



IN
SEARCH
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*Program
Study Guides*

**For
May 2018**

The Wages of Sin Romans 6:19-23

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

Some think they can sin and get away with it, but sin always _____ more than they imagine. Today, we're going to look at the _____ of sin. God has given us His Word to help us _____ between good and evil. Sin is the breaking of God's _____, doing what God forbids. God doesn't make rules and laws to be mean to us but to _____ us from the harm that sin does. Wisdom is following God.

What _____ a person to sin against God, to violate His Word? James 1:13-15 says, "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren." It's easy to _____ ourselves about sin. Sin starts from our selfish _____. The Lord Jesus said "For out of the _____ come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders" (Matthew 15:19).

The heart wants to do things it shouldn't do in order to _____ its thoughts and desires. It focuses on the _____ things and plans when and how it will do them. The time comes, and a person acts. The lust conceives and gives _____ to sin. When one accomplishes the breaking of God's laws, he _____ himself from God in spiritual death.

"Don't be deceived, my beloved brethren." Sin is _____, and it will bring forth spiritual death. Don't imagine that God doesn't see or know. Don't imagine that God will _____ your sins as if they had never happened. Don't imagine that He'll buy into _____ or listen if you blame others for your decisions and actions. God will indeed _____ us according to our works, whether good or bad. God's forgiveness is the only _____ for sin.

Our reading today comes from Paul's Letter to the Romans 6:19-23, where he talks very frankly to these Romans who came out of a pagan lifestyle and now had become Christians.

We do not _____ sin as infants or the guilt of Adam's sin, like some people teach. Rather, we _____ sin. We grow up in a sinful world and are _____ to sin when we observe others sinning. Learning sin is like learning a language. Then in time, our selfish desires _____ us, and we give in to them and then we sin. **Read what the apostle Paul said in Romans 7:7-11.** This is how people fall into sin and into spiritual _____.

Sin is a universal _____. Everyone who reaches the age of responsibility, where he knows right from wrong, must _____ with temptation and sin. Romans 3:10 reveals God's Word, "As it is written, 'There is _____ righteous, not even one.'" Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We may wish we hadn't sinned; we may act as if we hadn't sinned; we may even say, like many, there is no such thing as sin; but this doesn't

_____ what God has written. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Because we've sinned, we need to know how sin _____ us. Committing a sin is no small matter; it affects us in profound ways. First, sin's temptation will _____ us about its consequences. The devil will tell you and show you all the fleshly _____ of sin, but he won't reveal the _____ about what sin does to your soul or to your eternal destiny. He won't tell you how your sins will lead others to sin. The devil is a _____; and you can't believe him. Paul reminded the Ephesians of their former life outside of Christ in sin, "in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit" (Ephesians 4:22). Sin promises pleasure, but it ends up destroying us.

Hebrews 3:12-14 warns Christians, "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving _____ that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' so that none of you will be _____ by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end." Don't let sin deceive you and _____ your heart against God. Hold fast to the Lord! Sin will _____ your faith from you. Those who don't want to deal with their sins often end up denying the existence of God. If sin robs you of your faith, it'll also rob you of your _____.

Second, sin will _____ you. The Lord Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the _____ of sin" (John 8:34). You may wonder how people could do terribly evil things. They do them not because they're mentally deranged but because they're _____ enslaved to sin. Romans 6:16 says, "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you _____, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?" Sin will enslave you, so that you do things that you _____. Continuing in sin will _____ you of self-control. Slaves of sin seek to enslave others with their sinful passions. **Read Second Peter 2:18-22.**

Third, sin will _____ you in more ways than you can imagine; it'll corrupt your mind and your body. When God speaks against sin, He does so to _____ us from its devastating consequences. Sin will corrupt your _____ and your conscience. Titus 1:15 says, "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are _____." When people give in to sin, they allow evil to _____ their views about everything. They no longer know what _____ is all about. First Corinthians 15:33 simply says, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company _____ good morals.'" When you fill your heart with wickedness, you no longer think about what's _____.

Galatians 6:7-8 says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man _____, this he will also _____. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap _____ life." Sin has caused many diseases. Sin has filled the prisons and the cemeteries. Sin causes the greatest heartaches of our lives. We think we can pass laws that will stop sin—and we need laws to keep

order; but until people _____ their hearts, laws won't stop people from evil and sin.

Fourth, once sin corrupts the heart, it hardens it. Ephesians 4:19 speaks of those who do not know God: "and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the _____ of every kind of impurity with greediness." When sin hardens the heart, people no longer _____ what they do. First Timothy 4:2 talks about the "hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron." Sin defiles and then it stops the conscience from _____ any guilt or shame at all. In the days of Jeremiah, the people of Judah had become so entrenched in their idolatry and sins they didn't give a second thought of their _____ toward God. The Lord said, "Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to _____" (Jeremiah 6:15). Sadly, our nation has become so _____ to vulgar speech and behavior that we don't blush much anymore either.

The Hebrew writer lamented over some Christians who had abandoned their _____ in Christ. **Read what he wrote in Hebrews 6:4-6.** They had so hardened their hearts they could _____ Jesus again and put him to an open shame. They wouldn't repent, because they felt no _____ to repent. They were in a _____ condition than before they became a Christian.

Fifth, sin causes spiritual _____. Ephesians 2:1-2 says, "And you were _____ in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." Please don't think of sin as simply a _____ or an inappropriate action. Sin causes people to be _____ from God and lost eternally! Spiritual death means we do not have God and we don't have His _____. Proverbs 15:29 says, "The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the _____ of the righteous." Micah 3:4 says this about sinners, "Then they will cry out to the LORD, But He will not _____ them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time, because they have _____ evil deeds."

People tend to _____ their sins, but God never does. God often calls sin an "abomination." We try to find ways to _____ sin and to justify ourselves. Some people blame others or blame God Himself for their own _____. When people sin, they _____ God and break their relationship with Him. This breaks God's heart. After listing the hypocrisies of the scribes and the Pharisees and pronouncing woe after woe upon them, the Lord Jesus declared his heartbreak, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!" (Matthew 23:37-38).

We so often _____ to ourselves about sin! In our hearts, we know sin is wrong, but we'd rather believe a lie and _____ the truth. First Corinthians 6:9 says, "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the _____ of God?" Galatians gets specific about what sins will keep you _____ of heaven. "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality (sexual immorality), impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts

of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who _____ such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21). The Scriptures are clear and plain. Ephesians 5:5 says, “For this you _____ with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”

If you do not come to Christ to find the forgiveness of your sins, you’ll have to _____ the consequences of sin on your own. You won’t want to suffer for your sins. Jesus paid the _____ of His blood, so that you would not have to face the _____ of God for your sins. Jesus Christ is the only _____ to the problem of sin. Jesus Christ is the only way to find His grace, and the mercy of God that will _____ your sin and allow you to enjoy God’s blessing and an inheritance in heaven.

If you have unresolved sin in your life, you cannot _____ a place in God’s eternal kingdom. You simply cannot go to _____. Sin will cost you your _____. First John 1:8 says, “If we say that we have _____ sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.” Verse ten continues: “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His _____ is not in us.” Will you humbly and obediently _____ to the Lord’s grace by lovingly placing your faith in the Lord Jesus, repenting of your sins, confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and by being baptized into Christ? If you’ve not done that, it is something that you need to think about very seriously.

When it comes to the problem of sin, each of us has to make a _____. We can do _____ and suffer the consequences of our sin. We can _____ others and try to justify ourselves. We can act as if there were no God and no accountability. We can deny there is such a thing as sin, or we can humbly _____ our sins and _____ the Lord. Fools deny God’s reality; wise people fear God and act responsibly. What are you doing with your life?

God said, “Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who _____ will die” (Ezekiel 18:4). My friend, your soul doesn’t belong to you; it belongs to God. If you sin and separate yourself from God, you’ll suffer God’s _____. Revelation 21:8 clearly says, “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the _____ death.” Revelation 21:27 says about heaven, “and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose _____ are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free _____ of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” You’re choosing today whether you want to be _____ to God and be blessed or pull away from God and be lost. Put your faith in Jesus Christ and confess Him as the Son of God, repent of your sins, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. God will then _____ you from sin and make you His child. Stay faithful, and He’ll give you an eternal inheritance.

Free From Guilt
Ephesians 2:11-13

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

Some people say there's no such thing as sin; but their hearts proclaim sin is _____. Today, we're going to look at the _____ of being free from guilt. The Bible is a _____ book dealing with everyday life. God gives us His instructions so that we may _____ the evil that enslaves and destroys us. God leads us _____ from evil and into the paths of righteousness, where there is peace. Guilt and shame _____, but God's grace and mercy rescue.

Few things in life are more brutal than guilt and more _____ than forgiveness. When a person feels the sting of guilt, he feels it to the depths of his _____. We feel the burden of "guilt" when we do something _____. We all face guilt and feel its sting in our consciences, but removing the sting of the conscience and removing the guilt of sin are _____ different things. Some people can dull the conscience; but until they _____ the forgiveness of Jesus, the sin remains. We need the _____ of Christ to remove our sins; nothing else will do.

Read how David felt the heavy burden of guilt in Psalm 38:2-8.

Our reading today comes from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:11-13. This passage gives us such great hope. Even though our past may have been separate from God, we can now be close to God and live with Him.

Everyone sins. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the _____ of God." Every person who reaches the age of responsibility must _____ the consequences of his sin. If someone should suggest he's without sin, the inspired apostle John replies: "If we say that we have no sin, we _____ ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a _____, and His word is not in us" (1 John 1:8 and 10). There was only one sinless adult who walked the face of the earth, and that's Jesus Christ according to Hebrews 4:14-16 and 1 Peter 2:21-24. The rest of us _____ to live up to God's standards, so we must all come to Christ to find the solution to our sins.

Some folks _____ their sins or refuse to acknowledge what God calls sin. Whatever God calls sin is truly sinful whether our _____ or religious leaders agree or not. Even if a majority of people say that some act is morally acceptable, God is the only one who has a _____ to determine what is or is not sin. Lying is still wrong; covetousness still offends God; and drunkenness is still evil. Sexual immorality is still sinful, even if the whole world disagrees. **Read Galatians 5:19-21.**

People try uselessly to get rid of guilt on their _____. From the days of Adam and Eve, people tried to get rid of their sins by some means other than to _____ and _____ of them. In Genesis 3, Adam blamed Eve for giving him the fruit, and Eve blamed the serpent for her sin. In 1 Samuel 15, Samuel confronted King Saul for failing to fulfill the Lord's command to strike down all the Amalekites and the livestock. Saul tried to blame the people for his failure to _____ the commandment of God. He first claimed he had _____ God's commandments. He said he saved the animals to offer as a _____. **Read what the prophet Samuel said in 1 Samuel 15:22-23.**

People blame their parents, blame their circumstances, blame their friends, and even blame the Lord rather than _____ responsibility for their sins. Blaming others and avoiding responsibility simply doesn't _____ with God. God sees and knows everything. Jeremiah, the prophet of God said, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds" (Jeremiah 17:9-10). The solution to sin and guilt is not in man; it must come from the Lord Jesus. Again, the prophet Jeremiah said, "I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).

The Lord expects people to acknowledge their sins, to forsake them, and to _____ His forgiveness. Nothing but the blood of Christ will atone for sin; it's the only _____ for forgiveness and a clean conscience. **Read Hebrews 10:1-4.**

The Lord Jesus did what the Law, the _____ of Moses, was never able to do. His blood could take away sins! Paul said to the people in Perga in Pamphylia that through Jesus "everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses" (Acts 13:39). The Lord Jesus did not offer an _____ sacrifice for you, nor did He offer silver or gold to pay for your sins. No, He offered something far more precious – He offered _____. Ephesians 1:7 says, "In Him (that is, in Jesus) we have redemption through His _____, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace."

People encounter that sacrificed blood when they're _____ into the death of Christ. Romans 6:3 says, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His _____?" In baptism, we're crucified with Christ so that our sins could be done away with. We're buried with Him, and raised with Him to _____ in newness of life. Just as God raised up Jesus to new life, God unites us with Christ in baptism so that we can be born again and enjoy _____ of life. In this new life, we are no longer guilty of sin or _____ to sin.

This is why Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, "Now why do you _____? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16). This is why the Holy Spirit led Peter to write, "Corresponding to that, baptism now _____ you—not the

removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:21). Baptism is the time when we call upon His name and appeal to God for a _____ conscience. We want to be saved from sin and to have a clear conscience free from guilt! Being born again means we can put the past behind us and start fresh as a new person in Christ. The past doesn’t need to dominate our thinking or our behavior. The old man of sin is _____; he was crucified with Christ, so that we can live a life freed from sinful habits.

Being baptized is essential for the forgiveness of our sins; but the baptized, that is, people who are born again, will _____ the problem of sin, not just before but after they become Christians and throughout life. James 1:21 urges Christians, “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word (that’s) implanted, which is able to _____ your souls.” Old habits can hang on and continue to disturb us. Repentance is a change of _____ that leads to a change of _____; and when a Christian sins, he sees the need to repent once more. Some sins are easy to quit, while others continue to tempt us. Each period of life brings its own temptation. For these reasons, the Christian must stay _____ and resist the devil throughout his life.

God realizes our weaknesses and _____ forgiveness for His children when they sin. When children of God, that is, Christians who were _____, confess their sins, repent of them, and ask God’s forgiveness, God abundantly forgives and cleanses them through the blood of Jesus Christ. James 5:16 says, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and _____ for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” Being _____ about our sins is the first step to overcoming them. First John 1:9 says to the Christian, “If we confess our sins, He is _____ and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

The necessity of _____ repentance is vital to our relationship with God. We can’t continue to live in sin _____ and expect God to continue to forgive us. Hebrews 3:12-13 warns us, “Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called ‘Today,’ so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” God _____ us to put away our sins. Romans 8:12-13 simply says, “So then, brethren, we’re under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must _____; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will _____.” A Christian who lives for the flesh, and has sinful ways, that person “must die.” God will not _____ to give him life. But we can put away sin.

Religious deeds, going to church, and giving to the poor are good things; but they’re not a _____ for ceasing to sin and practicing righteousness. The Pharisees made a _____ of their religion, but did not cease from sin. **Read how the Lord Jesus described them in**

Matthew 23:25-27. You won't have a clear conscience and be free from guilt, if you continue sinful _____. You may appear _____ to the outside world; but in your soul, you will know that you're full of sin. God sees that and knows; this is why you should get serious about putting away your sins.

A Christian is to _____ a holy life, because God is holy. The apostle Peter encouraged Christians to live a life above the _____ life they inherited. First Peter 1:13-16 says, "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'" Christians must live lives that are free from sin and free from the compromise of the _____. Why? Because they belong to Christ. When Christians live ungodly lives, they _____ the name of the Lord.

That's why we must all put to death the evil _____ of the body and "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Colossians 3:5-10 says, "Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as _____ to immorality (that is, sexual immorality) impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the _____ of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being _____ to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him." That's what we must all do.

Christians must not allow the thinking of the _____ to keep them from living the transformed lives that God desires. Romans 12:2 says "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your _____, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

God has called Christians out of the world to "be _____." **Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.** Would you like to have a close, loving relationship with the Lord Jesus, free from guilt and the consequences of sin? To enter that relationship, you must place your _____ in the Lord Jesus and in His teaching; _____ of every sin and turn your heart to the Lord; _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God; and be _____ (immersed) in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins according to Acts 2:38. When you're baptized into Christ, you're baptized into His death, buried with Him, and raised with Him to walk in newness of life, free from sin, free from guilt, and born again (Romans 6:3-7).

Walking in Darkness Colossians 1:9-14

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

Some choose to walk in the light of God's _____, while others choose to walk in the darkness of the _____. Are you walking in the light or in the darkness? People feel _____ to walk in any way they like, but our paths take us in different directions. The Lord Jesus said, "Enter through the _____ gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are _____ who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are _____ who find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). We want you to _____ life by taking the narrow way, the Lord's way! Studying the Scriptures will _____ you from straying from God's will. That's why we focus our thoughts on the Bible.

When we become Christians, God _____ us out of darkness into light. People who walk in darkness cannot see clearly and never know what _____ are lurking. Spiritual darkness not only affects our lives; it also affects our _____. Christ is _____ us out of darkness into His marvelous light. First Peter 2:9-10 speaks to Christians, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has _____ you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

Because they follow Jesus, Christians are God's people who have received _____. Paul described the church, "for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; _____ as children of Light" (Ephesians 5:8). Because of Jesus, we don't have to walk in darkness. We can walk in the light!

Our reading today comes from Paul's Letter to the Colossians 1:9-14. In this passage, Paul makes very clear the beauty and the wonder of what it means to be a child of the _____.

Sometimes people who once followed the Lord take a _____ and follow the wrong path into sin. The Scriptures reveal several instances of otherwise faithful men who were _____ and took a walk in the darkness, leaving the narrow path and falling to temptation. We want to look at some of those who took a walk in sin, but later came home.

First is David. David was a man after God's own _____; he wrote nearly half of the book of Psalms; and was the _____ of loyalty to God for all the kings of Judah. Yet, he committed adultery with Bathsheba and caused the _____ of her husband, Uriah. Second Samuel 11, tells of David's temptation. He saw Bathsheba when she was bathing and he _____ for her. David called for her, slept with her, and caused her to become pregnant with child. He committed adultery, a sin that was punishable by _____. In order to cover up his

sin, he called for the mighty man, Uriah the Hittite, to come _____ to his wife; but Uriah did not go home. As an honorable soldier, he slept at the king's _____. David got Uriah _____, thinking he might go home; but Uriah didn't. David then arranged for Uriah to be _____ in battle so he could marry his pregnant widow. This "thing that David had done _____ the Lord" (2 Samuel 11:27).

Because David sinned against God, he felt a heavy burden of _____. David tried to conceal his sin, and that only made things worse. The Lord sent the prophet Nathan to David to _____ him. Nathan revealed to David the story of a powerful, rich man who selfishly _____ the only ewe lamb belonging to his poor neighbor to feed a guest. The lamb was _____ and like a daughter to this poor man. David became _____ and said that the rich man deserves to die. Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man!" David was rich and had several wives, yet he stole the only wife of his neighbor. Perhaps like David you've realized that you're the kind of person who could commit some terrible _____ against God. David left the light and decided to take a selfish _____ in the darkness.

Thankfully, David confessed his sins, and God _____ him. In Psalm 51, David reveals the _____ that he endured because of his sin. He spoke about his need for _____ to blot out his transgressions. He knew how badly he _____ washing and cleansing from sin. His sins were ever before him. His guilt was like having broken bones. He cried out, "Create in me a _____ heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your _____ and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the _____ of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit" (Psalm 51:10-12). David sinned against God. The momentary _____ of sin never last, and David suffered greatly for his walk in the dark.

Jesus tells the story of a younger brother who grew up in a godly home but decided to leave home and live as he pleased. **Read how Jesus tells this parable in Luke 15:11-24.** Because of his _____ to walk in sin, this young man became destitute. Sin _____ him everything! He _____ his inheritance; he gave up his self-respect; he _____ his ability to make a living and eat! He had no friends and no kinfolk in that far country! Friend, are you in a far country? Are the sinful _____ of your life costing you your self-respect and a clear conscience? Do you need a reset button and to come to your senses? The prodigal son finally recognized his _____ ways. This honesty is the first step to healing. His sin shamed him to the point that he no longer felt _____ to be the Father's son. When people see the great harm of sin and they begin to grieve over it, they find the courage and strength to _____ it. Thankfully, this younger brother _____ and came home to his father.

Luke tells of the apostle Peter's _____ to temptation. The Lord Jesus said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have _____ for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." Peter responded, "Lord, I am _____ to go with you both to

prison and to death” (Luke 22:31-33). On the Mount of Olives, Peter boasted, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will _____ fall away.” I’m reminded of Paul’s warning in 1 Corinthians 10:12, “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take _____ that he does not fall.” Jesus had predicted, “Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will _____ Me three times” (Matthew 26:34). Jesus’ prophecy proved true, and Peter even with the best of intentions fell to temptation.

Matthew 26:69-75 says, “Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, ‘You too were _____ Jesus the Galilean.’ But he denied it before them all, saying, ‘I do not _____ what you are talking about.’ When he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, ‘This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.’ And again he denied it with an _____, ‘I do not know the man.’ A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, ‘Surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk gives you away.’ Then he began to curse and swear, ‘I do not know the man!’ And immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, ‘Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ And he went out and _____ bitterly.”

Matthew, Mark, and Luke record Peter’s denial of Jesus. Thankfully, Peter did _____ and come back to the Lord. Though he denied knowing the Lord Jesus at the trial, he stood with the eleven and boldly _____ the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the Day of Pentecost, just fifty days later! Jesus didn’t cast Peter out and have no use for him. In John 21, when Jesus asked Peter three times whether he loved Him, Peter _____ his love. Jesus told him to “feed my lambs, ... tend my sheep, ... feed my sheep.” Repentance ceases from sin, yes; but it also gets busy doing the _____ of the Lord.

You may have at some time in your _____ taken a walk in the darkness. I want you to know that there’s _____ for you, if you’ll come back to the Lord and serve Him. Jesus said that He prayed for Peter, and Jesus is praying for you to _____ from sin and _____ in righteousness. The Lord didn’t give up on Peter, and He won’t give up on you. Don’t give up on Him or on yourself.

There is a constant _____ going on in this world between good and evil, between righteousness and sin, between light and darkness. The apostle John told the church, “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the _____ of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). It matters whether we follow the Lord Jesus or whether we follow the world. The Lord Jesus himself said, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are _____ who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are _____ who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). Those who follow the crowds of the world will be _____, while those who take the narrow path in following Jesus will enter into _____.

The reason we preach the gospel is so that everyone may find the _____ and be saved by the Lord. God chose the method of preaching and the message preached in the _____

to reach out to people in darkness and to bring them to the light. Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the _____ of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

The Lord Jesus _____ Saul of Tarsus; that is, the apostle Paul, to be a minister and a witness. The Lord said that He sent him to the Gentiles “to open their eyes so that they may _____ from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18). Paul reminded the church at Colossae what God had done for them. Paul said, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the _____ of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14).

We do not need to go _____ into the darkness, back into sin, or back into confusion and misunderstanding. We need to come to the Lord and to His Word and to _____ Him always. Paul urged the Romans, “Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to _____ from sleep; for now salvation is _____ to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the _____ of darkness and put on the _____ of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the _____ in regard to its lusts” (Romans 13:11-14). That is what we must do – leave the darkness and come to the light.

The Lord Jesus said, “I am the _____ of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life” (John 8:12). Jesus is the light of the world, but He desires His followers to _____ that same light of life. The Lord said, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light _____ before men in such a way that they may see your _____ works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16).

Let me ask you, do people _____ you as a light for Jesus? The world exists in spiritual darkness and desperately _____ the light. They need Christ’s love, His teaching, His grace, and His hope. You can’t show the light of Christ if you walk in darkness and live in _____. You can’t lead people to Christ if you aren’t following Him. Repent, and God will _____ and heal you. Repentance is a great gift; it means you can start over _____. Jesus preached repentance, because repentance brings healing to lost souls.

Begin your journey with Jesus. Place your trust in Him, in what He has _____ for you on the cross, and in what He teaches. Trust means _____ your heart and life to the Lord Jesus. When you give your life to Him, you’ll start to live as He _____ and you’ll give up the old sins. That’s repentance. Trust in Christ means confessing Jesus as the Son of God. Trust in Christ means _____ the Lord in baptism. You’ll be immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Oh, won’t you obey the Lord today!

Walking In The Light 1 John 1:5-10

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

It's better to light just one little candle than to _____ in the dark. When we _____ the Lord Jesus, we can walk in the light. God's Word provides the _____ that we need to make the most of our lives. It helps us _____ the dangerous pitfalls of sin and lies. It shows us the _____ to eternal life, filled with joy and love. It _____ us of the attitudes and mindsets that lead to conflict and danger. It blesses us by enlightening our _____ to reality, to goodness, to true love, to kindness, and to faith. We need the Bible to show us the _____ life to live and the freedom that we have in Christ. Nothing else compares!

Many years ago, a popular song had the words, "It is better to light just one little candle than to stumble in the dark!" I found that song inspiring in those early days, and it _____ inspires me today. All of us have stumped our _____ stumbling around in the dark at night; a small light would've made a difference. Jackie and I keep small flashlights by our bedside these days.

Moral and spiritual darkness can be even _____ dangerous than physical darkness. Moral and spiritual problems can _____ us our health, our lives, and even our souls. The Lord Jesus said of the Pharisees who were caught up in the doctrines of men, "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a _____" (Matthew 15:14). The freedom that we have in Christ is far _____ than the blindness of human traditions and our worldly culture. We want the true _____ of spiritual and moral light that will free us from the dangers of evil and deception.

Our reading today comes from The Epistle of 1 John 1:5-10. It reflects the blessing and the beauty of having a relationship and fellowship with God, the Father, and His Son Jesus.

The Lord Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world; he who _____ Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life" (John 8:12). The best way to walk in the light is to look at the _____ of Jesus Christ. We're to "walk in the light as He is in the light!" The Lord Jesus lived a _____ life on earth. Though the devil _____ Jesus, Jesus never sinned. Jesus asked, "Which one of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46). No one could then, and no one can now! No one could point fingers at lies that He told or sins that He committed. He set the _____ for telling the truth, for living a godly and righteous life, for loving others, and for giving Himself to bless others.

He wants us to follow Him by _____ in the light as well. When we do, we are also a light. The Lord Jesus said, "You are the light of the _____. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they

may see your good works, and _____ your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16). When we live like Jesus, we show light to the world; and that glorifies the Father in heaven.

First, walking in the light means I will show the _____ that Christ has. The Lord Jesus said, “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not commit murder’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ But I say to you that everyone who is _____ with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell” (Matthew 5:21-22). Christ loved _____ people and treated them with respect, and so should we. Getting angry over little things is not the way of Christ.

Paul said, “Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity” (Ephesians 4:26-27). In verses 31-32 Paul wrote, “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be _____ to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” James 1:19-20 says, “This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.” Angry people are hurting and tend to hurt others. We must learn to _____ our anger.

Likewise, the Lord Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with _____ for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell” (Matthew 5:27-30). Jesus wants us to _____ the evil behavior so that we can maintain a right relationship and fellowship with Him.

We must be _____ what we listen to, what we think, what we read, and what we watch. The things that we put into our heads and hearts can shut God out and then fill our _____ with darkness. Luke 11:34-36 says, “The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays.”

We must also treat others the way Jesus _____. **Read what the Lord said in Matthew 5:38-48.** These verses provide a serious challenge to be the sons of our heavenly Father, to think like He thinks.

Second, walking in the light means that I will adjust my _____ to be like Christ. In Matthew 12, the Lord Jesus healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute. In response to this miracle, some Pharisees accused Jesus of healing this man by the _____ of Beelzebul, the prince of demons. Of course, Jesus healed the man by the power of the Holy

Spirit! He could see their hardened _____ and spiritual blindness that kept them from seeking, or seeing the truth. Jesus said to them, “You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the _____ speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil. But I tell you that every _____ word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your _____ you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matthew 12:34-37). How we speak _____ whether we’re walking in the light of God or walking in darkness.

God’s Word says, “Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak _____ each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another” (Ephesians 4:25). Honesty is essential to our integrity. The devil is a deceiver. He’s the father of lies, and lying is his _____ according to John 8:44. Christians should speak the truth and speak it in _____. First Peter 2:1 says we are to put “aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.” We have enough _____ news and enough hateful speech in our world already. Wouldn’t it be _____ if people could speak honestly, respectfully, and lovingly about one another and to one another?

Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no unwholesome _____ proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is _____ for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.” Let’s build up rather than put down. Our speech needs to speak the truth in a way that _____ other people. Colossians 4:6 says, “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should _____ to each person.” People gossip, falsely judge, and slander others without mercy these days. Christians must _____ to live above this kind of speech. Wouldn’t the world be a better place if people could learn to speak _____ to others instead of unkindly about others?

Paul warned Timothy about people who “go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not _____ to mention” (1 Timothy 5:13). To let God’s light shine, we must _____ how we speak to and about others. Curse words and foul language are inappropriate for _____ occasion. What a shame that someone who calls Christ the Lord would use _____ language! Some think dirty jokes are mature or cute, but foul language is demeaning to the person who uses it. Ephesians 5:4 says, “and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not _____, but rather giving of thanks.”

Third, walking in the light means I will adjust my _____ to be like Christ. The Lord Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you _____ one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My _____, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35). Love is _____ to the identification of a Christian who walks in the light. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his _____” (John 15:13). Jesus practiced what He

taught. Jesus loved sinners and He loved the unlovely; His behavior _____ us how to love. First John 4:19 says, “We love, because He first loved us.”

The Lord Jesus asks us to _____ evil and live righteously. The Lord said, “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their _____ were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who _____ the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God” (John 3:19-21). When we live righteously, we don’t have to keep our lives _____ from others.

We must be careful not to let the world _____ how we live. Romans 12:2 urges us, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the _____ of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” To walk in the light we must know the will of God and _____ it. So, “He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is _____, so that he will have something to share with one who has need” (Ephesians 4:28).

Let’s give up _____ ways and walk in the light. That means _____ others for the Lord. Galatians 6:10 says, “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do _____ to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.” Every kind deed, every act of love matters to God and it matters to people. First Corinthians 15:58 says, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in _____ in the Lord.” When we serve God, we aren’t _____ our time. We are declaring to the world our love for the Lord.

Are you walking in the light? Can people see Jesus living in you? In Acts 4:13 the Jews recognized that Peter and John were people who had “been _____ Jesus.” Can people today say that about you, that they see the influence of Jesus in your life? Do you show the attitudes, the speech, and the behavior of someone who has _____ with Jesus? Are you _____ like Christ today than you were a year ago or five years ago? The Hebrew writer spoke of Christians who should have become teachers but needed to be _____ the elementary things themselves in Hebrews 5:12. I hope this common problem doesn’t describe you, too.

Let’s fix our eyes on Jesus. Let’s follow His teaching. Let’s see His kindness and patience. Let’s see His love for the lost. Let’s see His willingness to reach out to everyone and give them hope. Even though many _____ Him, Jesus had room in His heart for everyone. He said, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you _____. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

If you wish to draw close to Jesus; if you wish to live like Him and walk in the light with Him; then come to Him. You do this by believing in Him; repenting of your sins; confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God; and by being baptized, immersed in water, into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Oh, come to Jesus today!