Program
Study Guides

For
March 2016
Your Soul
Luke 12:16-21

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

One day, you’ll separate yourself from everything you possess except ______ thing. Today we’re going to consider something that many people __________. What is it? We’re here to search the Scriptures for God’s ______. We search because our _______ destiny depends on what the Scripture says. If we’re wise, we’ll _______ with love to God’s Word and _______ it. Every _______ that we enjoy comes from the hand and the heart of God. We give God our hearts and our minds as we __________ to Him speak in His Word, the Bible.

Life is swift and __________ with many joys and sorrows, victories and defeats, hopes and heartaches. Some things we _______ control, and other things we __________. When life comes to a close, there are many earthly things that we must _______ behind. We’ll leave our possessions, our treasures, and our families. Paul said, “For we brought nothing into the __________, so we cannot take anything out of it either” (1 Timothy 6:7). You will only take _______ thing out of this life. And, you’re making a ___________ from day to day where you will go when this life is over. What will you take with you? Your soul!

“Soul?” That’s a word you don’t ______ much these days. You have a soul. You’ve ___________ had a soul. Your soul is you. God _______ you your soul, and you’re deciding each day by how you think and how you live what you’re going to _____ with your soul. You’re deciding each day what will ___________ to your soul by how you think about God and how you ___________ to Him. God is taking notice of your _______. He knows ___________ about your heart and your life. You can’t fool him. He knows what’s going on in your soul. What is God _______ inside of you?

Our reading today comes from the words of Jesus in the Gospel According to Luke 12:16-21. Those are the Word’s of Jesus and need to be taken seriously.

What is the soul? The Hebrew word for soul is nephesh, and it originally ______ “to breathe.” God gave us life and breath and we became a _________ soul. Genesis 2:7 says in the King James Version, “And the Lord God formed man of the ______ of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a _________ soul.” To have a soul means that I have a ___________ existence. Sometimes the word soul is translated “life,” or “being,” or “self.” While animals also have a life force, only man is spoken of as having as a part of that life, a _______. According to Stephen Renn in his Expository Dictionary of Bible Words, the underlying essence of the word nephesh or soul “may be described as that quality which lends to human beings their distinctive individuality as creatures made in the ______ of God.” Your soul is what makes you what you are as a person.
The Bible translates the word “soul” in a variety of ways and with different meanings. I want to share some of those meanings. First, the word “soul” can sometimes refer to the person. Here it’s the equivalent to the word “heart.” The Lord God asks us to love Him with our heart and soul. There really is no difference between those two words. Both refer to that inner person, the of our emotions, our intellect, and our will.

The word “soul” is found 143 times in the book of Psalms and the psalmists are usually speaking of their passionate being. David worshiped God saying, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is me, bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psalm 103:12). In Psalm 139:14, David said to God, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully . Wonderful are your ; and my soul knows it very well.” Isaiah expressed the feelings of his soul, “At night my soul for You, Indeed, my spirit within me diligently; For when the earth experiences Your judgments, The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9).

When Mary found out that God had her to bear a holy child, the Son of God, she said, “My soul magnifies the Lord” (Luke 1:46). When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He told His disciples, “Oh, my soul is very , even to death” (Mark 14:34). So the soul can to our innermost thoughts and emotions.

But, the reason the soul is able to feel and to reason is because it’s in nature. The Lord Jesus warned, “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in the” (Matthew 10:28). That spiritual part of us, our souls, is not a material thing, but it will beyond this life. The Hebrew writer tells us, “Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be to the Father of spirits, and live?” (Hebrews 12:9). You have a spirit, a soul, that’s given to you by . That’s what makes you a creature made in the image of God. That spiritual part of you is what you will into heaven or into hell. That’s why your soul is so significant!

Jesus is a to our souls. Not only does He offer us forgiveness of sins, He also provides a way that our souls can . Christianity is livable! It’s not impossible to the Christian life. It’s not so difficult that we can’t go to . Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30. Jesus your soul and He wants to give you an abundant life, and that means giving you peace and comfort.

Second, sometimes the word “soul” refers not to some part of us but to the person. For instance, Acts 2:41 says, “So those who received his word were , and there were added that day about three thousand souls.” Peter spoke of Noah and his family being on the ark. First Peter 3:20 speaks of “the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls (or persons), were saved through water.”

Third, sometimes the word “soul” refers to the life force in a person, that which...
him life. While soul and spirit are sometimes speaking of the same thing, there are times when they emphasize different aspects of the spiritual ________ of man. Read Hebrews 4:12. The idea here is not so much that these terms are opposed to one another, as it is that they overlap and emphasize different aspects of the ________ man. The word “soul” emphasizes more the life ________ within a person, while the word “spirit” emphasizes the understanding and emotions of a person.

First Thessalonians 5:23 also seems to distinguish the soul and the spirit. This verse says, “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” God wants to save us completely: body, soul, and spirit. God is saving us as ________ people. This phrase is like the great commandment of Jesus in Mark 12:30 that you “shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” That’s all of you, every ________ of you. Just as we give our _____ to God, so God saves us completely: body, soul, and spirit.

Fourth, there are times that God distinguishes the body from the soul or spirit. One can lose his life physically, when his ________ dies, yet not lose his ______. Remember the warning of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 10:28. Death is a ________ of the body from the spirit or soul. James 2:26 says, “For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.” While the body _______, the spirit remains _______. Ecclesiastes 12:7 describes what happens at death, “then the_______ will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit (our soul) will ________ to God who gave it.” Your body will ________ here on earth, but your spirit, or soul will return to God.

Read what Paul could say in Philippians 1:21-23. When you’re a faithful Christian like Paul, you have the ________ of being with Christ when this life is over. This is one of the many ________ to become a Christian. The way to become a Christian is to ________ and ________ the Lord. We must never think that Christianity is somehow a ________ matter that has no personal connection. Your faith and your soul are unchangeably ________. What you believe will ________ your soul for eternity. So, I hope you ________ in the Lord Jesus and in His gospel, and you are ________ for the Lord Jesus, the way you ought to.

James 1:21 says, “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to ________ your souls.” When people believe in Jesus, when they repent of their sins, and when they receive or accept the word of the gospel into their lives by their obedience, the word saves their souls. My friend, have you ________ the gospel message? Have you ________ it?

Accepting it means believing that it’s ________, and not only believing but committing yourself to it, in word and in deed. You not only want to get right with God, you must ________ with the Lord. Many these days are ________ the Lord and leaving His church, wandering off
into false religion and no religion. When Christians _______ from the truth of the Word of God, they put their souls in _______. **Read James 5:19-20.**

When people give up on their faith, or they start believing something that is false, or they begin to practice sin because of these things, they could _______ their souls. This is why we need to _______ God’s Word, and _______ _______ to it. Your home in _______ with the Lord Jesus is dependent on you knowing the Word of God and following it. You can know all kinds of technology, history, science, and literature, but if you wish to live forever, to live with the Lord for all time, you must also _______ the Scriptures, believe them, and follow them.

Your soul is accountable to God. **Read what God said through the prophet in Ezekiel 18:4.** Your soul _______ to God, and if you sin against Him, you will _______. This death is not simply a physical death, as some wrongly suppose, but a _______ one. If you sin, you’ll _______ your soul from the grace of God. Death is a separation, and the one thing you should never _______ is to be separated from the God who created you.

**Read what God’s Word clearly says in Romans 2:6-11 that God will render in the Judgment.**

When this life is over, I hope you can say “for me to live is Christ and to die is _______.” If your soul is right with the living God, _______ will be great gain. You only have one _______ and you only have one _______. Make your time on this earth _______. Seek for glory, seek for honor and immortality in Christ. Do what is good and right; be obedient. Don’t let _____ overcome you. Proverbs 23:23 says, “Buy the _______, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding.” Oh, my friend, follow the Lord. If the God of heaven was willing to _______ His Son Jesus on a cross in order to save you from sin, that shows not only how much He _______ you but also how much your soul is _______ to Him. How much is your soul worth to you? The Lord Jesus asked, “For what will it profit a man if he _______ the whole world and _______ his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26). Your soul is worth more than the _______ world. You only have one soul. Get it right with God. On the Day of Judgment, nothing _______ will matter but whether your soul is right with the living God.

**Read the text in Luke 12:16-21 again.**

One day, the Lord will _______ your soul of you. Are you right with God? To get right with God, you must _______ with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; you must _______ of your sins and turn your heart toward the Lord; you must _______ Jesus Christ as the Son of God; and you must be _______ into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. This baptism is an _______ in water in the name of Jesus Christ. Baptism is when we _______ upon God for a good conscience, when God _______ away our sins and gives us _______ of life. Oh, we urge you to get right with God today!
Your Sin
James 1:13-16

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

Some people are saying, “Sin is an ____________ word” and should be dropped from our vocabulary. Today we’re going to talk about sin, something that affects _______ of us.

The Bible is the _______ important book that you’ll ever read. It’s the _______ book that tells you where you came from, why you’re here, and what will happen after death. Scripture reveals God’s ______ for mankind and how He’s dealt with our problem of sin. God’s desire for all men is that they be _______ from sin and live with Him eternally. Sin, however, keeps us from _______ life. The Bible reveals the answer to sin and how we can live eternally with God.

Some people _______ using the word “sinner” is offensive and a hindrance to Christianity. Some _______ that Jesus never called anyone a sinner. Several years ago, Dr. Karl Menninger saw this __________ in attitude in American people and he wrote the book, Whatever Became of Sin? More recently John MacArthur wrote the book, The Vanishing Conscience. Both of these men realized that many had grown callous about their sin and had decided to _______ the concept of sin altogether.

Does sin really exist? What does the ___________ say about sin? What does it _________ to be a sinner? What’s the big deal about sin anyway? Is sin really so offensive that a person will spend an eternity _______ without God? Should we ever call anyone a sinner? In a politically ___________ world, some have banned the word “sin” as being offensive. But, is the word “sin” really so _______ that we should never mention it? I realize some folks don’t want to hear about it, but sin is a real ____________ ! Ignoring sin won’t make it go away and it won’t turn something that is _______ into something that’s _________.

Our reading today comes from the letter of James 1:13-16. The word “sin” is certainly a Biblical term. It’s used _______ times in the New Testament alone; and the word “sinner” is used an additional _______ times. The Bible also uses other terms when speaking of sin. Sin is sometimes described as an “error,” “iniquity,” “unrighteousness,” an “evil,” a “trespass,” or a “transgression.” Sin is not some _______ thing that one can ignore or dismiss. You’ll never find sin taken _______ in Scripture. You’ll never find Jesus _______ that sin is an outdated word. In fact, every time Jesus thought about sin, he called for _______________. He recognized that sin was ________.

You can hardly understand the ___________ of Jesus without talking about sin. When Mary was with child, the angel told Joseph, “she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their ________” (Matthew 1:21). When John the Baptist
introduced Jesus, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the _____ of the world!” (John 1:29). More than seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah. He spoke about Jesus and how Jesus would _______ our transgressions.

**Read Isaiah 53:5-6.** Jesus died a cruel, ugly death upon a cross so that we might be _______ from sin. His suffering brought us forgiveness, grace, and peace. To suggest that sin is an unimportant word makes a __________ of what Jesus did on the cross for you and for me. It suggests that we don’t need His _________.

Sadly, some people don’t realize just how _______ sin truly is. Sin has caused much of our greatest _______ and has wasted countless lives. Sin, of some sort or another, is at the root of every _______ and every violent act; it’s brought so much guilt and shame, and so much pain. Calling sin “outdated” doesn’t make it outdated. Relabeling sin only shows the _________ of the one who makes this claim. God takes note of sin whether we do or not. When men sin, they sin against God—they _______ God. Sin is not merely a transgression against the law; it’s a transgression against God’s law and God Himself, and it breaks his heart! There is no “victimless” sin for _______ is always the victim.

Some people think of sin as something somebody _______ does. Nearly everyone can point to someone they think is a _______ sinner than themselves. But everyone sins. Paul said, “for _____ have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Every person who reaches the age where he knows about God, and he knows about right and wrong, comes to that point where he acts in _________ of God’s law and so sins. We all stand guilty before God.

Some people have categories of sin. They think “_______” sins are really bad, but “_______” sins are no big deal. Or they figure _______ commit the big sins, while they themselves only commit little ones. But all sins are bad. All sins transgress God’s law and break God’s _______. All sins go against His _______ for our lives. Paul said, “the wages of sin is _______” (Romans 6:23), and that hasn’t changed. When he talks about death, he’s talking about ___________ death, that is separation from God and from His grace.

Isaiah 59:1-2 explains, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a ___________ between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.” When people persist in sin they build this _________ between themselves and God. This barrier means that God no longer __________, that one doesn’t stand in His grace and receive His blessing.

Some people still don’t think they’ve sinned. However, John said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, then he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, why we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:8-10). People tend to _____ to themselves about many things. Some ignore warnings about the _________; others ignore warnings about their ________.
When your sins aren’t forgiven, they will _______ you your soul. Sin is no joke. **Read what Jesus said in Matthew 16:26-27.** Some people ________ about sin, but no one will be laughing when Jesus comes again. Then they will weep with regret that they didn’t ________ their lives and come to the Lord.

Sin not only has eternal consequences, it also creates __________ in this life. Sin deceives and hardens people’s _________. **Read Hebrews 3:12-13.** Most people sin because they think it ________ good, or because it’s pleasurable; but in the end sin will _________ your heart and hurt you. It’s deceptive and it’s cruel. Sin will make a person desert every member of his family just to feed a _________.

We generally think of taking drugs or getting drunk as addictive and destructive behaviors, but actually ____ _____ become addictive and destructive. A person can become _________ to lying, to gossip, to stealing, to anger, to sexual sins, and even to violence. These behaviors not only hurt the person who does them, they also hurt _________ people. How many families have been destroyed or impoverished because somebody thought they could sin and get away with it. The prisons are _________ of people who thought they could get away with their sins, or people who knew they’d someday get caught but wouldn’t give up their sins.

There is an unalterable _______ in Scripture about the life we choose to live, and you can’t cheat this law or change it. You can’t wish it away or ignore it. **Read Galatians 6:7-8.** When a writer says, “Do not be deceived,” it’s usually because people ________ themselves and _______ to themselves about the lives that they’re living.

Oh, I hope you’re not __________ yourself, thinking that you can live an immoral lifestyle and avoid any consequences. You simply can’t. Sometimes those consequences are physical diseases if you _________ your body. Sometimes they are shortened life if you commit _________. Sometimes sin ________ _____ families and _________ friendships. Sometimes sin enslaves us financially with heavy ________ like gambling does. The choices that you make today may _______ you far more than you ever dreamed in your health; or the spiritual drain in guilt, in money and friendships. My friend, if you continue in sin, you won’t be the exception. You will someday _______ what you ________.

The prodigal son wanted his inheritance, and he wanted it so that he could waste it on his __________. That’s what a prodigal is, one who _________ his resources with reckless living. You remember the story. **Read Luke 15:14-16.** I tell you, when you live a selfish, sinful lifestyle, the time comes when you run out of _________. Selfish people are friends only when they see some ___________. As long as the prodigal son paid the bill, he had friends.

It was only when the prodigal son was desperate and alone that he began to _______ _________ about sin. **Continue reading Luke 15:17-19.** Sin _________ the senses, but reality _________ us up. Sin makes a person feel _________ in his own eyes. He no longer felt _________ to be called a son of his father.
While sin _______ only to shame and guilt, the wonderful thing is how much God loves us even in our sin and guilt. **Continue reading Luke 15:20-24.** God _______ when his prodigal children come home. He _______ to meet his ragged, dirty, but penitent son. He embraced and kissed him. It was a time of celebration, for his son was now _______ and found! God wants to _______ you, too. Sin will hurt you and embarrass you; but God still _______ for you because He loves you. No matter what your past has been, God wants to _______ you as you turn away from the old evil life and come home to Him. God’s love is _______ than our sin.

**Read what Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:12-16.** My friend, there is _______ for you. If you’ll _______ in the Lord, if you’ll _______ of your sins, if you’ll _______ His name, if you’ll be _______ (immersed in water) for the forgiveness of your sins, you too will become a _______ of God and a member of the Lord’s _______. The prodigal son came home; Saul of Tarsus came home. They found forgiveness, and so can you.

We’ve seen that sin matters; it’s not trivial. Scripture tells us that unresolved sin costs people their _______. You remember Paul said, “The wages of sin is death.” Here, “death” is a reference to separation from _______ which lasts for eternity. Don’t let Satan or the world _______ you into believing that sin is no big deal. It’s the critical _______ to your soul and will cost you everything when Jesus comes again if it’s left unforgiven. If sin weren’t such a big deal, Jesus would never have gone to such great lengths to _______ for your sins by his cruel death on the cross. Sin is not trivial when you consider the _______ of Christ. Jesus didn’t die for a petty, unimportant problem. He died for you because your sins are the greatest _______ that you face.

When you consider the Lord’s ________, you can readily see His love. There’s no _______ love that a man can have than to lay down his ______ for his friends. That’s what Jesus did for you. He wanted you to be _______ from sin and to _______ with Him eternally in heaven. “The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is _______ _______ in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Forgiveness is a _______ from God; and I would hate for you never to know how much God loves you and wants to _______ you. If God takes sin and your soul that seriously, shouldn’t you take it seriously? Don’t let anything keep you from having _______ the blessings of the Lord? Love Him, _______ Him, and _______ Him.

To become a Christian, _______ Jesus Christ is the Son of God, _______ of sin that separates you from God, _______ Jesus before others, and be _______ into Christ. Baptism is an immersion in water for the _______ of sins. You’ll never regret obeying the Lord. So, do it today!
Your Salvation
Romans 5:6-10

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

Most people think everybody is going to heaven, but the Scripture distinguishes the ______ from the ______. Does it _______ whether we’re saved? The New Testament _________ more than a dozen chapters to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus died upon the cross so that _____ might be saved. We study the Scriptures because we know they tell about Jesus, and we want a relationship with the Lord Jesus, and to be saved by His _______. For us, the __________ is not merely words on paper; they give us _________. Read what the apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:1-2. We want everyone to be saved; we don’t want anyone to believe in ________.

Jesus came to earth “to save His people from their _______ ” (Matthew 1:21). “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). Jesus is in the saving business, the __________ business. He takes people where He _________ them and He __________ them into the kind of people that He wants them to be. He’s the _________ of sinners! He’s like the ___________ who leaves the ninety-nine in the open pasture and searches for the lost sheep until he finds it! He brings it home on his shoulders ___________! God rejoices over every sinner that _________ (Luke 15:7). The Lord is ____________ for you if you’re a sinner, my friend. He wants to find you. He doesn’t want you to be ________!

Our reading today comes from Paul’s letter to the Romans 5:6-10. God’s Word tells us about the great demonstration of the _______ of Jesus.

What does it mean to be lost spiritually? We know what it means to lose our _____ or our __________. We know what it means to lose our ________, our savings, or our __________. We have _________ alerts for a lost child and _________ alerts for a lost senior citizen. When a child is missing or a senior is missing, we’ll turn over every rock to _________ them. All these things are tragic, but they’re trivial compared to the loss of our _________. Being lost spiritually means that we’re without ________ and without ________ in this world. Being lost spiritually means that we can’t enjoy the blessings or the _________ of God in this life or in the one to come. God doesn’t want ___________ to be lost. First Timothy 2:3-4 says, “This is good, and it’s pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

The fact is that many are lost and don’t ________ it. Our nation has become so morally and religiously confused that many have come to ___________ that everyone is okay with the Lord. The Lord Jesus, however, clearly taught that not everyone is saved. He said, “Enter
through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are _______ who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are _______ who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). Wouldn’t it be _____ not to be among that few who find life? Scripture reminds us that there is salvation in no one else, “for there is no other _______ under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Even many religious people think that they are right with God, but not everyone who is ___________ is saved. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will _______ the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the _______ of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” When people _______ to follow the will of the Lord, even if they’re religious, the Lord will not allow them into heaven. But when people do love the Lord, when they are willing to _______ to His Words and obey Him, God opens His heart and opens the way for them to enter into Heaven. When you get away from the Words of Jesus, you get away from Jesus.

The prodigal son had lived wickedly until he ran out of _______. When he became destitute, he took a long look at his ___________ and life. The Scriptures say, “he came to his senses.” He realized that he needed saving. What about you? Do you need saving? Are you in _______ and in need of forgiveness. The prodigal son decided to go home to his father and ___________ that he had sinned against heaven and in his father’s sight. In his _______, he was no longer worthy to be his father’s son. Sin makes us small in our own _______. Sin ruins our lives. Our sins _____ be atoned for. Jesus _______ on the cross to atone for our sins. We must be willing to _______ to Him for forgiveness.

The prodigal son was afraid of what might happen, and many today have a _______ that the Lord or the church won’t accept them. When people come home humbly and penitently, willing to do the will of the Father, God will _______ them. When David came to God for forgiveness, he said, “For You (God) do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:16-17). Just as the prodigal son’s father, God will _______ His arms to us, run to meet us, embrace us, and kiss us. The Father knew his son had been wicked, but the father _______ loved him. God still loves us!

“But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was _______ and has come to _____ again; he was _____ and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate” (Luke 15:22-24). God celebrates when people recognize their sins and come home in _______________. Do you need to come back to God?

God wants to __________ you, to save you from sin because He loves you. Your salvation is so very important. Preaching the gospel means __________ about sin and salvation. That is what gospel preaching is all about.
What happens when you’re saved? Let’s see:

First, your salvation means that God has __________ you clean from sin. Sin leaves a __________ and it causes us to feel the sting of our _______. When we become Christians, the stain and the guilt are ___________. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. When we’re washed clean, we’re also made ________ and righteous. God no longer sees what we ________ but sees what we have __________, and what He caused us to become. We’re _______ creatures.

When we’re baptized, we’re __________ out to God for a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21). Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, “Now why do you _________? Get up and be baptized, and _______ away your sins, calling on His name” (Acts 22:16). That’s how we ______ upon God for salvation. First Peter 3:21 explains, “Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an __________ to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” In baptism, we’re asking God to __________ our souls and our consciences so that we can be right with Him and right with ourselves.

Second, your salvation means you are __________ and reconciled to God. Reconciliation means I’m in a right relationship with God; God and I are ________ again. To be _______ of sin and know you’re not forgiven is scary. To think I will ______ eternity without God’s favor, without His friendship, and having no hope; my friend, that is frightening. Hebrews 10:31 reminds us, “It’s a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the _______ God.” I wouldn’t want to face God outside of Christ, lost in sin, never having believed or never having ___________ the gospel. I wouldn’t want to face God having forsaken the ________.

I’m thankful for the words of 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not slow about His ________, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for _______ to come to repentance.” God doesn’t want to __________ anybody. He wants people to believe, to love Him, and to __________ their ways. He wants us to leave our sins and to become __________. I’m thankful God is ________ with us. I don’t want to presume on the ________ or the patience of God. I know I must change my ______ if I want to see the grace of God work in my life.

My favorite saying is this: “I’m not all I _________ to be; I’m not all I ________ to be; I’m not all I’m ________ to be; but thank God by His mercy and grace, I’m not what I ________ to be.” God’s grace and forgiveness transforms us. When we’re obedient to the gospel, we become a ________ of God. We become _______ people, transformed into a child of God. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19. Being forgiven means that God no longer holds my sins against me, and that allows me to _________ friends with God once again.

Third, your salvation means that you are _____________. What does that mean? It means God ________ you holy and regards you as holy. Read how Peter describes obedient Christians in 1 Peter 2:9-10.
If God has forgiven you, and cleansed you by the blood of Jesus, and He’s made you holy, then you should _______ that way. **Read what God’s Word says in 2 Timothy 2:19-22.**

Fourth, when the Lord saves you at the time that you’re baptized, He _______ you to His kingdom, His family, the church! When you’re baptized into Christ, you’re also baptized into His ______. **Read what Peter said in Acts 2:38-41.**

These penitent believers were ___________ to do what God says. They didn’t _________ with God. They committed themselves, and God recognized that. So, He added them to the _______ believers, to the church. Acts 2:47 says, “And the Lord was adding to their number (that is, the church) day by day those who were being __________.” My friend, to be saved means to be added to their number, and to be a part of the church, the family of God.

Why does this matter? It matters because we’re talking about your _______ and your ________. To be saved means every ________ in Christ is yours. To be lost means you have no relationship with God and no ________. Don’t gamble with your ________. Buy the _______ and do not sell it. Get right with God and don’t let anything come _________ you and God ever again. Don’t _________ with God. Life is too uncertain to put off putting your _______ in the Lord and ___________ the gospel in repentance and baptism. If the Lord Jesus came in the clouds this day, would you greet Him with love or would you be _________? Why would you remain afraid? Get right with God!

How are we saved? God saves us by His grace; it’s a __________. God has always wanted to save and redeem us from _______. Ezekiel 18:23 says the Lord takes “no _________ in the death of the wicked” but He wants us to “turn from” our sinful ways and live! God is in the saving business. People lose their souls when they _________ against God, or _________ to believe in God, or will not _______ God. God grieves when His people sin. He made and loves you and He doesn’t want anybody to be lost.

Some people want the grace of God, but have little _________ in what He teaches or commands. They want a Savior, but not a ________. However, you can’t separate Him from His ___________. Wanting Him means ____________ to what He has to say. First Corinthians 1:21 says, “God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the ____________ preached to save those who believe.” God saves through a message. **Read what 1 Peter 1:22-23 says.**

God saves us through the _________ (Romans 1:16).

If you _________ and are willing to _________ Jesus Christ as the Son of God; if you’re willing to _________ of your sins; and if you’re willing to be ____________ into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, you too can be saved and the Lord will add you to His church. Peter told the people to repent and to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). Ananias told Saul of Tarsus to rise and be baptized and wash away your sins (Acts 22:16). That is how a person responds to the grace of God. Won’t you repent and be baptized today?
On the cross, Jesus told the thief, “Truly, I say to you, ________ you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). The Lord clearly says that we’ll survive and be conscious ________ this life. Your death will either open the ________ to the most wonderful experience that you’ve ever enjoyed or the worst experience that anyone could have. God wants to ________ you, and the Bible gives us the information we need to ________ that blessing.

**Our reading today comes from the letter of James 4:13-17.**

The word “death” occurs _____ times in the Old Testament and _____ times in the New Testament. Death signifies ________. Physical death separates the ________ from the ________. Spiritual death separates people from ________ and His blessing. The good news is that while death is a separation, it is not the ________ of our existence.

The Bible describes death in James 2:26, “For as the ________ apart from the spirit is dead, so also ________ apart from works is dead.” The body is dead without the spirit. But, we’re ________ than a fleshly body. We are body and spirit. The body ________ but the spirit still exists. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, “the dust returns to the ________ as it was, and the spirit returns to ________ who gave it.” God is the ________ of spirits according to Hebrews 12:9. Your spirit is not physical or material, and it’s not destroyed by a physical ________.

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PO Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 1-800-321-8633

This study sheet is prepared by Jerry Campbell – www.searchtv.org; jerry@searchtv.org
life. The Lord _______ to see the thief in Paradise. There’s an _______ spirit that survives
death and is conscious. Life here and now is not _______ there is; there’s _________.

Yes, it’s appointed for men to die once, and then comes ___________. Death holds a lot of
___________ for us. The _____________, especially judgment, is frightening. We worry whether
our after life will be one of _______ or not. Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-
14. This surprises many who think nearly ___________ will be saved and only a few of the
worst will be lost, but that’s not what Jesus says.

We must consider the afterlife. How we live will determine ______ we will spend eternit
ty. What are we saved by? The shed _______ of Jesus Christ and the _______ of God. What are
we saved from? The ___________ of sin. Read what Jesus warned in Matthew 5:29-30.

to what He says. “Now there was a _______ man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine
linen, joyously living in splendor every day. And a _______ man named Lazarus was laid at his
gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich
man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now the poor man died and
was carried away by the _______ to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was
_________. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in __________, and saw Abraham far away and
Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and he said, ‘Father Abraham, have _______ on me, and
send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and ________ off my tongue, for I am
in _______ in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your life you
received your _______ things, and likewise Lazarus _____ things; but now he is being
comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great
_________ fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that
none may cross over from there to us.’ And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, that you send him to
my father’s house—for I have five brothers—in order that he may _______ them, so that they will
not also come to this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let
them _______ them.’ But he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the
dead, they will repent!’ But he said to him, ‘If they do not _______ to Moses and the Prophets,
they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’’

Many think this story is a ___________ or some kind of fanciful story and for that reason
shouldn’t be taken seriously. But Jesus never speaks about _______ matters. When Jesus uses
a figure of speech like a parable, He does so to ___________ a point, not to trivialize it.

However one takes this story, people will face ______ very different destinies after they die.
One destiny is _______ with comfort and the other with agony. Lazarus and the rich man both
_________ where they were. Both could reason and have intelligent conversations. Both could
___________ the lives that they lived back on earth.

Sometimes the Bible speaks of death as “________.” This is likely because the physical body
after death _________ to be sleeping. This, however, doesn’t mean that our _________ are
unconscious or in a stupor. Moses and Elijah, though they had been dead for many ___________, had a conversation with the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-5). Death happens to the ________, but death doesn’t make our spirits unconscious.

The lives that we live now, whether we’re right with the Lord will determine our future ___________. The story of Lazarus and the rich man _________ our _________ to what happens when our spirits leave this world. After we die, the angels will come for us to take us to the ________ God has assigned for us. After death comes judgment. This may be a place of _________ or a place of __________.

Scripture uses the word “Hades” to describe the __________. “Hades” literally means “unseen.” Hades shouldn’t be confused with _______. Hades is a ____________ place, where the spirits reside until the Judgment Day; but hell is ___________. No one will enter the promised heaven or the eternal hell until ________ the resurrection. Hades is the place where only __________ of dead people reside. At the resurrection, our spirits will return to earth and will be joined to ________, imperishable bodies. Death is the separation of the body and spirit. Resurrection takes place when our spirits are ______________ with a changed, imperishable body.

While Hades usually refers to that place of torment, the word can also be applied to the ________ realm, which is divided into both a place of torment and a place of comfort. In Acts 2:27 the apostle Peter _________ David’s prophecy in Psalm 16:10 about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He noted that Jesus’ soul was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh suffer _________. When Jesus died, his soul went to Paradise according to His statement to the thief on the cross. He said “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43).

The word Paradise is used ________ times in Scripture and each time refers to that heavenly realm where the righteous go after death. Second Corinthians 12:2-4 says Paradise is equated to the third heaven, that is the place where God __________. Jesus went to that __________ place of righteous spirits where God dwells. And so, the Paradise of God is where the __________ of life is (Revelation 2:7). If Jesus’ soul was not abandoned to Hades but He went to Paradise, then Hades must contain a place where righteous souls are ______________.

The apostle Paul also ________ us to understand that we will have an existence in spirit form after we die and until the resurrection. Read what he said in 2 Corinthians 5:6-9. When the righteous die, they go to be ________ the Lord.

Read what Paul said in Philippians 1:21-23. Paul said he would _____ and _____ “with Christ” when he died. This is the Christian ________, to live with our Lord Jesus forever and ever.

Read the reassurance Paul gives in Romans 14:7-9. We may die physically, but not even death can separate us from the __________ of our Lord Jesus. When Christians die, they go to be with Him that very _________. But when ________ people die, the angels take them to a place of torment.

This is why we must be ____________ spiritually. No one else can do that for you. The Bible says, “For we must _____ appear 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 5:10). The
saved in Christ go to judgment washed _______ by the blood of Jesus; and their names are recorded in the book of life. They can face the afterlife with confidence that they have an eternal _______ with the Lord. The unbeliever and the impenitent person have no such _______. They must ______ God on their own without their sins being washed away. They will be _______ eternally.

God doesn’t want anyone to be ________—He wants everyone to be _________. He wouldn’t have sent Jesus to die painfully on a cross if He were looking to __________ everybody. But God won’t make people ___________ and He won’t turn their lives around, and He won’t make people believe in Him or love Him. That is your _________. You are a _______ moral agent, and you are deciding whether you will serve Him or you won’t serve Him.

God has prepared the way for your salvation in the ________ of His beloved Son, Jesus. By His ________ you are saved. But grace as a gift must be received by _______ and _______________. We don’t _______ our salvation, but God has determined that those who receive His gracious salvation are people who meet his ____________.

The Bible says, “Although He (that is, Jesus) was a Son (that is, a son of God), He learned __________ from the things which He suffered. And having been made ________, He became to all those who ______ Him the source of eternal salvation” (Hebrews 5:8-9). Your gift of salvation is ready for you if you ___________, ___________, and are ____________. My friend, have you prepared? Death is something that all of us will face one day, and it may come sooner than we think. Are you prepared?

I bought life insurance to __________ my wife and to __________ for my family after I’m gone. I’ve known people to buy a plot, choose the casket, and arrange the funeral service _______ before the time. How foolish I think it is to be so well prepared for the dying and the death here, but _______ to prepare oneself spiritually for the hereafter. I don’t want to be like the five foolish virgins who failed to _______ the oil needed for their lamps. They ran to the dealers to buy oil; and while they were gone, the bridegroom came; and the _______ was shut and they were not allowed in (Matthew 25:1-14). We must __________ now before the time is up.

Don’t waste your opportunity to get right with God; once life is over, there isn’t any _________ chance. Why not __________ in a new and different direction for your soul’s sake and for those you love? Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door and _________. And if anyone _______ my voice and _______ the door, I’ll come in to him and eat with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

Friend, you can lose your car, your house, your health, or your life and still go to __________. But if you lose your soul, you’ve lost ______________. Make the most important commitment that you’ll ever make, that of giving yourself to the Lord by ___________ the gospel. Believe in the Lord Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Repent of every sin. Confess the name of Jesus, and be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. When you’re baptized, the Bible says in Acts 22:16 that God will wash your sins away. The Lord will add you to His church, and you’ll be a child of God with the promise of eternal life. Would you do that?