

The Righteous Life

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are _____. For the gate is narrow and the way is straight that leads to life, and those who find it are _____.” Which way are you going? We look to _____ with a hunger and thirst for righteousness. The Scriptures teach us how to _____ God and to live in a right relationship with Him. We want nothing less than to _____ God with all our heart and soul. God has _____ to satisfy our hunger and thirst for righteousness, if we turn from evil and seek His face.

The apostle Paul asked a serious question, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in _____ that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who _____ to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2). The grace that forgives our sins is the marvelous _____ of God. Faith in God, repentance of sin, and baptism lead to _____ from sin. When we repent, we die in our hearts to sin. We no longer determine to live in sin but to _____ the Lord Jesus. Grace and repentance work hand in hand. Grace forgives at baptism, but repentance _____ the heart toward righteousness and away from sin.

Titus 2:11-14 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, _____ us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to _____ self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed _____, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to _____ us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” Grace teaches us to _____ for the Lord and to turn away from evil. Allowing God’s love and grace to work in our hearts and lives yields the _____ of righteousness.

Our reading comes from the Second Epistle of Peter 1:5-11. Here we have the Word of God that gives us great and precious promises and gives us all that we need for life and Godliness. This requires faith, but it requires more than faith.

Righteousness generally _____ adherence to what is required according to God’s teaching and moral standards. Sadly some have sought to establish their _____ righteousness, since they didn’t know about God’s righteousness and didn’t subject themselves to the righteousness of God (Romans 10:3). The Pharisees adopted many humanly conceived traditions that caused them to _____ God’s own commandments, rendering their pursuit of ‘their own righteousness’ futile (Matthew 15:3-14).

Today people still think of themselves as being righteous, though they _____ and even celebrate what God calls sin in their lives. Many churches today _____ that we come as we are and leave the same way. Many ignore or forget the need to _____ (Luke 13:3, and Acts 17:30). So not wishing to confront or offend, many preachers no longer _____ of repentance. Repentance demands that we _____ our hearts from sin and reverse our lifestyles as well. Those who reject or ignore God’s laws become a _____ law to themselves, subjective and usually permissive. By doing so, they set their minds and hearts on their own _____. They don’t realize their rejection of God’s laws means they _____ be righteous in His eyes.

Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.

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Romans 8:5-8 says, “For those who are according to the flesh set their _____ on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is _____, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it doesn’t subject itself to the law of God, for it’s not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot _____ God.” If you wish to be right with God, you must consider where the _____ of your heart lies.

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 lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his _____. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it’s better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into _____. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it’s 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). What we think about in our hearts matters, and we must learn to _____ our eyes, our thoughts, and our desires. Whether it’s the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life, we must _____ to deal with it.

Many today have forgotten the momentary _____ of sin have a high price. They may imagine there are no _____, but Scripture repeatedly warns of the dangers of sin. “Be sure your _____ will find you out” (Numbers 32:23). God will even _____ the secret sins (Romans 2:16). One may feel he’s justified in his actions and yet he’s only _____ himself. “There is a way which _____ right to a man, But its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12). All the changes happening in our _____ won’t turn a lie into the truth, won’t turn sin into righteousness, won’t turn the immoral things into moral, and it won’t justify having no morality at all.

Sin always _____ more than we think. Sin will always yield more _____ than we thought. The _____ of sin, which is death, will last longer than we can imagine (Romans 6:23). If we think we can live for our desires and never face any consequences, we’re only _____ to ourselves. Galatians 6:7-8 says, “Don’t be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man _____, this he will also reap. 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.”

Therefore, the faithful Christian who hungers and thirsts for righteousness needs to _____ virtue, integrity, and purity. The word “virtue” describes _____ excellence. The virtuous person not only avoids sin, he’s also highly involved in doing _____ to others. For him the pursuit of what is good is foremost in his daily thoughts. Paul described the way a Christian should think, “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there’s any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

Not only does the virtuous person think properly, he _____ what he believes. Like Jesus in Acts 10:38, he goes about doing _____ and blessing others. He does more than is expected for others and is _____ to all. Since he knows he belongs to Jesus Christ, he looks for opportunities to _____ others. They please God and bless all who know them. Ephesians 5:-2 says, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and _____ Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

The righteous person is a person of integrity and honesty. He takes seriously the admonition in Romans 12:17, to “respect what is _____ in the sight of all men.” A righteous person is honest with himself, he’s honest with others. He doesn’t lie, cheat, or steal; and he doesn’t cover up for those who

do. A righteous person does an honest day's _____ for an honest day's _____. A person of integrity keeps his _____. Psalm 15 describes the person as one who shows integrity: whenever "he swears to his own hurt and does not change; He doesn't put out his money at interest, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent." Integrity in _____ makes a person trustworthy.

The righteous man also values _____. The Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are pure in heart, for they shall _____ God" (Matthew 5:8). Paul urged Timothy to show himself an _____ of purity (1 Timothy 4:12). He said, "Now _____ from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:22). The righteous man shows self-control in his thoughts and his behavior. Sadly, some people _____ their minds, their speech, and their behavior to become anything but pure. Titus 1:15 says, "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, _____ is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled." Do people see you as a person of virtue, integrity, and purity?

Righteousness can also _____ to God's character of holiness and purity. We serve a holy and pure God, who doesn't sin, and doesn't permit sin, to please Him. We can learn about becoming righteous through the _____. The apostle Paul said, "For I'm 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. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall _____ by faith'" (Romans 1:16-17).

The apostle Paul did not want a righteousness that comes from keeping the Mosaic Law but one that comes from _____ in Christ Jesus. Paul, who had been a leading Jew and a Pharisee wrote, "But whatever things were _____ to me, those things I've counted as _____ for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing _____ of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may _____ Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may _____ to the resurrection from the dead" (Philippians 3:7-11).

Because of Jesus, we can become _____ with God and enjoy the blessings of being His children and in His grace. Jesus suffered to redeem us and to make us right with God. The One "who knew no sin _____ sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might _____ to sin and _____ to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

We can have a right relationship with God through _____ in Jesus Christ. We're justified (that is, made righteous) "as a gift by His _____ through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:22-24). It's by the grace of God through faith that we're freed from the condemnation of sin and are able enjoy newness of life, being _____ again into the family of God and able to enter the kingdom of God. Of course, the faith that saves is an _____ faith (Romans 1:5).

The Lord Jesus said, "And you shall _____ the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). Righteousness means loving God with all your heart and allowing God to _____ in your heart. Many think of love as a _____ of the heart, but love for God requires the whole person: heart, soul, mind and strength. The Lord Jesus said love for God includes how we _____ to His commandments. He said, "If anyone loves me, he will _____ my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with

him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not _____ but the Father's who sent me" (John 14:23-24). Faith alone is not enough to show love for God; one must _____ be obedient to His will.

It means loving the things that God loves and avoiding the things that _____ God. It's all about Jesus Christ being your Savior but also your _____. You long for His mercy and grace, but you also must _____ His being your Lord and Master. Righteousness is all about _____ with God and giving God a home in your life. We won't find purpose, love, rest, joy, peace, or hope, _____ we find it in the Lord Jesus Christ. You'll remain hungry for righteousness until you taste and see the Lord is _____. Augustine of Hippo was right about our need for God when he said, "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds rest in thee."

Jesus calls us to that rest, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will _____ you rest. Take My yoke upon you and _____ 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 live as a righteous person, then come, come to the Lord Jesus.

What does the righteous life look like? How does living for the Lord make a difference? Galatians 5:22-24 says, "But the _____ of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; and against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the _____ with its passions and desires." These are marvelous gifts and beautiful ways of life; they _____ everyone. When you hunger and thirst for righteousness, that leads you to _____ in faith and obedience, and the blessings of life grow each day. God's grace can make a difference! Don't doubt what God can do in your life, if you deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acting in faith means putting away your _____ way of life and taking up the Lord's way. You can't find God's satisfying ways while you _____ in sin. You must hunger and thirst for righteousness. Do you thirst for God? Place your faith in the Lord Jesus and believe in the gospel. Turn from sin and follow the Lord in repentance. Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38).

The apostle Peter wrote, "Corresponding to that, baptism now _____ you—not the removal of the dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). If you wish to be saved, don't argue with God or hold to your sins; be _____ to the Lord in faith. Today is the best day to let that hunger for righteousness lead you to be filled with faith, love, and peace.

We hope today's study has stirred you to consider whether you're living the righteous life. So focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everyone needs a church family. There's probably a church of Christ near you. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one.