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*Program
Study Guides*

**For
May 2019**

The Heart of Christ Philippians 2:5-8

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

If you really want to know someone, look into his _____. If you want to know the Lord Jesus, look into Scripture where His heart is _____. The Bible opens the _____ for us to know the Lord. We don't rely on opinions, or polls, or hunches. We know the Bible always teaches us the _____, so we focus on God's Holy Word.

Jesus _____ people. God sent Him into this world because the world _____ Him so badly. Jesus cared about people's lives. He _____ the hungry. He cared about their _____ and so He healed them. He cared about their problems and invited people to cast their _____ on Him. But, more than anything, He cared about the _____ of people. This is why He _____ repentance and the need for forgiveness. He wanted everyone to be right with God.

In Matthew 9:36-38, we see a little of the heart of Jesus. "Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like _____ without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.'" Jesus knew that all of us needed someone to _____ us out of this dangerous and sinful world and to a place of peace and righteousness.

Galatians 1:4 says Jesus "gave Himself for our sins so that He might _____ us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." Jesus cared about souls enough to die for us so that we might die to sin and live in righteousness. What a wonderful Savior! How blessed we are just to know Him. Today, we want to look at the heart of the One who cares.

Our Scripture reading comes from the Book of Philippians 2:5-8. Some people think this passage was part of a song that the early church sang. It talks about the heart of Jesus.

Jesus has _____ existed in the form of God. He is Divine. Some think of Jesus as a man and _____ His Deity. Some think of Him as a _____ or only the son of Mary. Still others think He was _____ a great, moral teacher. The Scriptures, however, present Jesus as Divine. They argue that He has always existed.

John 1:1-3 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was _____ God, and the Word _____ God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were _____ through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." In this passage, "the Word" is a reference to Jesus Christ. He was in the beginning; He was with God, and He was and is God, and _____ took place through Him. In John 1:15 John bore witness about Jesus and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'"

In His prayer to His Father, Jesus spoke of His existence _____ creation. He said, "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you _____ the world existed" (John 17:5). Later Jesus prayed, "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved

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me before the foundation of the world” (verse 24). The Lord Jesus has _____ existed.

Jesus was truly God before He became a human. Then, without ceasing to be God, He was willing to lay _____ the glory of being equal with God. He emptied Himself of divine privileges by becoming human. Philippians 2 says Jesus Christ was made in the _____ of men and found in appearance as a man. He became something _____ than He was before. He left his place in Heaven and took on flesh.

John 1:14 says, “And the Word became _____ and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only (begotten) Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Jesus Christ was indeed unique. John saw a glimpse of His glory, but He was _____ of glory when He came, and He died on the cross, and was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of God. Jesus was God, yet He _____ himself and became flesh. One might ask why.

Hebrews 2:14-15 answers that question. “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise _____ of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through _____ of death were subject to lifelong slavery.” The devil possesses the power of death in that he tempts people to sin and to come under sin’s penalty, which is spiritual death.

Jesus took on flesh so that through dying He could take _____ of death. He shed his blood on the cross to _____ us from sin and from the consequences of sin. He conquered physical death when He _____ from the dead. The faithful Christian who follows the Lord, doesn’t have to fear physical, spiritual death, or the judgment. He has the _____ of heaven.

By leaving heaven and coming to earth, the Lord Jesus emptied Himself, taking the form of a _____. Jesus didn’t empty Himself of His Deity, but of His _____. His focus was not on being _____ with God but of taking the form of God’s servant on earth. The Lord Jesus said, “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to _____, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). Jesus was and is the Lord of Glory, but He walked upon this earth like a _____ man.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and Luke 2:7 says that Mary “wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no _____ for them in the inn.”

Jesus spent most of his life in Nazareth in a carpenter’s shop. While Joseph and Mary knew of His miraculous birth, His neighbors in Nazareth took offense at His _____ to be the Messiah and tried to kill Him. To them Jesus was just the carpenter’s son.

Jesus never did any of the worldly things that people associate with _____. He never led an army, never ruled an earthly kingdom, never owned any land or built a great house, He never possessed great wealth, never wrote a book, and never traveled far and wide. He never married or raised a family. He did not come to glorify Himself; He came to glorify the Father and do His will.

The Lord Jesus left everything holy and good to come and _____ sinful mankind from evil. Second Corinthians 8:9 says, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became _____, so that you through His poverty might become rich.”

Jesus’ humility should cause us to be _____. Philippians 2:3-4 says, “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count _____ more significant than yourselves. Let each of

you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Jesus never taught anyone to think of himself as _____ than others, or to be selfish, or to be conceited. Paul once asked, “What do you have that you did not _____?” (1 Corinthians 4:7). Everything we have, everything we are, everything we hope to be comes by _____ providence and grace. When we consider the grace and providence of God, we have no _____ to be arrogant.

The Lord Jesus taught and practiced _____. Jesus taught his disciples, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and _____ of all” (Mark 9:35). He was saying, “You don’t become great by putting yourself before everyone else. You become great by putting yourself _____, by serving other people.” A Christian minister once said, “I was never of any use until I found out that God did not intend me to be a great man.”

Jesus humbled himself by becoming obedient. Servants and slaves _____. A humble person is free from arrogance. He knows how _____ he is on God. Humble people aren’t concerned with _____. Jesus was God but stooped down in humility and in obedience. Hebrews 5:8-9 says, “Although he was a son, he _____ obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who _____ him.” The humble obedience of Jesus opened the _____ for our obedience and our opportunity for eternal life.

The Lord Jesus said, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you _____. Take my yoke upon you, and _____ from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29). Jesus Christ was approachable by the common Jew, even by those who felt weary and burdened. The downtrodden and the sinner could find a _____ in Jesus. They found rest for their souls. The Lord Jesus never sinned, but He was not afraid to stoop down and lift up fallen, broken people. **Read Hebrews 4:14-16.**

Many shy away from God when they sin, but we have a high priest who _____ all of our weaknesses and knows what it means to be tempted. Rather than shy away from God when we’re tempted, we should draw close and _____ for help. The Father understands and will help us through our temptations and struggles. We can receive mercy and find grace to _____ in that time of need.

Jesus was obedient to the point of death on a cross. No other death on a cross compared to His: there He bore the sins of His people, taking their place and enduring the _____ of God that they should have received. The death of Christ was nothing less than Christ experiencing the punishment of sin, so His people would not have to bear it themselves.

The Bible speaks of how personal this death was for Jesus. First Peter 2:24 says, “He himself bore _____ sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” Jesus’ death was a deeply passionate and personal sacrifice for our sins, so that we could _____ forgiveness and spiritual healing. Second Corinthians 5:21 says God made Jesus “who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Jesus was entirely _____ in dying on the cross, so that we might find blessing.

Jesus didn’t die for us and then afterward _____ us. Do you know what Jesus is doing today? Jesus is still helping us _____. Jesus is defending God’s children when they sin. Hebrews 7:25 says, “Consequently, he is _____ to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through

him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” He is pleading the _____ for your salvation before the Father who is in Heaven. First John 2:1-2 says, “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an _____ with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation (atoning sacrifice) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The One who _____ for the forgiveness of those who nailed His hands and feet is interceding with the Father today on behalf of Christians. Jesus never quits loving or blessing us as long as we _____ to follow Him. He constantly takes up our defense with the Father. The One who died for us is now pleading for our continued forgiveness. Even when we Christians _____ the Lord, He’s willing to plead our case to the Father. I must confess: when I consider the terrible death of Jesus on the cross and His constant loyal defense before the Father, I cannot fully grasp such great love.

My prayer is like the apostle Paul’s prayer. Paul wanted the church to comprehend the love of God, which is to some extent _____ our ability to comprehend. He prayed that they “may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the _____ of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:18-19).

Can you imagine how your life would _____ if you really grasped how deep and wide the love of God is for you? We often take the love and the blessing of God for granted. We _____ all He’s done and all He’s doing for us. We get so caught up in our own little world and our own desires we lose _____ of the heart of Christ and His devotion to us. We desperately need the heart of Christ to be in our own hearts. Do you have the heart of Christ?

Because Jesus humbled Himself, God exalted Him. Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is _____ every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” God blesses those who will humbly _____ Him.

We need hearts like the Lord’s heart. “Have this _____ in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5). We, too, must humbly obey God and sacrifice ourselves out of love. Instead of challenging the Lord with our beliefs and opinions, we need to humbly step back and _____ God and keep His words. Love and grace do not excuse us from the need for obedience. Love and grace make us all the more willing to do His will. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will _____ my commandments.” Love moves us to do whatever He asks and to live every day in His service.

Love for God moves us to trust Him, to be willing to confess to the whole world that we believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Love also moves us to think of sin differently. We realize sin will ruin our lives and so we repent of sin and we turn to the Lord. We put on Christ in baptism. And we’re baptized into the death of Christ (Romans 6:3), where Christ shed His blood. In baptism, God washes away our sins and gives us newness of life (Acts 22:16; and Romans 6:4-7). Take the necessary step of being baptized into Christ. That’s when you’ll receive the forgiveness of sins. Today is the best day for you to do that.

Understanding the Heart Romans 6:16-18

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

Scripture uses the word “heart” to describe the _____ man who thinks, feels, and decides what he believes, what he likes or dislikes, and what he’ll do and not do. Today we examine the word “heart.” Though the Scriptures were written thousands of years ago, the Bible _____ the most valuable and relevant book. It speaks the _____ and pricks our hearts to see ourselves as we are. The many narratives of Scripture help us to understand not only God’s holiness and purity but also human _____. God helps us look _____ of ourselves.

God made you in His own _____, after His own likeness. This idea refers not so much to the physical part of man as it does to the _____ man that thinks, feels, and makes choices. The Scriptures use the word “heart” to describe the inner, conscious _____. The heart is _____ to our relationship with God. The Lord Jesus said, “‘You shall _____ the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments _____ the whole Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40). Solomon wisely advised us, “Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the _____ of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

The Lord Jesus knows our hearts. John 2:25 says about Jesus, “He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself _____ what was in man.” To each of the seven churches of Asia, discussed in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, Jesus, who walks among His churches says, “I know your _____.” Hebrews 4:13 says, “And there is no creature _____ from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”

Our reading today comes from Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 6:16-18. He discusses the importance of who we decide to _____ and how we deal with that from our hearts. What a wonderful thing to be able to _____ from slaves of sin to slaves of righteousness.

Our hearts function in many different aspects of our _____, including our thoughts, our feelings, and our volition. The heart is our inner _____ that remembers, makes decisions, and makes plans for the future. The heart is the very _____ of our being. We have a relationship with God when our hearts belong to Him and we have determined to do His will and follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

The heart is where our thoughts, our reason, and our memory _____. The heart is where we _____ the greatness and benevolence of God! Scripture _____ directly to our minds to educate, to reprove, to correct, and to train us in righteousness. If we _____ with our hearts to Scripture, we can come to know our Creator and our Savior. God gave us hearts and minds to _____ His Word. Let’s not waste our hearts on things that do not _____. One day we’ll

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face God to give an _____ for our lives. God will _____ our hearts, too. The Lord Jesus warned, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who _____ at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28).

According to Scripture, the heart is the _____ from which the emotions flow. God commanded Israel, “You shall not _____ your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall _____ your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD” (Leviticus 19:17-18). Both love and hate come from the heart. Our hearts _____ whether we love the Lord and whether or not we love our neighbor.

We’ll also decide in our hearts whether we trust the Lord. Proverbs 3:5-7 says, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.” What we _____ in our hearts will always spread to our decisions and our behavior.

The heart is where our _____ arise. Psalm 37:4 says, “Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.” If we desire God, seek Him, and serve Him, He will _____ us; but if we allow fleshly desires to rule our lives, we will _____ ourselves from God’s blessing. Romans 8:12-13 says, “So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

The heart chooses and plans. Proverbs 16:1 says, “The plans of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.” People imagine in their hearts they can do as they _____, but God is watching. Proverbs 19:21 says, “Many plans are in a man’s heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand.”

Solomon counseled the young to _____ their choices in life. God wants us to enjoy life, but He’s going to hold us accountable for our _____. Ecclesiastes 11:9 says, “Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to _____ for all these things.” Desiring sin in our hearts won’t justify our sins. Saying we love someone doesn’t justify _____ God’s commandments.

Jesus taught, “the things that proceed out of the _____ come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the _____ come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders” (Matthew 15:18-19). The desires of our hearts can _____ us toward God or away from God. Because our hearts lead to our _____, God takes notice of the heart. Genesis 6:5 discussed the men’s hearts during the days of Noah, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every _____ of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Selfishness and sin can lead people to _____ their hearts against the Lord. When the

heart is only _____ continually, one's behavior will be evil, too! The intent leads to the action. I've heard people say, when they sinned that God _____ them that way; but God doesn't make us sinners. We choose to sin and we're responsible for our choices. **Read James 1:13-15.**

I've heard people say, "God wants me to be _____"; but it's wrong to think that God wants us to be happy in our sins. God doesn't call us to worldly happiness; He calls us to righteousness. We should never imagine that worldly happiness can compare to the inexpressible joy that arises from a _____ conscience. The prophet of God said, "Your (God's) eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You cannot look on wickedness with _____" (Habakkuk 1:13). Don't let your heart _____ you. The Lord 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 _____'" (Jeremiah 17:9-10).

Romans 1:21-23 says about ancient mankind, "For even though they knew God, they did not _____ Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish _____ was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an _____ in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures." What foolishness to honor the creature rather than the Creator, but people still have their _____.

Some glorify science as if _____ created science; but who gave us our bodies, our souls, and our spirits? Who gave them to scientists? Do you honestly believe people could _____ anything if God had not enabled them? Man's intellect didn't come from primordial soup; only a _____ intellect could produce a human intellect. That's why we must _____ the Creator, God, not the creature, man. When people exalt the _____ of men and lose sight of God's teaching, they may profess to be wise; but such thinking leads to foolishness.

When people harden their hearts against God, they _____ themselves. When Israel hardened their hearts against God and worshiped idols, He _____ them by allowing Babylon to destroy Jerusalem and take them into captivity. After seventy years, God _____ they would return to Israel and to Him as their God. God said, "And I will give them one heart, and put a _____ spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may _____ in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God" (Ezekiel 11:19-20).

The New Testament _____ against allowing our hearts to harden. Sin will harden the heart against God. **Read Ephesians 4:17-19.**

Even Christians who've known the _____ of the Lord can develop hardened hearts when they let evil into their lives. Hebrews 3:12-13 says, "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that _____ 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 _____."

On the positive side, the Bible talks of a heart that _____ a person to do good to the Lord. God told Moses, "Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose

heart moves him you shall raise My contribution” (Exodus 25:2). God wants us to give to the _____ willingly and cheerfully. God said, “Each one must do just as he has _____ in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). Unlike the contribution of the Jews, God no longer _____ a tithe or a tenth; nor does God _____ our gifts. We can give as much as our hearts desire. Whatever we give, let’s give generously and cheerfully.

God desires that we do more than merely _____ His laws. He wants _____ from our hearts. True devotion encompasses the _____ person. **Read what the Lord said to Solomon in 1 Kings 9:4-5.** God wants whole-hearted, loving obedience from His people.

The Lord has never wanted hypocrisy that practices righteousness only to be _____ by others. Pretended worship or showmanship has never _____ God. The Lord Jesus said, “the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him _____ worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23-24). True worship isn’t a theatrical production or display of talents; it’s a heartfelt _____ for the Lord. Hebrews 12:28-29 says, “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable _____, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.”

Gratitude for the cross of Christ and for what God has done for us every day should move us to _____ Him with all our hearts. We must stop forgetting God and _____ our hearts to Him. God is well aware of our hearts. The prophet Ezekiel, inspired of God, spoke to a rebellious Judah, hoping to _____ their hearts. **Read what he said in Ezekiel 18:31-32.** We must not allow our hearts to harden against God.

The Lord commanded Samuel to anoint one of the sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, as the new king to replace Saul, whom God rejected. Samuel looked at Eliab and thought that he was surely the Lord’s anointed. “But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the _____’” (1 Samuel 16:7). God knows your heart, whether you love Him or love something else.

The Lord said, “No one can serve _____ masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot _____ God and wealth” (Matthew 6:24). What you treasure and love tells where your heart is. You may not be close to God, but you can be! Wherever you are in life, you can find God. Moses told Israel that even when they had wandered from God, they could find Him. He said, “But from there you will _____ the LORD your God, and you will _____ Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29).

Where is your heart? Do you seek God? Search the Scriptures and listen to God! You’ll find God there! Believe in the Lord Jesus. Without faith, one cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6). Repent of your sins. Unless you repent, you’ll perish (Luke 13:3). Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Be baptized into Christ, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38).

Your Heart Psalm 139

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

The Father in Heaven _____ everything about you. He knows how you think, what you say, and what you do. David asked the Lord to _____ his heart; would you?

The Lord leads us in the _____ of righteousness through the teaching in His Word. These are the words of _____ life. They are the words of encouragement, words of love, and words of warning from God's heart. We must _____ closely to God's Words and not drift from them. There's nothing like them in all the world.

I hope you make it your _____ each day to live pleasing to the Lord. It's amazing how many take the _____ of God for granted and never consider the need to improve their spiritual lives. The apostle Paul said, "So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to _____ him. For we must all _____ before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2 Corinthians 5:9-10). Each of us must _____ how we're going to live, and then we'll have to face the consequences of our behavior. How does God see you?

Have you made it the business of your life to _____ in your faith, in your love, and in your zeal for the Lord? Many people live their lives in complacency, thinking that because they're under the grace of God they never _____ to mature or grow. But, God expects all of us to _____ our hearts and to see if there are things that we can do better. As we study from the Scriptures today, I hope that you'll take a long look at your heart, your life, and your soul. Are you living as God wills? Could there be some sinful or hurtful way in you?

Our reading today comes from a psalm of David, Psalm 139.

One cannot read Psalm 139 without the overwhelming realization that God is _____ with us. He sees and knows everything about us. He searches our hearts and knows us _____ than we know ourselves. He knows how we _____ and what we do. Psalm 139 says, "You _____ when I sit down and when I rise up." God knows our thoughts. Psalm 139 says that God discerns our "thoughts from afar." The Lord even knows every _____ we speak. Psalm 139 says, "Even before a word is on my _____, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether."

God encircles us. "You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me" (Psalm 139:5). The fact that you cannot go anywhere that God isn't already _____ is a wonderful thought. You can't _____ away from God. **Read Psalm 139:7-12.**

God is both omniscient, that is all-knowing, and omnipresent, that means everywhere-present. He's not _____ by space or time; and nothing escapes His notice. Proverbs 15:3 says, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping _____ on the evil and the good."

No one can escape the presence of God. This fact ought to _____ us that we must have pure and holy lives. God said, “You shall be holy, for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44 and 1 Peter 1:16).

Hebrews 12:14 says, “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will _____ the Lord.” God expects His people to _____ their sins and to live holy lives. God will not tolerate being put in second place to our sins. God wants to be _____ in your heart, in your life, in your thoughts, and in your words. David knew that God will not tolerate wickedness but will one day slay the wicked.

God knew about us even before we were _____. **Read Psalm 139:13-16.**

Because God saw every aspect of his life and that sin would displease God the Father, David asked the Father, “Search me, O God, and know my _____! Try me and know my _____! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (verses 23-24). David wanted to please the Father so much that he wanted God to _____ his heart and life to see if there was any grievous or hurtful way in him. God would already know it. God didn’t need to search to find out. David is the one who needed to know. He didn’t want anything to come _____ God and him. He wanted to get rid of the hurtful way and be led in the everlasting way!

David was saying, “If there is something _____ with me, I want to know it so I can _____ my ways.” We, too, need to have our hearts and lives examined. David wanted so badly to stand right in the sight of God that he _____ his life up to God’s scrutiny. We might be able to fool others; we might even fool ourselves about our sins; but we can _____ fool God. David was afraid he was ignorant of a sin or he had blinded himself to a sin that he was committing.

We must all be _____ about whether we’re living in sin and then not recognizing it. Perhaps we’re entertaining some wicked thoughts or failing to do our _____ as Christians. God’s Word _____ us what we must do and what we must not do. They’re clearly set out in Scripture, but many people live completely oblivious to their _____ sin. I’m reminded of Proverbs 30:20, which says, “This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, And says, ‘I have done _____ wrong.’”

Sin is deceitful. People who commit sin don’t like to acknowledge that they could have done such a thing. The more people sin, the more likely they are to _____ themselves of sin. They often re-label sin to _____ the sting and make it appear innocent. For instance, a person isn’t greedy; he is just “business savvy.” Or a drunk will hardly ever admit that he’s intoxicated; instead he’s “high.” A gossip may never admit that he or she is backbiting; instead they’re merely being zealous against sin. Many people shape their principles according to their _____ rather than shape their practice according to their _____.

Sin is able to deceive us because sin _____ our judgment. If I allow a certain lust in my heart to continue, it won’t be long until I find a way to _____ of my own actions. People just naturally begin to think that whatever _____ them must be all right. The same

passions that lead people into sin _____ them to its deceitfulness. They begin justifying their behavior. For instance, the more we hate somebody, the more inclined we may be to tell ourselves this person is rotten and deserves to be _____. We may even tell ourselves that we're right to hate others. Sin corrupts the heart and makes its thoughts twisted.

This is why the Bible says, "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to _____ away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of _____" (Hebrews 3:12-13). Sin deceives us, and then it blinds us to ourselves, and then it _____ our hearts toward Christ and toward other people. Many people who get caught up in sin grow _____ at anyone who thinks what they're doing is wrong. Inside they know the truth; they just don't want to _____ it.

Proverbs 21:2 says, "Every way of a man is _____ in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart." If given enough time, you can _____ to yourself whatever it is you want to do. Just because you think it's all right, and just because you think it's that way doesn't mean God approves of your sin. All you have really done is _____ to yourself. We cannot always _____ our own hearts. The Bible says, "Whoever trusts in his own mind is a _____, but he who walks in wisdom (wisdom that comes from God) will be delivered" (Proverbs 28:26). Don't trust your own thinking as to what is right and wrong; trust the wisdom of God found in God's Word.

People easily see the faults of others but seem to _____ even the most glaring faults of their own. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus about unfair judging: **Read Matthew 7:3-5.**

When some people see the _____ of others, they can quickly condemn them; but it seems easy for people to _____ themselves for committing the same sin. Romans 2:1-3 says, "Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who _____. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, _____ the very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who do such things. Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself—that you will _____ the judgment of God?"

Paul urged the Corinthians, "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the _____. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!" (2 Corinthians 13:5). Let's ask ourselves some questions that _____ our souls. Let's see if there is any grievous or hurtful way in our lives. Let's see if we pass the test.

Do I believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God? Do I believe He died for my sins and that He was raised up again on the third day? Do I believe the Bible is inspired of God and _____ from error? Do I believe the Lord Jesus is coming again one day to _____ the world in righteousness according to the things written in the Book and according to our deeds? Do I really believe? If I don't have faith in Christ, I cannot _____ God at all. I've failed the test.

Do I love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength? We might easily say that we love

God, but do we love Him completely and freely? Do we put Him _____ in our lives, our decisions, our plans, and our time? Do I _____ regularly and fervently? Do I _____ and meditate on God's Word? Do I _____ God's kingdom and righteousness first? Do I _____ others about Christ? Do I _____ to God when I hurt? Am I compassionate toward those who _____ and toward those who are _____? Have I encouraged anyone lately? Am I willing to be a bigot towards other races or be prejudiced towards those who are not like me?

Do I let the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life to _____ me away from God? Do I have _____ sins that I keep committing? With what kinds of things do I _____ my heart? Do I think _____ thoughts or do I allow sexual sin to flirt with me? Do I allow my eyes to see things that I shouldn't see and my ears to hear things I shouldn't hear?

Do I allow my _____ to indulge in envy or jealousy? Do I fuss with others often? Do I gossip? Am I greedy? Do I support the Lord's _____ generously? Am I grateful for all the _____ that God gives to me and my family? Do I tell little lies? Am I _____ in all my dealings with others? Do I _____ on my taxes?

The grace of God provides forgiveness, and we all desperately _____ the grace of God. But God's loving grace should lead us to _____ our ways. We must never presume on the grace of God. The grace of God is not a _____ to continue in sin. God's gracious gift of Jesus Christ on the cross was not _____. It deserves to be taken seriously. So, let's examine our hearts and our lives that the grace God has given us may not be in vain.

In Psalm 26:2, David asks God, "Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my heart and my mind." Could you ask God to _____ you to see what kind of person you are? Would you want God to _____ into your heart? Then what would He see? Would you want Him to look into your mind? Would you want Him to _____ what you're thinking? God already knows what's inside you, but are you willing to _____ yourself spiritually so you can correct what is wrong? Would you be willing to see if there's any grievous way in you and give it up?

David could say, "I have walked in my integrity, and I have _____ in the Lord without wavering" (Psalm 26:1). Can you say that? In verse three, David says, "For your steadfast _____ is before my eyes, and I walk in your faithfulness. I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites. I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked." Can you say this?

As you look into your heart and at your life, you might ask yourself if you've made a firm commitment to God. God has loved you enough to send His Son to die for you. Have you humbly come to Him? A person makes a commitment and becomes a Christian when he believes with all his heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. A person who commits to Christ will recognize Jesus as Lord and turn away from every sinful thought or behavior and turn to a life that pleases God; this is repentance. A person who commits his heart to Jesus will confess Him before others and will be baptized in water for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). I pray that you'll do that today.

The Godly Heart Colossians 3:12-15

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

No matter how much we've _____ in Christ, the Scriptures urge us to excel still more. We all need to have a godly heart. Paul said, "Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you _____ still more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1). The Scriptures reveal the will of God and urge us to do our _____ to be followers of Christ. We can all excel still more in faith and in love. Are you growing in Christ?

The Lord calls us to be _____ Him in our attitudes, in our speech, and in our behavior. The Lord Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount said, "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Of course, no one can be sinlessly perfect as God is; but we can _____ every day to "walk in the light as He is in the light."

First Peter 2:21 says, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an _____, so that you might follow in his steps." Jesus is our _____ example in how to think, how to treat others, how to forgive, how to serve, and how to love. Paul said, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Some time ago, my brother-in-law, Dale Hartman, told me his _____ was every day set upon growing closer to God and being more like Christ. I know that he's not alone in that worthy _____, but his words encouraged me to do more. Have you set your heart on serving God?

Our reading comes from Paul's Letter to the Church at Colossae 3:12-15.

Paul addresses the brothers and sisters in Colossae, describing them with three adjectives. He first calls them "_____ of God." God calls us through the preaching of the _____. When we receive and _____ the good news of Jesus Christ, we become chosen or elect as God's children. Second, Paul calls them "_____." When a person is washed _____ in the blood of Jesus, God sanctifies him or makes him holy. Then, he belongs to God and can no longer have an ungodly heart that ignores God. Third, Paul calls them "_____." Christians realize in their hearts that God's great _____ for them is in Christ. Paul had already revealed the _____ that God had made in their lives. Colossians 1:13-14 says, "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the _____ of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

For this reason, we can't _____ like those who don't know the love of God or the gospel. God desires that we _____ off our worldly hearts and _____ on hearts that conform to His love and His will. First, He calls us to "put on a heart of compassion." To have compassion means to sympathize with _____. We are to "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep

with those who weep” (Romans 12:15). Jesus blesses those who _____. **Read what will be said on the Day of Judgment in Matthew 25:34-36.**

Second, we must put on a heart of _____. God acted in kindness toward us when He sent His Son Jesus to _____ for us according to Titus 3:4. Kindness considers the _____ of others and often does for them what they can’t do for themselves. God saved us through Christ. A kind person is warmhearted, considerate, generous, and benevolent. This is one of the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit. One cannot be like Christ and act cruelly toward others.

Third, we must put on a heart of _____. Philippians 2:3-4 says, “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others _____ significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his _____ interests, but also to the interests of _____.” If the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, could lay aside his garments, gird Himself with a towel, and _____ the disciples’ feet to leave us an example, surely we can humble ourselves and _____ others. We’ll never be what God desires if we are haughty, proud, or arrogant. Love isn’t arrogant; it instead _____ others up. Arrogance and pride don’t built character. First Peter 5:5 says, “all of you, _____ yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

Fourth, we need a heart of _____. Jesus described Himself as gentle or meek, “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 meek and lowly (or 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). Meekness refers to _____ under control; the strong person shows gentleness to others rather than handling them roughly or abusively. The Lord Jesus was meek, but He was not _____. He promised, “Blessed are the gentle (that is the meek), for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

Fifth, we need a _____ heart. Love is patient. It maintains a peaceful and tranquil heart while _____ for a desired outcome. It continues to be steadfast even when it’s provoked. God is _____ with us. Second Peter 3:9 says, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to _____.” God is patient with us in the hope that we’ll _____ our hearts; and we should be patient with others as well, hoping they too will change their hearts and be like Christ. People can change when they have a _____ to change and truly want to.

Sixth, we must put on a heart that _____ with the weaknesses of others. Philippians 4:5 says, “Let your gentle (that is, forbearing) spirit be known to _____ men. The Lord is near.” Some people allow their frustrations over even the smallest matters to _____ over into anger and even vengeance. Ephesians 4:26-27 says, “Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your _____, and do not give the devil an opportunity.” We must learn to _____ our tempers and take the experiences of others into account. They may have very difficult lives which prompts them to act rashly or unkindly. Let’s have reasonable hearts.

Seventh, we must put on a _____ heart. Ephesians 4:31-32 says, “Let all bitterness and

wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be _____ to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” The Lord Jesus _____ us to forgive seventy times seven. The Lord Jesus said, “For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions” (Matthew 6:14-15).

If we have a complaint against another person, let’s go privately and humbly to them for an explanation as Matthew 18:15 teaches. It’s better to _____ your brother and reconcile than to live in anger. If your brother listens to you, you’ve won your brother.

Eighth, we must put on a _____ heart. Love binds everything together in perfect _____. Love _____ and brings people together. Selfishness and pride _____ division and conflict. The Lord Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will _____ that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35). Jesus wanted us to love each other the way that He loved us. He said, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his _____” (John 15:13). True love is willing to sacrifice for the good of others. Selfish and hard-hearted people will not sacrifice like Jesus.

The Christians in the church at Corinth in the first century were divided and spiritually immature. Like little children, they wanted their _____ and they boasted in themselves. Paul reminded them, “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:31). We may have many talents and gifts, but if we lack love, we are nothing in God’s sight. **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.** Let’s put on a heart of love for our brother and for all. We are called to be one body.

Ninth, we need a heart that lets the _____ of Christ rule over our hearts, our words, and our actions. It’s better to endure a small, personal wrong and maintain peace than allow _____ to grow and to split a congregation. Causing division is a work of the flesh and will cause people to be _____ (Galatians 5:19-21). The Lord Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be _____ sons of God” (Matthew 5:9). If you wish to be a son of God, then _____ for peace and harmony among God’s people.

Romans 12:17-18 says, “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is _____ in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it _____ on you, be at peace with all men.” We can’t control what other people do, but we can control how we _____ to what they do. Some people enjoy _____ and they love a fight. We can’t control the events of this wicked world, but we can place our _____ in a faithful Creator who will do what is right. First Peter 4:19 says, “Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their _____ to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.” We must do what God wills, even if the whole _____ is against us.

Tenth, we must put on a _____ heart. Thankfulness to God for what Christ has done for us is the foundation of what it _____ to be a Christian. We must keep focus on the cross of Christ and the _____ that He paid for our sins. That cross draws us to Christ in love and

gives us a reason for _____. In Christ, we have an abundant life and _____ spiritual blessing. How could anyone be a Christian and ignore the blessings that we enjoy in Christ?

Colossians 3:16-17 says, “Let the _____ of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” Let’s worship with songs of thankfulness, and let’s give thanks every day in all that we do. We serve a great God and have a great _____ in Christ of eternal life in heaven. A thankful heart is a joyful and a contented heart, full of hope. You’ll never find true joy until you get in the _____ of thanking God.

We live today in a society where the focus is on _____. We’re obsessed with our possessions, achievements, and comforts. We wish to achieve greatness, but we’ll never achieve greatness until we become _____ of God. The Lord Jesus said, “whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His _____ a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26-28).

If your heart isn’t what God wishes, please don’t _____ that way. Repentance is a change of heart that _____ to a change of ways. God can give you a _____ heart if you’ll let Him. **Read what God promised Israel through the prophet in Ezekiel 11:19-20.** You too can have a new heart, a new mind and a new spirit, by placing your _____ in the Lord Jesus and obeying Him. Won’t you turn your heart to the Lord?

There is no higher _____ in life than to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbor as ourselves. First Corinthians 13:4-8 says, “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.”

A loving heart is a believing and _____ heart. Because it loves God, it does its best to _____ Him in every respect. The heart of Jesus decided doing the Father’s will was more important than doing His _____ will. Jesus didn’t quit on the will of God because the Pharisees were hypocrites or because the religious leaders opposed Him. Jesus didn’t quit on the will of God when Judas betrayed Him, or Peter denied Him, or the other disciples scattered.

If you would have a godly heart, then lovingly, humbly _____ the Lord Jesus. Place your trust in Him as the Christ, the Son of God. Repent by turning your heart from evil and pursuing righteousness. Confess the Lord Jesus as the Christ and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism into Christ was a baptism of a penitent believer; and it was an immersion in water to wash away our sins. The New Testament never speaks of sprinkling as baptism, nor does it record the baptizing of an infant. These are innovations, human traditions. We must not trust the traditions of men, but with a godly heart follow the Scriptures. Won’t you be baptized into Christ today?