak in _____? The crowds gathered to the mountain to _____ Him speak. They hung on every _____. The people knew about Jesus’ power to heal, His godly _____, and kind ways. **Read Matthew 4:23-25.** These people wanted to hear what the Master had to say—I hope that you have that kind of _____ for the Word of God.

The beginning statement of a sermon is usually what catches people’s _____. Jesus made a surprising and captivating _____ about being “poor in spirit.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). He started His sermon talking about _____ who are “poor in spirit.” He started there because He knew how _____ being “poor in spirit” was to our relationship with Him and with the Father. If

we're not "poor in spirit", we may never have _____ for God in our lives. The blessed person not only has room for God; the blessed person cannot _____ without God!

What does it _____ to be blessed? The word "blessed" means _____ than being "happy." Happiness is merely an _____, and it's often dependent upon _____ circumstances. To be blessed here refers to the ultimate well-being of a person, a person who has a lasting _____ joy arising from his relationship with God. The beatitudes are not _____ statements; they're exclamations! They're saying that these are the kinds of people that God sees as having the _____ in well-being.

Habakkuk, a prophet in the Old Testament, lived at a very _____ time. **Read Habakkuk 3:17-19.** Oh, a relationship with God is a wonderful and fulfilling blessing, because it assures us of an _____ home, and even when our world here falls apart here, we have a time with God.

The Lord Jesus, before His death, gave some _____ to His apostles. Jesus knew that He would be crucified and they would be _____, but the Lord said, "Therefore you too now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart will _____, and no one takes your joy away from you" (John 16:22). In Christ, no one can take away our _____ or our _____. In Christ, we have forgiveness, the right to _____, eternal life, and an inheritance in heaven. No one can _____ this away from us! We may have all kinds of change in this world, but _____ can change and take away all the joys that Christ gives. If you're counting on this world to bless you, remember this world is fickle and temporal, but Christ is _____.

We don't always see things the _____ God sees them. The people that we _____ are blessed aren't necessarily the ones that God says are blessed. God said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

The world _____ riches, honors, fame, intelligence, appearance, and strength. These beatitudes emphasize _____ dispositions, not _____ circumstances; so God has different values than people do. **Read Jeremiah 10:23-24.** Men shouldn't _____ over their human wisdom, power, or wealth. These things don't make a man blessed in God's _____. If you wish to boast about something, boast that you _____ and _____ the Lord God of heaven who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth. Those things are _____ valuable.

When God _____ someone blessed, he is blessed indeed! God never lies but calls things as they _____ are! If anyone else blesses you, that blessing may last for a time, but God's blessings last for _____ of our lives and beyond this life. God's blessings are _____

physical and spiritual. He meets our physical needs for food, water, clothing, and shelter; but He also meets our _____ needs. Ephesians 1:3 says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with _____ spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

In Christ, we do have every spiritual blessing that we could even _____ for. We have access to the Father, peace, joy, assurance, and love. In Christ, we have forgiveness. **Read Romans 4:7-8.** Forgiveness through the _____ of Christ opens the door to an eternal fellowship with God on earth and in heaven, and that’s truly a blessed state and condition!

The Lord said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” There are two words for _____ in the New Testament. First, there are those who are poor who are _____ and have to work from day to day just to earn a living. They have food and clothes enough to _____ but very little else. Second, there are those who are destitute beggars, living in _____ poverty—the person who has nothing at all and is desperate. It is this second word that’s used here; and that’s what makes this so _____! The blessed person is the one who “in spirit” has _____ at all. He has nothing and is utterly _____ upon God.

The “poor in spirit” are not the _____ as people who are “poor-spirited”, that is, who are dejected or self-pitying creatures who go about in fear or in indifference. No, this is speaking of people who _____ their spiritual poverty without God. They realize they have an utter _____ and a dependence upon God. Since they know their condition, they’re humble and they yearn for God’s _____. They put their whole _____ in God. They realize they owe their existence and their _____ to God. They realize that on their _____, without God, they’re _____ in sin and have no hope. They know they cannot _____ their salvation.

Read Ephesians 2:8-10. A person “poor in spirit” will become wholly dependent upon God—that is, God means _____ to him! We must realize that we need God’s help and we need His _____; only God can give us eternal life. We must put our _____ in Him.

A person “poor in spirit” doesn’t invent his own _____ and he doesn’t invent his own way to be _____. A person “poor in spirit” is willing to _____ and do what God says and do it God’s way. He doesn’t try to _____ God or _____ God’s laws or morals. He doesn’t propose his _____ solutions to the problems of sin or _____ God’s wisdom and justice. He loves God and is willing to follow the Lord and _____ from Him.

Because a person “poor in spirit” realizes His need for Jesus to be His _____, he also regards Jesus as His _____! He _____ to the Lord and takes what God says seriously. God said, "But to this one I will look, To him who is _____ and _____ of spirit, and who trembles at My word" (Isaiah 66:2). Does the Word of God make you

_____? It should. God's Word will one day determine your _____ destiny. God is the eternal authority, and one day you will have to give an _____ for your life to Him.

When we think about all of these matters, one of the things that we realize is that God is the only one who could make the moral _____ of life. The Pharisees were a sect of Jews that lived by its own human _____ and judged others for not keeping their rules. They would even judge _____ for not keeping their traditions! They were _____ themselves. The Lord Jesus said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone [that is the Pharisees]; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit" (Matthew 15:13-14).

A proud person doesn't think he needs God's _____ and he thinks God should be honored just to have him around. **Read Luke 18:9-14.** God cannot use a man who is _____ of himself because such a man has no _____ for God!

The Bible also tells us of an arrogant _____ that didn't know it needed the Lord. **Read the message the Lord Jesus sent to the church in Laodicea in Revelation 3:15-20.**

Oh, these things _____ because we all stand in the utter need for God. My friend, are you "poor in spirit?" Do you need God?

Blessed is the person who has realized his own utter helplessness and who has put his whole trust in God, for only by emptying himself out can he render to God that perfect _____ which will make him a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Obeying God is a _____ of our faith, our love, and our attitude toward Him. James said a man shows his faith by his _____. The Lord Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it" (Luke 9:23-24). You must _____ out your pride and your willful ways and _____ yourself before God if you wish to enter the kingdom of heaven.

To become a Christian, we must _____ to ourselves so that we may _____ for Christ! Trust in the Lord with all your heart, remove the sin from your hearts and lives in _____, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be _____ into Christ by being immersed in water. Baptism is when our old man of sin dies and we're born again to _____ in newness of life. **Read Romans 6:3-4.** Start a new life in Christ today by obeying the Lord!

Let me also encourage you to get involved in the church. When you're baptized, the Lord saves you and adds you to His church. As a Christian, you keep your connection with God by staying faithful in His church. Don't think that you can go it on your own. You need the Lord and you need His people to help you stay faithful and to reach heaven. Get involved in church!

Pure in Heart

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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

Have you wondered what happened to people's _____ to be chaste and pure? Today we're going to explore what it _____ to be pure in heart. More than anything I want to _____ God and go to heaven. I want to see my Father in heaven who has loved me and sent His Son Jesus to _____ me from sin and give me eternal life. To have eternal life I must _____ to the will of the One who is in heaven, not my own will.

The Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall _____ God" (Matthew 5:8). To have a pure heart means it is not _____ or compromised. A pure heart means I haven't _____ God's will with worldly pleasures. Proverbs 16:2 says, "All the ways of a man are pure in his own _____, but the LORD weighs the _____." What you think is pure and what God thinks is pure may be _____. Just because you approve of some _____ doesn't mean that God approves. Habakkuk 1:13 says of God, "Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, and You cannot look on wickedness with _____." God isn't like us. We may approve of the sins of others, but God cannot. His holy character will not permit Him to _____ of sin.

Hebrews 12:14 says, "Strive for peace with everyone, and for the _____ without which no one will see the Lord." The Lord forgives our sins, but He also expects us to _____ our sins and to live holy lives. God didn't forgive our sins so that we could _____ living in sin. Unless we _____ for holiness we won't see the Lord. A pure heart _____ to a pure life. Are you pure in heart or have you allowed sin into your life?

Our reading today is from Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 6, verses 14 to 18.

A person who is "pure in heart" is single-minded about God and doing His _____. He wants to do what is right and _____ doing what is wrong. He distinguishes the _____ from the evil, the _____ from the wrong, the _____ from a lie, and what builds up from what tears down. He takes seriously what God _____ because of his love and devotion to God. He doesn't want any sin barrier to _____ his relationship with God. Sin offends God and _____ us from His grace. Isaiah 59:1-2 says, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear." You cannot expect God to bless you if you cherish your sins. Psalm 68:18 says, "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have _____." If we keep on sinning, we cannot presume the grace of God will still _____ our sins. Paul asked, "What shall we say then? Are we to _____ in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who

_____ to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2). God’s grace and forgiveness is a precious _____ that came at a great _____. God forgave us so that we might _____ to sin and _____ to righteousness. Continuing to sin shows that we have forgotten the _____. Continuing in sin after we become Christians puts our _____ back into peril.

Romans 8:12-13 says, “So then, brothers (he’s speaking to Christians), we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die (and he’s talking spiritually), but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” **Read Hebrews 10:26-31.**

Many Christians today are not serious about their _____, but are Christians in _____ only. They’ll tell you they believe, but their behavior hardly differs from the _____. Though they wear the name of Christ, they actually _____ others to blaspheme Christianity. You can’t flirt with lust and sin and it not _____ you. Sin can not only overcome you, it can _____ your heart, _____ your faith, and _____ your love for God. **Read Hebrews 3:12-13.**

So, we have to ask, what can we do to keep ourselves from being _____ by sin and then lose our souls? First, we’ve got to watch over our _____. Proverbs 4:23 says, “Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.” Why is the heart so important? The Lord Jesus said, “For _____ of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander” (Matthew 15:19). Choices begin in the heart; and people _____ what they want to do and what is important to them. When people choose to sin, their hearts can _____ to them. Their hearts may say, “Well, it’s no big deal,” “no one will get _____,” “it’s only _____,” or “no one will find out.” But sin is so deceptive and destructive by its very _____. That’s why God urges us and instructs us not to _____. He loves us and He knows what sin will do to us.

When people give their hearts to sin, they end up corrupting their _____ lives and corrupting other people around them. **Read Titus 1:15-16.** Don’t ever let sin get a foothold in your life; it will _____ you. Rather, control your thoughts and _____ on God and what is good. Philippians 4:8 says, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there’s any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” Focus your heart on God and the good He’s doing in your life.

Repentance is a change of heart that leads to a change of _____. You’ll never fully repent until your heart turns against sin and _____ for righteousness. It’s not simply that you _____ the sin, you don’t _____ to sin anymore! You want, with all your heart, to _____ and to _____ God. First Thessalonians 5:21-22 says, “but test everything; hold fast to what is _____. Abstain from every form of evil.” You must _____ the ways of the world to _____ Christ in righteousness.

Read Colossians 3:1-10. Don't excuse your sin, but put it to _____. Don't _____ someone else; put your sin to death. Don't _____ sin; put sin to death.

Second, pray fervently for God's _____. When the apostles at Gethsemane could hardly keep their eyes _____, the Lord Jesus said to them, "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. Oh, the spirit indeed is _____, but the flesh is _____" (Matthew 26:41).

We, too, need to watch and pray that we will _____ the temptations of life. The devil tempted Jesus. Even when Jesus overcame the devil's temptations, the devil was not content to quit tempting Him. Luke 4:13 says, "When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time."

The devil attacks us when we're _____ or unprepared to resist. James 4:7-8 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." Some folks are tempted to sin and they flee from God in fear. Hebrews 4:15-16 reminds us, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need." If we draw close to God, He will _____ us through every temptation.

Third, we need to _____ the Word of God diligently. The psalmist asked, "How can a young man keep his way _____? (The answer) By guarding it according to your _____" (Psalm 119:9). The psalmist then resolved "I have _____ your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11). The best way to know God and to know His will is to _____ His Word. God gave us His _____ in His Word to protect us and to guide us.

Romans 12:2 reminds us, "And do not be conformed to this _____, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove (that is, live out and show it's right) what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." Loving God means loving His _____. You'll be _____ to live it out in your life if you love Him. When you live God's way, you'll _____ to yourself and to everyone around you that His way is right! The will of God _____ everyone to become good and honest and kind. People want to be around people like that because they're acceptable. Who wants to be around a drunkard when he's drunk? Or an angry person when he's angry? A thief when he steals? Or a cruel person when he's mean? God's ways lift up rather than tear down; and that's why we need to _____ and _____ God's will. Because His way is truly _____!

Fourth, we need to _____ from sin. Sometimes fleeing is the _____ thing we can do to overcome our temptations. First Corinthians 6:18-20 says, "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom

you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” Today people do everything but flee from _____ sin. Our sex-crazed world has _____ the ability to blush or even to feel ashamed. Lust will _____ your faith and your love for God and _____ you of your soul. If you want to stop sexual temptation, then _____ anything that promotes it. Put to death any bad habits of _____ sexually explicit things on television or on the internet. Stop _____ literature designed to inflame sexual passions. Flee the _____ of your temptations. Second Timothy 2: 22 says, “So flee youthful passions and _____ righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.” By all means, get _____ at a church of Christ that’s near you.

Why does all this matter? It matters because we _____ to Christ. We’re accountable to God. We’ve been bought with a _____, the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Paul said, “I’ve been crucified with Christ. It’s no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Since we belong to the Lord Jesus, shouldn’t we _____ Him? One day we’ll give an _____ for the choices that we’ve made, whether we lived a chaste and righteous life or a wicked and indulgent life. Are you living a life _____ to God or one polluted by the sins of the world? If you follow the world rather than Christ, you will undoubtedly have to give an account for your sins. Why not change the _____ of your heart and your life? Die to sin and live for God. There is no other choice if you wish to have _____ life.

Romans 13:11-14 says, “Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let’s walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.” None of us is getting any _____. As each day passes we are one step _____ either to the end of life or to the second coming of the Lord Jesus

If you’ve been involved in sinful practices, isn’t it time that you woke up and _____? Why would you _____ your eternal soul for a brief moment of passion? Remember: “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 _____.” The Lord Jesus died upon the cross so that you might have the forgiveness of sins; but His grace has some _____. You can’t continue to live in sin and expect God to _____ you on the day of judgment. Grace doesn’t work that way. Grace teaches us to “to _____ ungodliness and worldly desires and to _____ sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age” (Titus 2:12).

Do you need to repent of your ways? Today is the best day to do that. Place your trust in the Lord Jesus, repent of your sins, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Focus your heart on serving the Lord!