Program Study Guides

For

January 2016
At the __________ moment of His life, the Lord Jesus said, “Thy Will Be Done.” We want to be able to say “Thy Will Be Done” in our _______ lives. God’s Word always gives us the _______ that we need to know the truth and to draw close to God.

A necessary __________ of life is that God is God, and we’re not; we’re human. God _______ our lives, and we should live according to His _______. When the Lord Jesus came into this world, He understood He was here to _____ the will of His Father in heaven. We too must do His will. Every facet of our lives ___________ to God our Father, and the problems of this life arise when men ignore His will. We must _________ to pray, to speak, and to live a life that proclaims, “Thy will be done.”

When Jesus taught His disciples to ________ in the Sermon on the Mount, He said, “Pray, then, in this way: “Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your _______ be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10). What if the will of God were done on __________ like it is in heaven? What if people were willing to set their _______ aside and to give their lives to the will of God? What if all the _______ in this world vanished and people set their hearts on righteousness?

So many problems in life come at the expense of people doing their _______ will and ignoring the will of the Father. The selfishness, the greed, the lust, and the pride of our time have _______ our lives, our homes, and our society untold pain and ruin. We desperately _______ God’s will in our lives. “Thy will be done” is not only a prayer; it’s a _______ of life.


“Thy will be done.” Jesus must have _________ it both difficult and yet fulfilling to pray that the Father’s will be done. While Jesus hated the thought of a scourging and an agonizing death, He knew it was necessary to fulfill His _________ in life. While He hated the thought of bearing the punishment for the sins of the world, He loved the world and wanted it to be saved from _____.

The Bible presents a number of paradoxes about the Lord on the _______. A paradox is a situation that seems to be absurd or contradictory, and yet is in fact _______. For instance, the Bible says, “For our sake he made him to be sin who _______ no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Or 1 Peter 2:24 says, “He himself _______ our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. For by his _______ you have been healed.” The Holy Lord Jesus bore our sins at the cross so that we could __________ holy.

Hebrews 12:2 says that the Lord Jesus, “for the _______ that was set before him endured the cross, despising the __________, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” He despised the pain and the shame but He loved the ___________ of what He did on the cross. He looked to the joy that was set before Him, the joy of men _______ forgiveness in His sacrifice. He didn’t want
to die, but His desire for our eternal salvation was ________ than His desire to live in the flesh. He rejoiced in the eternal, not the temporary, and He was glad to do the Father’s will.

Doing the Father’s will was not a ________ concept or behavior to Jesus. From the time that He was _______, He realized that He had come into this world to do the Father’s will. At age 12, Jesus was in the __________ doing His Father’s business. When the devil tempted Him at age 30, Jesus said, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you ________’” (Matthew 4:10).

In John 4, Jesus passed through Samaria. Stopping at a __________ near the town of Sychar, Jesus sent his disciples into town for some food while He rested. At the well Jesus had a remarkable ______________ with a woman who had been married five times and was living with a man. When she learned that Jesus was the Messiah, she ran into town and ________ all the men of the town. The disciples began to __________ with the food that He had sent them for.

John 4:31-34 says: “Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, ‘Rabbi, _______.’ But He said to them, ‘I have food to eat that you don’t know about.’ So the disciples were saying to one another, ‘No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?’ Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the ________ of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His ________.’” The Lord Jesus lived to do the will of His Father in heaven.

Jesus explained, “I can do nothing on My ________ initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not ________ My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me” (John 5:30). Jesus regarded the will of the Father as the perfect ______________ of right and wrong. He didn’t want to ________ from His Father’s will in any way, and so He listened to His Father. He made judgments of right and wrong only as the will of the Father instructed. He did not ________ on His own initiative.

In Jesus’ heart and in His mind, keeping the will of the Father was how He remained in a __________ relationship with His Father. The Lord said to His disciples on the night before He died, “Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you ________ My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have ________ My Father’s commandments and abide in His love” (John 15:9-10). Abiding in the Father’s will was an ________ of love and devotion. Keeping the Lord’s commandments is how we demonstrate our love to the Lord and remain in His love. First John 2:3-5 says, “By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we ________ His commandments. The one who says, ‘I’ve come to know Him,’ and doesn’t keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.” Our love for God moves us to be obedient to His will and to keep His commandments.

When Jesus was told that His family was outside the house and had come to speak to Him, Jesus asked, “Who is My mother and who are My brothers?” And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, ‘Behold My mother and My brothers! For whoever ________ the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother’” (Matthew 12:48-50). Jesus claimed a close kinship to anyone who does the ________ of His Father in heaven. He wants to be close to us, too.

On the other hand, Jesus, when He finished the Sermon on the Mount said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the ________ of My
Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness’” (Matthew 7:21-23).

The Lord knew people would _________ to have a close relationship with Him, while they lived lawlessly. They wanted the blessing of Christianity, but didn’t _________ to the will of the Father in heaven. The Lord Jesus never knew them. He never had a relationship with them. They never belonged to Him because they lived life on their own lawless terms and would not _______ the will of the Father. You can’t live by your own will and expect to ________ the Lord.

You can’t draw close to God while you turn your back on what the Father _________. You obey God by obeying what He teaches, not by _________ that you love Him while living the way you desire. A person who lives in lawlessness says to the Lord, “Not Your will be done, but ________.” He lives by his own _________ and he ignores God’s ________. He hasn’t set his _________ on the Father’s will but on pleasing himself.

A person who plays by his own will thinks he’s an _____________. He thinks his sins aren’t as ______ as other people’s sins. He does as he pleases and he _________ the Lord will still consider that as obedience. He counts on his own _________, not on God’s will, to assure him of a place in heaven. The Lord’s rejection is going to ____________ him.

We should ___________ to follow the will of the Lord. It’s not only going to bless _____ when we do that, but it will also bless ____________ around us. The Bible says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may _________ what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2). Doing God’s will shows everybody the _________ of the Lord’s way! It’s a good way and an acceptable way and the perfect way.

Jesus taught us to __________, “Thy will be done.” Have you thought about how radically different and better our world would be if people ________ did the will of God? God’s will for our lives is no ________ matter. If people did God’s will, crime would disappear, the moral climate of this country would drastically change, and people would be more loving and less selfish. We’d keep the golden _________. Jesus taught, “In everything, therefore, treat people the _________ way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

If we did God’s will on earth, as it is in heaven, God’s Word would have a _________ of priority in our lives and decisions. We’d be asking the __________, “What does God’s Word have to say about this matter or that matter?” We’d realize that the God who __________ us knows us better than we know ourselves and He __________ us in His Word, the Bible, what is best. We’d make our life __________ and we’d think of right and wrong on the basis of God’s teaching, not our opinions or even our culture.

If we did God’s will on earth, we’d begin to ________ as a people again. We’d realize that nothing ________ can happen without God’s blessing and favor. We’d seek His face. What does that mean, to “seek His face”? It means that we’d look to God for _________ and for the answers of life. When Solomon became king, he asked God for ____________ to know how to lead the people of Israel. He
worried about what might happen if Israel forsook the Lord and faced famine or were defeated in battle. Solomon asked God to be willing to __________ His people.

The Lord God answered Solomon’s prayer with this promise, “If...My people who are called by My name __________ themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:13-14). God wants to draw ________ to His people, and when His people in humble hearts, turn from their wicked ways, and pray to Him, God will hear their prayers and He will heal them.

If God’s will were truly done on earth, we’d stop __________ God’s name being taken in vain and we’d stop hearing all the filthy talk. Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no unwholesome _______ proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.” I tell you, words are ______________; and our speech should be gracious, seasoned with salt, as we ought to speak.

If God’s will were done on earth, we’d set our hearts on things that ________ rather than concentrate on things that ___________. The Bible says, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Philippians 4:8). What we think about shapes our __________. When our minds concentrate on the good, we see good all around us; and we become __________ people. If we think about the evil, it won’t be long before we __________ evil people. The Bible says, “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ________ good morals’” (1 Corinthians 15:33). When what is bad fills our ________, then evil begins to fill our ________.

If God’s will were done on earth, we’d think more about the Lord and about heaven. **Read what the Bible says in Colossians 3:1-4.**

What are you going to do with your life? Does your life ________ that the will of God is good and acceptable and perfect? My friend, are you doing the will of the Father?

The Lord Jesus told Nicodemus unless he was born of water and the Spirit, he could not __________ the kingdom of God (John 3:5). Jesus was emphatic about it and He said, “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You ________ be born again.’” Some people think when it comes to salvation and life that the will of God is __________ and doesn’t matter, but nothing could be farther from the truth.

**Read what the apostle John wrote in John 1:11-13.** You cannot be saved by substituting some __________ plan for God’s will. We have to realize that necessary lesson of life: that God is God, and we are human. We cannot ________ or overrule the will of God. If we are saved by God’s ________, it will only be by His will. To do His will we must _______ and ________ the New Testament.

What is the will of God for us to do to be ________? Upon hearing the gospel of Jesus, we must _________ that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We must _________ of our sins and turn to righteousness. We must be willing to _________ our faith in Christ and be _________. Baptism is that new ________ in water and the Spirit. The Bible teaches that we must be born again. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that our sins will be ___________. When we’re baptized, God washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). That old man of sin dies, and we’re born again to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). I pray that you will do the will of God today.
The Grace of God
Titus 3:3-7

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

Someone said that grace is “God’s Redemption At Christ’s Expense.” I’m excited today to tell you what the grace of God can do in your ________. I believe you’ll get excited, too. We know the Lord’s Way is the right way, and we search the Scriptures because we know the Bible is always _________.

When you say salvation is a ________, some people think it’s too good to be true. They figure they must ________ their way to heaven by doing some great thing. They can’t imagine God giving us His ____________, the forgiveness of our sins, and a home in heaven. Today, we’re asking the question, “What does it ___________ to be saved by the grace of God?”

Someone has taken the word grace and made the acrostic “G-R-A-C-E” “God's Redemption At Christ's Expense.” This is a fairly ___________ description of grace. The word grace (in Greek charis) means “__________.” The distinguishing factors of God's grace are twofold: first, God's grace is a gift and is not ___________; and second, God's grace is undeserved. Usually we think of having to ________ a place of favor with others, but God gives us his favor as a gift.

God accepts, loves, and blesses the person who stands in His grace. In spite of one’s past, when a person is ___________ in the blood of Jesus Christ, he stands in a right relationship and in the favor of God. Even though we ___________ to be punished for our sins, God graciously ___________ us and no longer holds our transgressions against us. In Christ, we became ________ creatures, transformed into children of God, and transferred into the kingdom of God. In Christ, God hears our ___________ and gives us every spiritual blessing.

Our scripture reading today comes from Paul’s letter to Titus, chapter 3, verses 3 to 7.

You can’t __________ God’s grace; it’s a gift. In Romans 4:4 the apostle Paul says, “Now when a man ________, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his ________ is credited as righteousness.” Grace is not a ________ for our labors, a ________ for our winning a competition, or an ___________ for our meritorious efforts. Grace is a gift. When a man can earn no wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award, yet receives a wondrous gift, he has been given unmerited ________ or undeserved ___________. That’s what God, in his love, has done for us through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:1-10 helps us to understand how God has __________ us and __________ us. Read what the apostle Paul said in Ephesians 2:1-3. Sin causes a person to be spiritually ________. It’s not merely an inappropriate act; sin ________ one spiritually.

Read Ephesians 4-7. I’ve found that some of the most wonderful sections of the Bible begin with the word “________.” We were spiritually dead, but that’s not the ________ of the story. God, rich in mercy and love, __________ us by His grace.
Read Ephesians 2:8-10. We’re saved by grace through _________. It takes both. We’re not saved by grace alone or by faith alone, but by grace through faith. Grace reflects _____ that God does in our lives to bring us home to Him. Faith reflects our ___________ of trust and love and obedience to the grace that He’s given us.

God’s grace ________ through faith. God desires that we appreciate his great gift by ___________ to him in faith. Read what Paul said in Titus 3:3-5. God chose to ________ us and ________ us as an act of loving kindness. How does He wash us?

This washing that regenerates and renews is when we are born again in ___________. By faith, when we ___________ and are ___________, God washes us clean from sin and causes us to be born again into His family. The faith that matters to God is a faith that is ___________ to trust God enough to accept His teaching and His blessing by obediently responding. In Galatians 3:26-27, the Bible says, “for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through _________. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have _________ ______ Christ.”

This means the faith that saves, the faith that Paul had in mind, which responds to grace is an _________ faith. We are sons of God by faith, but this is a faith that will ___________ and be ___________. For it is in baptism that God causes us to be ___________ _______ and we “put on Christ.” In baptism, God grants to us all the blessings and favor that goes with being a Christian. What a great God we have! Baptism is not, as Paul said, some _________ that we do to earn salvation. It’s how we lovingly ________ Him in faith because He asks us to be baptized.

Obedience is not the same thing as ___________. Let’s say I had a treasure worth $100,000 hidden in my backyard and I told you that I would give it to you, provided you go and _______ it up. Do you really believe that that ______ minutes of digging earned that $100,000 for you? You met a _______ for a gift by obeying my words. You didn’t earn the gift; you merely received it by doing what I _________ you to do. That’s how it is in salvation. We don’t earn salvation by repenting or being baptized; we merely ___________ with God’s conditions for receiving the gift.

In Numbers 21, the children of Israel, while wandering in the wilderness, came to the land of Edom where they grumbled and spoke against God, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to _______ in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food (that is, the manna).” The Lord became ________ and “he sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. The people repented and confessed their sin. They asked Moses to intercede for them with God, and Moses asked God to ___________ the serpents.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “You make a fiery serpent (that is, out of bronze), and you set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he _________ at it, he will live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent and he set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he ________ (Numbers 21:8-9). All they had to do was to look by _________ on the serpent. They didn’t earn their healing, but they did have to comply with God’s ______________. Obedying is not the _________ as earning. Obedience is an act of faith and trust that God will keep his ______________.

In John 9, Jesus encountered a man who was born _________. Jesus wanted to heal this man and show the power of God, so He spat on the ground, and he got a little of the dirt, and He made clay of
the spittle, and He applied the clay to his eyes, and said to him, “Go, _______ in the pool of Siloam” (which translated means Sent). So he went away and he washed, and he came back _______ (John 9:6-7). Who would argue that washing in a pool is the _______ as earning his eyesight? The man earned nothing, but he believed strongly enough to _______ what Jesus told him to do. Faith is not merely accepting. It is trusting enough to do what the Lord asks us to do!

Let me make it very clear that the Bible does not teach that baptism is how we _______ salvation. But the Bible does teach that baptism is ______________ to salvation—just as looking on the brass serpent was necessary, just as washing in the pool of Siloam was necessary.

God _______ us to see if we really love Him and believe in Him. These tests are God’s ______________, not ours. He gave them to us; we didn’t make them up ourselves. When we meet God’s conditions, we say to Him, “We trust You enough to _____ what you _____ of us. We know that You will keep Your ____________.” God’s grace is so wonderful, and we must _______ cheapen it or presume upon it. People presume on God’s grace by __________ the conditions or by setting those conditions aside. They presume God’s __________ whether they respond rightly to Him or not.

Some people think the grace of God means I can ___________ to Him any way I want to. They think grace has _____ conditions at all. Do you think the blind man would have argued with Jesus about doing it, and wanting to do it his _____ way if he really wanted to see? Do you think that the Israelites would have argued about looking on the serpent? Why then does anyone argue about repentance or baptism today? Wouldn’t it be better just to _______ God and _______ Him?

The New Testament contains the _______ covenant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This new covenant contains what God ___________ His people and what God __________ of His people. In this covenant God is the benefactor who gives _______ to us than can ever be ___________ or earned. If we __________ our blessings, they include salvation, continued forgiveness of sin, eternal life, the right to pray, and son-ship. I tell you if we lived for thousands of years, we could never _______ God for what He has done for us. God doesn’t _______ repayment. God expects love, loyalty, and obedient faith from His children.

Jesus said, “If you _______ Me, you will _______ My commandments” (John 14:15). Jesus said, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My _______; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him” (John 14:23). Faithful obedience is not some _______ of legalism or works righteousness or anything else; obedient faith is _______. Paul said, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith ___________ through love” (Galatians 5:6). When we love the Lord and we want to ________ Him, we’re willing to do everything He asks and do it the _____ that He wants it done. We won’t argue with Him about it.

So, when the Lord asks us to believe, we’re willing to ________ Him and His word completely. When the Lord asks us to _______ of our sins, love turns us away from sin that
God. We couldn’t imagine continuing to ________ the God who’s been so good to us and blessed us. When Jesus asks us to ________ Him before others, we’ll gladly say to the whole world that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is Lord and He is the Messiah, the Christ!

When Jesus says to us in Mark 16:16, “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be ________,” we believe Him. We’re baptized because we ________, because we ________, and we do it to ________ God. The Bible says, “Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into ________, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might ________ in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). If the baptism of the New Testament is immersion, and it is, then I will be immersed without ________ so that I might be able to ________ God.

In Acts 2:38, the Bible commands us to “repent and be baptized.” That commandment is in the ________ voice, not the active. The active voice is used when the subject ________ an action, but the passive voice is used when the subject is being acted ________ by someone else. In baptism ________ performs the action of saving us; and we are passive, ________ God’s grace and forgiveness. Let God’s grace work on you in baptism. Let God cleanse your soul; let God bury you and then raise you up with Christ; let God give you newness of life; let God add you to His church. God does all this ________ we’re baptized into Christ and His death.

Sometimes people say, “Well, you don’t have to be baptized to be saved!” But, they’re missing the point. God works His grace on us ________ baptism into Christ. If you love Christ Jesus, and I know you do, let Him save you through the ________ that regenerates. That washing God gives you is in ________.

God gives laws for our _________. God doesn’t give laws to ________ or to enslave us. He doesn’t dream up ________ laws just to prove that He is in charge. No! God gives us His laws to ________ us from troubles in life. Even the law of God is gracious to us. As a loving parent, God’s concern is for our ________. Psalm 103:13 says, “Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the L ORD has compassion on those who ________ Him.” Everything God does, He does to favor and bless us. When we understand that, we’ll see God with__________ eyes.

Read Titus 2:11-14. God wants to bless you richly by ________ you with His Word, the Bible! Let Him do it.

Where are you in your life, your spiritual life? Do you have a close, loving, peaceful relationship with God? Are you at ________ in your soul? God hasn’t left you; it may be that you’ve left God. You can draw close to Him again by ________ in Him, by ________ His Word. So ________ in the Lord Jesus, and ________ of your sins, step out and ________ Him before others, and be ________ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38). It may be that as a Christian brother or sister you’ve wandered away from ________, and you’ve wandered away from the ________, and you need to come back home. My friend, do it today! Let God’s grace back into your life.
We Need the Church
Acts 20:28-32

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

Many people think that you can be a good Christian without being a ___________ of any church. Is church really necessary? Today, we’re going to explore what _______ says about the church, and you can’t afford to miss this study! We know the Lord’s way is the best way, the right way, and the holy way of life. The best way to know the Lord’s way is to __________ the Scriptures. They’re God’s __________ to us today. They were true when the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles and prophets to write them, and they’re true for _______ time.

When you mention the word “church,” people ____________ in a multitude of ways. Some think of the church as ____________. Some think of the church as an _______________. Some think that the church is made up of prejudiced ______________. Some think the church needs reinventing in a style more like the ___________ of our times. Everyone seems to think they _______ what the church should be like. Even folks who have never read the Bible or haven’t entered a church door in many years have an ___________ about what the church should be.

You’ve probably noticed that religion in America has _____________. Many groups have become religious _________________ venues, and others have become like shopping malls. Some think the primary ____________ of the church is to cater to my wants and desires. We’ve become self-centered, thinking Jesus ought to be our _____________ rather than thinking we ought to be His. It’s no wonder some see the church as optional and others as a ___________ of time. Few want to know what ___________ envisioned for the church that He built or what place it has in His heart. The Lord never thought of the church as an option; in His eyes it’s necessary.


Yes, the Lord Jesus considered the church as ______________. He wants everyone to be a ___________ of His church and to _____________ with the church regularly. The idea that you can be a ________ Christian and not be a member of the church is not from the heart of God. When you take a close look at your Bible, the New Testament ___________ that the church is quite necessary to our relationship with the Lord.

The church that Jesus ___________ doesn’t belong to you or to me; it belongs to the Lord. He built it. After Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Lord Jesus said, “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock (that is, the confession Peter made) I will ___________ My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it” (Matthew 16:18). Yes, Jesus built His church, and not even His ___________ could prevent it.

The church belongs to the Lord because He ____________ it. The apostle Paul, by inspiration, told the elders of the church at Ephesus, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased
with His own ________.” (Acts 20:28). If Jesus loved the church enough to _______ for it, how can we think so little of it? The church must be ______________ to the Lord.

The Bible reveals how ___________ related Christ is to the church in Ephesians 1:22-23. The Bible says, “And He (that is, God) put all things in subjection under His feet (that is, Jesus’ feet), and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” Just as your ________ is inseparably connected to your body, so Christ is inseparably connected to the church. Just as your body does your will as is conceived in the ________, so the church does the will of its head, and that’s Jesus Christ. The church is the ________ of Christ. We must never, never ______________ Christ from His church or the church from Christ.

The church is extremely precious to the Lord; He considers the church as His _________. Read Ephesians 5:25-27. Jesus has gone to great lengths to _________ and to sanctify the church. He wants her to be radiant with ________. Jesus _________ the church that much.

When people ___________ the church or make it trivial, they mock and insult Jesus Christ. If you wish to make a man angry, just slander his _________. Do you think the Lord Jesus will look kindly on anyone who slanders His _________?

I want to _______________ the church that the Lord Jesus calls His bride from what people today think when they hear the word “church.” What I’m speaking about is the Lord’s church ___________ in the New Testament. Many religious groups who call themselves “churches” are ___________ like the New Testament church. They ___________ in their name, in their organization, in their doctrine, in their mission, and in their worship. They’re often a ___________ of our culture more than what God intended for the church to be. Some groups have so little ___________ value and content, it’s no wonder that people see it as unnecessary.

This difference of what we see today and what the Bible teaches ___________ and causes people to stray from the will of God. More than ever, people need to know the ________ revealed in God’s Word about the church. They need to think clearly about what God desires rather than be pulled into a ________ hope by something that calls itself church but differs greatly from the church that Jesus built as found in the New Testament. The Scriptures clearly make the church that Jesus built a necessity for us to engage in if we wish to ________ God.

Why is the church so necessary? There are several reasons. First, the Lord ________ those that He saves to His church. When the Jews at Pentecost heard Peter __________, they were pierced to the heart and they wanted to know what to do. Peter replied that they must __________ and be __________ for the forgiveness of their sins. Acts 2:41 says, “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.” In verse 47 the Bible says, “And the Lord was _________ to their number (that is, to the church) day by day those who were being _________. “The Lord forgives us at baptism and adds us to His church. Baptism was that time that they were ______________ or saved.

When a person is saved, the Lord ________ him to His church. To be in the church means the Lord has ___________ you. The Scriptures never contemplate a person who is saved as a person who hasn’t been baptized or a person who is not in the Lord’s church. The apostle Paul told the church at Colossae, “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). Just
as the Lord grants forgiveness when one repents and is baptized, so the Lord adds the baptized to His church. The church is the __________ of Christ!

When John wrote to the seven churches of Asia in Revelation 1, he revealed to them what Christ had done for them. The Bible says, “Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our ________ by His blood—and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—and to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:4-6).

The book of Revelation addresses people who had come into a kingdom and were ________ to God. John taught that “we” Christians “are of God, and the whole world lies in the __________ of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). There are but ________ kingdoms: the domain of darkness and the kingdom of His beloved Son. To enter the ________ is to enter the kingdom of the beloved Son.

The Lord Jesus Himself spoke of the church as a kingdom. Read what the Lord said in Matthew 16:18-19. Why would the Lord ________ one thing and then give Peter keys to something else if the church is not the Kingdom? He doesn’t do that. The church is the kingdom of God today.

Some may ask, Phil, how do you know that? In Acts 20:28, the Lord Jesus purchased the church with His own __________. We have no record anywhere in the New Testament that the blood of Jesus ever purchased anything but the _________. The twenty-four elders, however, sang this new song to the Lord Jesus, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And you have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth” (Revelation 5:9-10). The same blood didn’t purchase ________ different things, no—the church is that blood-bought kingdom.

Second, being in the church means you’re blood-bought, but there’s no promise of being blood-bought to those ________ the church. The church contains the __________, but the others outside are still in _______. The kingdom contains __________ to God, but outside there are no priests to God. The Bible says, “Whoever has the Son has life; but whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:12) Being in the Lord’s church is ________ to our eternal salvation.

Ephesians chapter 2 contrasts the difference between people who are in the _________ and outside of Christ from those who come into Christ and His church. The apostle Paul reminds those who came out of paganism at Ephesus of what they had _________ they became members of the church, or body of Christ. Read Ephesians 2:12-13. In verses 19 to 22, Paul describes them after they became Christians, “So then you are no longer __________ and aliens, but you’re fellow __________ with the saints, and are of God’s household (His family), having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.” Before, they were strangers without ________ and without _______. Now, they’re God’s family and fellow citizens in God’s kingdom, the church.
Third, the church is necessary because being in the church means that you are a member of God’s _________. Paul told Timothy, “but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household (that is, the family) of God, which is the _________ of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). Paul identified the church as God’s household or family. The ________ of God are in the church. If you claim to be in God’s family but say church membership is unnecessary, then you’re confused and may be __________ yourself.

The very ________ that puts you into the family of God is what puts one into the church. Compare these two verses. First, Galatians 3:26-27, “For you are all _________ of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were ___________ into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Baptism as an act of _________ and is what makes us children of God. Second, consider 1 Corinthians 12:13, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one _________, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” This verse says that we are baptized into the body. Ephesians 1:22-23 taught us that the body of Christ is the _________. So, baptism is what makes one a child of God, and baptism is what puts us into the body of Christ, and that is the church.

When we realize the church is God’s family, it’s the bride of Christ; it’s the body of Christ; it is the saved; it is those that were bought by the blood of Jesus, then we can see why the church is so ___________ in God’s eyes. Being a member of the Lord’s church is not ____________. Let me ask you, are you a member of the church that Jesus built? It matters!

Many people claim to be members of the church, but they aren’t ___________. They’ve ___________ worshipping at church or supporting it. By their actions they’ve actually abandoned the church and in that sense they’ve abandoned the _________. The Bible says, “let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as the habit of some, but ___________ one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:24-25). The Lord wants us to encourage each other to love and good works and not ___________ assembling with other Christians. You can’t encourage other Christians to stay ___________ if you quit going to church altogether.

I know some of you can’t attend worship because of your _________. The Lord understands your situation. But if you can attend, yet ___________ to forsake meeting with the Lord’s church, you’re forsaking the Lord, too. The Lord ___________ His people and knows His church. If you quit serving Him, He knows it. When you stop attending, you also open the door to ___________ of every kind. To stay spiritually ___________, stay in church.

To become a member of the church and to be saved, ___________ with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; ________ of your sins; __________ Jesus Christ as the son of God; and be ___________. When you’re baptized, the blood of Jesus will _________ away your sins; he’ll cause you to be ___________ to the church. You’ll become a child of God, _________ again into His family. If you are a member of the church of Christ but you’ve stopped attending, my friend, why not come back to the Lord and to the church. Get right with God and do it today.
You Can Understand the Bible
Luke 1:1-4

The Bible is the __________ book of all time and comes today in hundreds of languages. Some think the Bible is too ________ to understand. Is it really? God’s way is always a __________. God loves us and He gave us His will in written form in the Bible so that every age and nation could __________ the truth and be __________. God wants every person to __________ and to __________ His will.

Some people think the Bible is just too ________ to understand. Perhaps you’ve heard people say, “The Bible is not ________ to be understood.” Or, “The Bible says different things to different ________.” Or, “What is important is not so much what the Bible says but what the Bible says to ________.” I’ve heard people claim, “The New Testament addressed the __________ of the first century but really doesn't speak to us today.”

Others dismiss God’s Word by saying, “It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are ________ and love Jesus.” Then there’s the skeptic who says, “You can make the Bible say anything you ________ it to say.” Some say, “You just take a passage of Scripture and you read it to a group of people and there’ll be as many ___________________ of that passage as there are people in the room.”

These popular charges against the Bible lose sight of God’s __________ in giving us His Word. They seem to forget about God’s incredible __________ to have a relationship with us that lasts for an eternity. That relationship means that we can know ________ and know His ________. The Lord Jesus promised, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you ________” (John 8:31-32).

Our reading comes from the opening words of The Gospel According to Luke 1:1-4. Is the Bible meant to be understood? The answer is yes, but don’t take my word for it. Let’s see what the Bible has to say for itself. Psalm 19:8 says, “The precepts of the L ORD are __________, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the L ORD is ________, enlightening the eyes.” Psalm 119:18 says, “Open my eyes, that I may ________ wonderful things from Your law.” Psalm 119:105 says, “Your word is a ________ to my feet and a ________ to my path.” Psalm 119:125 says, “I am Your servant; give me understanding, that I may ________ Your testimonies.” Psalm 119:130 says, “The unfolding of Your words gives ________; It gives understanding to the simple.” Proverbs 6:23 says, “For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the ________ of life.”

When people say the Bible is not meant to be understood, I wonder how they came to that conclusion. Did they get it from the __________ or from other people? Surprisingly, some
churches don’t want you to ______ your Bible. These churches worry that if you read your Bible, you’ll find out what the Bible actually says and that it’s ________ from what they teach and practice. The Bible has God’s ______ attached to it, and it challenges those who vary from it.

The apostle Paul __________ in Scripture about this kind of problem, and even in his day there were people who were misusing and tampering with God’s Word. Read 2 Corinthians 4:2-4.

The devil will do anything, anything to keep people from understanding the ______ of God’s Word. He’d love nothing more than to ______ people to the gospel so they won’t know the truth. Satan will ________ with the Word to convince you to believe something that’s only partially true. He realizes his message must ________ true or you won’t buy into it. If he tells a _______ that sounds true, he might lead some folks astray. If he can make his lie really ___________, he will. But when people obey the lie rather than ________ to God, they’re deceived with a counterfeit religion. The devil has supplied plenty of counterfeits in our world today.

We wouldn’t know what the truth is and what error is if it weren’t for this permanent ______ of truth in the Bible. The Word of God provides that standard of truth for _____ time. God’s Word is settled in heaven and it doesn’t ________. It’s this stability, this security, this solid foundation that allows Christians to remain _________ to God. God was wise to give His message to mankind in __________ form in the Bible because by giving us the Bible, we can know the truth which makes us free. The difference between Christ’s true disciples and other people is that true disciples _________ in the Word of God, while the others ________ away from the Word.

So, we must stay with God’s Word. God expected ancient Israelite parents to ______ their children the Law of God. The Lord God was concerned that a generation might arise that didn’t know His ________________. Read what Moses commanded them in Deuteronomy 31:10-13. If the Bible were so _______ to understand, God wouldn’t have commanded all Israel to read the law every seven years. Truly, we ______ understand the Bible. The Bible says, “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are ________ belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29). God gave us His Word to bless us.

Read what Deuteronomy 30:11-14 explains. God not only wants us to understand it, He also ______ us to love and obey it.

The Word of God went out to _____ Israel. There were all kinds of people __________. There were the people who might be wise, and then there were the naïve; there were people who were conservative, and there were people who were liberal; there were people who were
educated, the young, and the old. Those who didn't know God’s Law were expected to _____
the Law and _____ it. You’re not an exception. God expects you to know His will.

First Timothy 2:3-4 says, “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who
desires all men to be saved and to come to the __________ of the truth.” God doesn’t
communicate in riddles, nor does He hold back some ________ message for only the select
few. Oh, no! God wants ___________ to be able to know the truth, to be saved, and to live in
heaven with Him. The Bible says in Hebrews 2:9 that Jesus tasted __________ for every
person. Why then would God give us a Bible with the words of ________, but give it in a way
that we couldn’t understand it? That’s ridiculous.

When God inspired Luke to ________ one of the four gospel accounts, He chose this Greek
Gentile to write to a Roman authority about Jesus Christ, a Jew. Luke didn’t grow up knowing
about God, and Theophilus had only heard bits and pieces. **Read what the inspired Luke
wrote in Luke 1:1-4.** Theophilus apparently wanted to know the truth, and Luke said that he
could tell him with __________ the things concerning Jesus Christ. The Bible was written
to impart to us ________ knowledge, ________ knowledge, and the ________ knowledge of
Jesus Christ.

**Read what the apostle John said in John 20:30-31.** God gave us this book, the Bible, so
that we might ________ in Jesus Christ and be saved and have life in His name. I cannot
imagine why, if this is the __________ of the Bible, that God would write something that
nobody can understand. The fact is we can understand what we ________ to know to be
saved and go to heaven and live with God forever!

**Read Acts 17:2-4.** The Scripture is not some strange __________, but it’s a book that
gives life and tells the marvelous story of Jesus Christ.

From this inspired book, we learn the most wonderful story of _____ and __________. To
some it may be meaningless, but to us it’s the _______ meaningful story in the entire
world. I’m so thankful that God chose men and inspired them to ________ that story down in
the first century so that we could hear it, and we could read it as it really happened, and could
believe and obey it. The New Testament gives us ______________ accounts of the death,
burial, and resurrection of Christ, a story of good new that saves our souls. There simply is no
better, no more important, no more meaningful story in the entire world.

The gospel provides God’s _________ unto salvation to everyone who believes it,
according to Romans 1:16. God knew that He had to ________ Himself to mankind if they
were to know and believe in Him and find salvation. We also can know some things through
observing the universe, but we can’t know the _________ story; we can’t know it apart from
the Word of God. The Bible says, “For since in the wisdom of God the world through its
wisdom did not come to know God, then God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the
_____________ preached to save those who believe” (1 Corinthians 1:21). If we want to know
the __________ truth about God, we must go to His Word. Our task is to hear it, believe it, love it, obey it, and share it with others. Oh, thank God for the Bible!

The apostle Paul said, “For we write nothing else to you than what you _______ and ______________, and I hope you’ll understand until the end” (2 Corinthians 1:13). Paul wrote no other thing but what the Corinthians could understand; and we too can understand the Bible.

In fact, we must understand the Word of God and _______ it. Why? Because one day we will be ______________ by the Word of God. The Lord Jesus said, “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the _______ that I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” (John 12:48). My friend, you and I will be judged one day by the Words that are ______________ in this book. We will stand before God and we’ll have to give an ____________ for our lives, and the standard will be these written Words.

The Lord Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who _______ the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter” (Matthew 7:21). We must know what the will of God is. The purest ___________ of God’s will is found in the New Testament. So don’t settle for anything _______ than the Scriptures. They will lead you to an _________ knowledge of the Lord’s will. And they will give you the unfailing truth that _______ to eternal life. What kind of God says, “I’m going to judge you by the things ___________ in the books” (Revelation 20:11-15 and John 12:48), but then gives us a book that people _______ understand? Wouldn’t such a God be a monster? But our God isn’t like that. He gives us a book so that we _______ understand. Our God loves us and wants all men to be _________ and to know the truth. Shouldn’t we strive to know His will? If knowing and doing the will of God is the difference between eternal life and death, can we afford to _______ what He says?

The apostle Paul said, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one ____________, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). God wants us to _________ the Bible so that we will know the truth and not be ashamed on the Day of Judgment because we didn’t follow the teaching of the Bible. Proverbs 23:23 says, “Buy truth, and do not sell it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding.”

I hope you’ll follow those ____________ and that you’ll come to Christ. To hear the Words of Christ and believe them is a part of what it means to come to Him. Do that; _________ of your sins and _________ the name of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Repentance means that you _________ your heart; you leave sin and you turn to the ways of God. So with love and faith and repentance, be ___________ for the forgiveness of your sins as Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16 teach. The baptism of Christ is an immersion. When you do, God will _________ you with His grace and forgiveness and add you to His ___________. He’ll make you His child and give you an inheritance with Him. My friend, won’t you do that? Won’t you do it today?
The Restoration Plea
Ephesians 4:1-6

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

Going back to the Bible is essential to ________ Christianity. We search the Bible because we know that it is God’s Holy Word and that it teaches us what God wants us to know to _________ Him. God’s Word provides for us a ______________, an example that teaches us His will for our lives. We do well to know and to follow that ______________ that He set for us.

Have you ever broken a favorite _________ or dropped a treasured _________ into the mud? You probably groaned and wished you could bring back your prized possession to its ________ and ______________ state. You wanted to restore it because it was ____________ . Spiritually speaking, the restoration plea calls us to bring back the pure and unbroken ____________ as God meant for it to be by returning to the truth that’s found in the New Testament.

Christianity has ______________ dramatically through the centuries.  Many changes were departures from the stated __________ of God in the New Testament. Some changes came as innovations that were never considered in Scripture; and other changes came as edits to make the church more up-to-date with _____________; and then still other changes caused Christianity to be ______________ with other religions. In the end, the ________ Christianity of the New Testament, as God willed it to be, was corrupted. It needed desperately to be brought back to its ______________ condition, to be what God desired it to be.

If we wear the name of Jesus Christ, shouldn’t we seek to truly ___________ Him?  Shouldn’t we _____________ every belief or practice that gets us away from His will as declared in the New Testament? Should we not seek God’s ______________ in everything we do?  Let’s restore the Lord’s way in our lives.

Our reading today comes form Paul’s epistle to the Ephesians 4:1-6.

In the early 1800’s, many church leaders grew __________ of the strife and fussing that was found in the denominations of their day. They believed the Lord wanted His people to be ____________, to all be together. All of the bad-mouthing and exclusiveness of the denominations shamed the name of the Lord. Their divisive ways caused people to _______ _________ from Christ in disbelief. They also objected to all that was of ____________ origin that led them away from pure Christianity.

Read what the Lord Jesus prayed, John 17:20-21. The Lord Jesus wanted His _____________ to remain united. The whole concept of denominationalism is really foreign to the New Testament.

These early church leaders believed that the acceptance of human opinions, human creeds, councils, human practices, and names ____________ this divisive and hostile condition. They wanted something better—a pure and true Christianity that went back to the Bible and remained ________ from human traditions. They knew that if they abandoned what was human and they
concentrated on what was from God, they could find a ________ for unity. They could have
unity only through following the ________ of God’s Word that was found in the Scriptures.
This meant that they had to cast off everything human and denominational, and ________
to the Christianity that was proposed in the New Testament.

These leaders ________ human traditions, human opinions, and innovations since these
things cannot be found in God’s Word. They believed that they could not ________ members to
believe a doctrine that was not expressly taught in the New Testament. They said, “We speak
where the Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent.” They wanted unity in
essentials, freedom in matters of opinion, and ________ in all things.

They also recognized the New Testament ________ that Christians would fall away
from the truth into error. God knew that the hearts of men often follow their ________ paths.

Read what the apostle Paul told the elders of the church at Ephesus in Acts 20:29-30.
Paul knew that some would fall away from the truth.

Read what the apostle Peter also predicted in 2 Peter 2:1-3.

Paul was serious about staying with the truth. Read what he told Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-4.

Early church history ________ that Christians began teaching and practicing things that
were never taught or authorized by the New Testament. Within 500 years after the apostles died, a
wholly new ________ developed with many innovations. For instance, the New Testament
says nothing about holy water, or lent, or penance, or infant baptism, or intercession of the saints,
or sprinkling for baptism, or sacrifice of the mass, or celibacy of priests, or purgatory, or
confession to priests, or archbishops, or popes, or instrumental music in worship, or salvation by
faith only, and “once saved, always saved.”

Century by century, the church ________ farther away from the simplicity of New
Testament Christianity. After a while, it no longer followed God’s pattern for the church in the
New Testament, but became something very _________. God’s way was corrupted by the
will of _______. If the church is to ________ God, it must return to what God willed in the New
Testament. Restoration to the Lord’s way is necessary because repentance from error is necessary.

No one can remain in ________ and still please God. Read what the Bible says in James
5:19-20. Straying from the truth can put our ________ in peril with a multitude of sins. By
casting off these sinful, manmade doctrines and practices, we can ________ the doctrine,

Our intent is not to ________ a new denomination, but to restore the church according to the
ideals of the New Testament. Jesus built His church ________ any denomination existed. The
Lord’s church is not denominational, not inter-denominational, and not even non-denominational.
The church Jesus ________ was undenominational and “pre-denominational.”

The New Testament never entertained the idea of so ________ groups with different names,
and creeds, and organizations, and forms of worship. The Bible condemns the perpetuation of new
doctrines that ________ from the teaching that’s found in the New Testament. So, churches of
Christ strive to "do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names." They believe they must _____________ from their faith and their practice everything that is not found written in the New Testament of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and that they are to believe and to practice whatever is instructed there.

The concept of “restoration” grew out of a ________________ that the Bible is a complete and final authority. Just as a seed will produce only after its own ____________, so the seed of God’s Word will produce the same Christianity today that it did in the first century. Luke 8:11 says, “Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God.” As long as you keep a pure __________ you will have a pure Christianity. But if you corrupt the seed, the teaching of the Word of God, then you’ll also have a corrupt Christianity.

The Bible is complete and gives us _____ of God’s revealed will for our lives and our godliness. **Read what Jesus promised His apostles in John 16:12-13.** The Bible is all-sufficient and contains every _____________ truth that we need to have eternal life and to live the Christian life. We aren’t ______________ anything that God wanted us to know.

But many people aren’t _____________ with the pure teaching of the Word, so they say we must change. We ask, “Change to what?” If they call for change that leads us ___________ to the doctrine of Christ in the New Testament, we can rejoice in that. But if they call for a change that leads us ___________ from God’s revealed will, let’s not be fooled.

When people go beyond the Scriptures to teach other doctrines, they _____________ something other than the church that Jesus built. They’re making a church in their own image rather than _____________ God’s will. To add to the Scriptures or to take away from the Scriptures, to edit the Scriptures to fit today’s culture is to corrupt the pure message or seed and to substitute for it something that will not accomplish God’s intended ____________. Rather than fall for a substitute, let’s demand pure Christianity.

The Lord Jesus desires unity among His followers; but before He prayed for unity in John 17:20-23, he first prayed for his followers to be sanctified or “set apart” in the truth. Jesus wanted all His followers to ________ and to ___________ the truth. Christ didn’t pray for a unity that sacrifices or compromises the truth. No, it’s our ___________ in the truth that unites us. Christian unity is not ecumenism, where groups unite but maintain conflicting and contradictory beliefs and practices. Christian unity means being _____________ to the truth, and refusing error.

The Lord Jesus said, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32). Jesus distinguished true disciples from others by their willingness to ________ in His Word. What we believe may not matter to today’s culture, but what we believe and practice matters to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The New Testament provides for us examples and patterns showing how God wishes for us to _____________ to His grace, how we should come to Him in faith and obedience, how we worship, how we should live, how we should organize ourselves, and how we should treat one another. Some ___________ to the concept of patterns in the New Testament, but the Scriptures are clear
about the ________ to follow the apostles’ doctrine and example. God expects us to believe and obey His instructions found in the New Testament.

For instance, Romans 6:17-18 says, “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became ___________ from the heart to that form (or pattern) of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became the slaves of righteousness.” Again, 2 Thessalonians 2:15 says, “So then, brethren, stand ________ and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.” Again, 2 Timothy 1:13 says, “Follow the ______________ of sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”

If the sun, the planets, and the moon in our universe follow a pattern; if every cell in our body has a DNA pattern that is alike; and if every leaf on every tree follows a pattern, why would we suppose that the Lord’s ___________ has no pattern? If there is no pattern to the church, then it’s the ________ thing that God ever produced that didn’t have a pattern.

The New Testament speaks of the love and grace of God, but these 27 books in the New Testament ________ have commands, instructions, and examples for us to follow. The Lord Jesus said, “If you love Me, you’ll _______ My commandments” (John 14:15). He demonstrates how this will affect our relationship with God. Read John 15:8-10. Obedience to the Lord is not some kind of legalism; obedience from the heart is how we ________ God. If we wish to abide in the love of God, we must be obedient to His ______________. God requires people to ____________ of their sins when they learn the truth. Repentance means that we ________ error and we embrace the Lord’s will. Repentance is how we are _____________ to the Lord. My friend, do you need to repent? Do you attend a church that goes _____________ the teaching of the New Testament? Are you a true disciple that ________ in the Words of Christ? If you aren’t, you need to repent and restore your faith.

Restoration leads the ________ out of sinful error and into eternal life. If this is true for individuals, it’s _______ true for groups and churches. Even ______________ can fall from God’s grace when they abandon the truth. Jesus anticipated disciplining whole churches in the book of Revelation chapters 2 and 3; if they didn’t repent, he was going to come and _____________ their candlestick. We must ____________ faithful to God and His Word. We must hold to the truth at all costs. If we unite with error, we will ____________ ourselves. We’d rather speak the truth with the Lord than to _________ for the devil’s lies. We’d rather lovingly teach the truth that gives—maybe a little offense at first, but heals—than to spread ________ hope that destroys. Love demands that we _________ the whole truth of God because it’s the truth that saves.

The truth is there’s only one gospel, one body, one church, one baptism. In order to enter the Lord’s church, ____________ with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Out of faith and love, ______________ of sin, ______________ the Lord Jesus Christ, and be ______________. The one baptism of Jesus Christ is an immersion in water for the forgiveness of _________. When you’re baptized, the Lord will add you to His church. Why not be baptized today?