Hearing the Gospel
1 Peter 1:22-25

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

God gave us ears to hear, but are we __________? Today we’re going to explore the importance of listening to God. We want everyone to ______ and to ______ the Lord. We know that the true way to know the Lord is through a thorough ______ of His Holy Word, the Bible. We can’t count on __________ or the __________ of men. We want to hear God _______ for Himself, so we go to the Scriptures.

“‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. People will stagger from sea to sea, And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find it’” (Amos 8:11-12). For many today, there is a __________ for the Word of God. I fear what happened to Israel in the eighth century before Christ is happening ________.

While the Bible is still the number one ______________ of all time, and while 82 percent of Americans revere the Bible as sacred literature, they simply don’t read it and don’t know what it actually teaches. In a recent report by the American Bible Society, 79 percent of the people believe that they are knowledgeable about the Bible, but only 45 percent could __________ the four gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Sadly, many people know very little about God’s __________ on sin, the soul, salvation, or the judgment. If we want to live with God eternally in _________ with joy and peace, then we must hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our reading today comes from 1 Peter 1: 22- 25.

Proverbs 1:5 says, “A wise man will hear and increase in __________, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel.” From our earliest days in school, our teachers encouraged us to listen and to follow ___________. Listening, really listening, may be one of the _______ tasks of life. We can hear words, but have we ___________ to listen and to receive the message that we heard? Have we sought God and treasured up His Words in our __________? The Bible everywhere emphasizes the ____________ of listening.

Read what the psalmist sang in Psalm 119:10-16. Some say they don’t like ________; I hear that a lot, but the psalmist ___________ in the ordinances or rules that God gave. In fact, he set his ________ to delight in them, to store them up, to meditate upon them, and to consider
them significant, so he would not forget them or wander away from them or sin against God. I hope that you ________ the Lord with all your heart and that you love God’s Word like that.

Every parent who loves the Lord wants to see his children __________ God’s ways and wisdom. Read what Solomon said in Proverbs 2:1-5. Solomon knew how important, how utterly important knowing God and His Word was to his children. Do you know? Have you made the Word of God a __________ in your home, mothers and fathers?

The Lord Jesus more than once said, “He who has _______ to hear, let him hear” as He did in Matthew 13:9. In the book of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, we can read seven times: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” God wants and demands to be ________. God spoke from ___________ on the Mount of Transfiguration about Jesus. He said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased. Listen to Him” (Matthew 17:5).

Matthew, Mark, and Luke record one of the Lord’s parables. Some call it the parable of the ________, and others the parable of the _________. It really describes how ________ respond to the teaching of Jesus. Read Mark’s account of this parable in Mark 4:14–20.

In this parable, the ________ is the Word of God, the gospel. The first group is like the soil beside the ________. Matthew 13:19 explains, “When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and he doesn’t understand it, the evil one comes and __________ away what’s been sown in his heart. And this is the one on whom the seed was sown beside the ________.” Just as the seed never quite breaks into the soil, so the Word never quite breaks the __________ heart. Some never take the word seriously, never believe, and they ________ their opportunity to become Christians.

Read John 1:11-13. Satan came and ________ the Word from them, so they never heard what was necessary for them to know the__________ and so be saved. Many today never have the Word planted in their hearts, never truly hear the gospel, and never know the truth about Jesus.

The Jesus that they ________ they know and the Jesus that is ____________ in Scripture are really for them two different people. Why? Because Satan is a deceiver. He doesn’t want people to have the truth in their hearts, and so he ______________ a mythical Jesus for the real one. This is a Jesus that never ____________ them, that’s Satan’s Jesus; that never ____________ anybody, that’s Satan’s Jesus. Oh, He’s very attractive, but He’s __________. He’s not the Jesus of the New Testament.

Then, there’s the rocky soil. These folks hear the message and they believe quickly; but when ______________ comes, they fall away because they lack the deep spiritual roots that they need. Their shallow, superficial ________ isn’t strong enough to sustain them. They only believe for a while. Trials or persecution cause their faith and their commitment to Christ to
just ________ _______. They heard the good news of salvation, yes; but they didn’t ____________ it up in their hearts, so they leave their faith behind.

Third, Jesus tells of the ___________ soil. They hear the word, but they let other things _______ the Word of God out of their hearts. They have a little ________ in their hearts for God, and a little for His Word, but because of the cares of the world, because of their delight in riches, because of the pleasures of this life which become their focus, the Word of God gets __________ _______.

Read Colossians 3:1-4. That’s where our hearts must be, where we must remain if we wish to _______ with Christ in glory. The psalmist said, “With all my heart I have ________ You; do not let me ___________ from Your commandments” (Psalm 119:10). We need that way of __________ : otherwise we too might have hearts filled with distractions that take us away from God.

The fourth soil is made up of “good and honest ___________.” Oh, they hear and they ___________ the Word. Rather than ___________ with God, they accept it and they hold fast to it. In the end they bear ________ with patience, some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold. A good and honest heart is willing to be in subjection to God because God ________ Him and he’s willing to be honest about himself. Many hearts _______ to themselves about their need for God or about their need to change and repent. Many hearts would rather argue about what is and is not _______ than really to listen to what God actually says. An honest and good heart will listen to God and make then the needed ___________.

God is able to produce fruit in a good and honest heart because His Word is firmly _________ there. If you’re not willing to listen to God, God cannot __________ you; but if you’re willing to listen, God can do great things in your life! Many want to claim the ___________ of God in the Word but they’re unwilling to let God’s Word be the moral and spiritual ___________ in their lives. But you can’t have the promises of God if you’re unwilling to ___________ the rest of what God says. God is God, and we are His ___________. We don’t ________ more than He does. We’re not _______ than He is. We must listen to Him rather than think that we can tell Him what we ought to ________.

Listening to God means that we regard His written Word as the __________ authority. Instead of going with our “gut feelings” or listening to other _______ that are in this world, we’re going to listen to Him in the Word. Listening means that we quit trying to __________ what the Bible says, quit trying to remake God in our own image, and quit thinking God is subject to our ___________. God is God! He was God before He __________ the world, and He’ll be God after this world comes to an end. He doesn’t change, and His Word doesn’t change. Psalm 119:89 says, “Forever, (forever ) O LORD, Your word is _________ in heaven.” What was
true when Jesus spoke it in the first century is settled in heaven and has not __________. The Lord Jesus said in John 10:35 that the Scripture cannot be __________. That is, you can’t change it; you can’t edit it, or dispose of it. It stands __________.

The book of Galatians __________ us that there is one, unchangeable gospel. The gospel of Christ is not a cafeteria, where people can __________ what they want and __________ the rest. No, the Lord determines what the gospel is, and our task is to hear and to be __________.

**Read Galatians 1:6-9**. We must __________ the one, true gospel. We must not imagine any other gospel will do.

The one, true gospel __________ to Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, and raised from the dead.

**Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-4**.

Why is all this important? It’s important because we can be __________, and frankly many people have been. If we believe a gospel that has been __________ with, we’ll be following a lie. We must __________ and __________ the one, true gospel. The Lord Jesus said, “Take __________ what you listen to” (Mark 4:24). A false gospel will only __________ those who follow it. The devil likes to counterfeit the gospel and __________ people. He likes to make people think they are __________ even when they’re following a lie. We must be careful not to fall into his __________ and lose our souls. We’re going to spend this month looking at what God desires from us to obey that one, true gospel. So, please study with us each week this month.

**Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-27**. The Lord Jesus __________ a wise man as one who hears and does what He has said. He doesn’t __________ to the gospel, or doesn’t __________ __________ from it. He doesn’t __________ what God has said, or try to rewrite the gospel. He simply __________ and __________ the words he heard. On the other hand, the foolish man hears, but he __________ __________ do what he heard. He does something else. He builds a house yes, but not a house built on the __________ foundation of the Words of Jesus. So, when the time of testing comes, the one who listens and obeys __________, but the one who ignores what he hears and does what he wants to do, that person is going to be __________.

Hear the Lord and obey Him; become a Christian today! Put your __________ in Christ and __________ Him, __________ of your sins, and be __________ into Jesus Christ and into His death. When you’re baptized, the Lord will wash away your __________ (Acts 22:16) and He’ll raise you up to walk in __________ of life (Romans 6:4). Today is the best day for you to hear the Lord and respond to His message.
Believing in Christ
Hebrews 11:1-6

Do you truly believe Jesus Christ is the _______ of the living God? Today we’re going to explore what it _______ to believe, truly believe, in Jesus Christ. We believe God, so we believe what He _______ in His Word, the Bible. God has shown us the _______ to eternal life in Scripture. We know God will keep every ____________, but we also realize that God makes a distinction between those who will _______ Him and those who won’t. So, we study the Scriptures and we strive to ____________ the Lord.

If you wish to be ________ with the living God, faith is a necessity. The Lord Jesus said, “For God so _______ the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Do you recall the next two verses, verses 17 and 18? The Lord also said, “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be ________ through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”

Believing in the name of the only Son of God is necessary if we’re to have ________ life. It’s not just believing God _________; it’s also believing in Jesus as God’s only Son. We must put our faith in Christ. The Lord Jesus said, “I am the ________, and the _________, and the _______; and no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6). The way to God is through ________ in Jesus.


I want us to look at faith from _________ perspective. Many look at God and Christianity through the eyes of popular ___________. Salvation is not an entitlement that God _________ us. It’s a _________ to those who believe. But we must understand the idea of believing as God _________, not try to read into it what we _________ it means. Let’s take some time to ___________ to God, asking what kind of faith God wants from us. We seek to __________ God.

Throughout the Bible, God distinguishes those who _________ Him, those who abide in His grace and have His approval, from those who don’t. Hebrews 11:6 says, “And without faith it’s ____________ to please God, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek him.” We must believe in God, but we must also know about the God that we believe. We must know He _________ those who seek Him. Many people believe a God exists, but the God they _________ is not the God of the Bible.

Our postmodern society thinks it should _________ its own god and wants to sit in judgment of God rather than seek the God who created them. Some manufacture a god that ________ with the times. Faith in a culturally-correct god is not the same as faith in the God who made the world and will one day ________ it. We must believe in God as He _________ and _________ Himself in His Word, the Bible, not in a mushy god popularized by our culture.
Our culture thinks of God as one who winks at ________, who never condemns anyone, and who believes everything that we believe. Many think the God of all ________ doesn’t care about righteousness or truth. Others have forgotten that God is not just holy, but He’s ________ holy. Habakkuk 1:13 says of God, “Your eyes are too ________ to approve evil, And You cannot look on wickedness with favor.” Some think God doesn’t ________ what we believe or do, but God is vitally interested in our living holy ________ devoted to the truth, serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot speak of having faith in Jesus Christ but then believing ___________ we want to believe. Nor can we speak of having faith in Jesus Christ and living any way that we ________ to live. When a person comes to Christ as a believer, He belongs to Jesus. Paul told the Christians in Corinth, “You are not your ________, for you were bought with a ________” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). If we wear the name Christian and we believe in Jesus Christ, we can never ________ that. We’re not our own; we ________ to Jesus. He’s our Lord and Master, and we are His ________.

Moses wrote, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God” (Psalm 90:2). The eternal God stands ________ our changing culture. The Lord is not ________ to the changing philosophies of humanity. His holiness, His righteousness, His purity, and His justice do not change with popular _________. We must ________ Him and His revealed will in the Scriptures as He gave it to us instead of trying to remake Him in our own image. How can anyone say He trusts in God, when he doesn’t believe what God ________ ? Faith means we believe what the Lord Jesus ________. Why? Because He is Divine. He knows all things and has all ___________. He gives us His wisdom in the Bible, His Word, because He ________ us and wants us to know the truth.

Believing in the God of the Bible also necessitates ___________ in the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son. The Old Testament prophesies of Jesus as the ________ Messiah. The New Testament tells how He ________ dozens of prophecies. Believing in Jesus means that you believe the ________ that He made to be God’s Son. Jesus said that He would ________ from the dead, and He did. Jesus said Jerusalem would ________, and the Romans destroyed the city in 70 A.D.

The Bible says, “He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:11-13). Many people approach Christ with preconceived ___________. If Jesus fails to measure up to what they want or imagined, they aren’t ________ to believe. Some will only believe if Jesus never ________ anyone and never calls for moral ___________. That kind of Jesus simply doesn’t ________. To know the real Jesus, we must ________ all of the New Testament, all that it says about Him, not just pick out certain passages and ignore the rest.

Jesus came to His own people, but they didn’t ________ Him. The Lord Jesus _________ only those who believe in His name, who believe who He really is and what He really teaches. Only they are given the ________ to become children of God. Jesus loves you, but He’s not obligated to save you unconditionally. Jesus isn’t your ________; He’s your creator and Lord.
Faith stands ________ being accepted and being rejected. God made that decision, and we can’t ________ God. The Lord Jesus said, “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned ________, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:18). On another occasion Jesus taught the Jews that He had come from the Father in Heaven. He said, “I told you that you would die in your ________, for unless you believe that I am He you will die in your sins” (John 8:24). Believing in Jesus means believing He ________ is the Christ, the Son of God. It means believing that He is the fulfillment of God’s __________ of the Messiah.

Saving faith is not simply believing in the ______ of believing. It’s believing in the __________. Believing in Him means that you believe what He ________, what He ________, and what He __________, that all of these things are true. If I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, then I will recognize His authority over my ________ life. Faith includes ________ and responsibilities. The Lord Jesus said, “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46). If I regard Jesus as Lord, I cannot pick and choose which of His commandments I will ______ and which I won’t.

There are times when we wonder ______ God asks the things that He asks. Trusting faith means that we ______ even when we don’t understand. Hebrews 11:8 says, “By faith Abraham, when he was called, ________ by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Abraham didn’t ______ with God because he ________ God; he simply obeyed. He showed his confidence in God, though he didn’t ______ what lay ahead. We trust God in things that we ________ know because we find Him trustworthy in what we ______ know. We know God is true and loving.

The apostle Paul said, “For this reason I also suffer these things, but I’m not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I’m convinced that He is ________ to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day” (2 Timothy 1:12). Paul could face the ________ with peace and confidence because He knew God and how God kept His promises. We can trust God in what we do not know because God has proved Himself ________ of our trust in what we do know!

Hebrews 11:3 says, “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.” By faith we can understand God ________ this world in six days just as He said in Genesis, chapter one. While no one was around to ________ the creation, we can trust God’s word about the creation. Why? Because we know God is trustworthy, and ________ of our faith.

The early disciples were willing to _____ for their faith for two reasons. First, they were ________ of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus “presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing ________, appearing to them over a period of forty days” according to Acts 1:3. They ______ Him, ______ Him; they touched His body. They were so convinced that when they were threatened by the Jewish council, they replied, “we cannot ______ speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). They were eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ!
Second, they believed in Jesus because they saw how He ____________ Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Jesus was _______ in the right place, at the right time, in the right tribe, with the right family lineage, and with the right kind of mother—a virgin. A ________ announced His birth, and wise men came from the East looking for Him. The apostle Philip said to his brother Nathaniel, “We have ________ Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” (John 1:45). As you read through the book of Acts, the apostles and evangelists time and again ____________ that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah.

What we know is true about Jesus is that He is the promised Messiah who ________ from the dead. For this ____________, we call Him “Lord” and “Christ.” Since we have confidence He is the Son of God, we can trust what He ________ about creation, about Adam and Eve, about the flood, about Sodom and Gomorrah, and every other story found in the Old Testament. When Jesus spoke of the Old Testament, He treated what He read there as ________, historical events. For this reason we can believe the Old Testament is trustworthy and ________. Why? Because we ________ Jesus Christ.

Because we have a living Savior, we want a ________ faith not a _______ one. Read James 2:14-18.

Dead, inactive faith is __________. It doesn’t reveal that one truly believes in Christ. It doesn’t save.

Saving faith is ________ obedient. The Lord Jesus said, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; and whoever does not ________ the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36). You can claim to believe, but unless your faith ________ to obedience, you really can’t be right with God. When the Bible speaks of saving faith, it’s ___________ an active, obedient faith. Galatians 3:26-27 says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were ____________ into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” James said, “Be ________ of the word, and not __________ only, deceiving yourselves.” Are you a doer or merely a hearer? Faith means I’m willing to do what God wants me to do. I’m willing to be the kind of person God wants me to be. I’m going to hear what He says; I’m going to believe it’s true; and I’m going to do it; I’m going to be obedient. Oh, the believer “has eternal life, but the one that does not obey shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).

Read John 11:23-27. You need to ask yourself, “Do you believe this?” Do you believe God ____________ the world in six days? Do you believe the Bible is ________? Do you believe that Jesus arose from the dead and is ________? Do you believe Jesus’ death on the cross can ________ for your sins? Do you believe that you will one day be ________ from the dead? Do you believe in the ____________ Day? Do you believe in Heaven and Hell? Faith in Christ means believing what He ________ and what He ________ to give us eternal life.

If you really believe, put your faith into action by ____________ of your sins; ____________ Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God; and by being ____________ into Christ. Baptism is an immersion in water of a penitent believer. It’s done in the name of Jesus Christ for the ____________ of sins. Baptism is the time when you become a child of God, free from sin, and ____________ to the Lord’s church. The Lord Jesus said, “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16). Oh, we hope that you’ll become a Christian today.
Repentance
Matthew 21:28-31

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

Someone said, “You cannot repent too _______ because you don’t know how soon it will be too _______.” We’re now in the third part of our series on _______ the gospel. Two weeks ago we studied about _______ the gospel. Last week we explored what it means to _______ in Jesus Christ. Today we’re looking at the importance of repentance in responding to the _______ of God. As always, the Bible will be our _______ because we know the Bible gives us God’s true teaching. We want to _______ and _______ God, so we’re going to take the time to hear what He actually says about this and every other topic.

The New Testament _______ the great love that Jesus showed to sinners. The Pharisees criticized the Lord Jesus Christ for _______ with tax-collectors and sinners. In those days, the Pharisees, though a small group, had bullied the Jewish society into following their _______ traditions. They had no _______ in their hearts for anyone but those who followed their dictates. But Jesus followed a truer, better _______ that showed the love and compassion of God for all.

Jesus touched the _______ and told the story of the Prodigal Son. Jesus cared about _______ soul. The Lord said, “For the Son of Man has come to _______ and to _______ that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Let’s be clear, just because Jesus _______ sinners didn’t mean that He tolerated their sin. Jesus told the man that he healed on the Sabbath Day, “do not sin _______, so that nothing worse happens to you” (John 5:14). The Lord Jesus doesn’t _______ us where He _______ us. He _______ us up out of sin and transforms our lives. Oh, thanks be to God.


The New Testament word “repentance” comes from the Greek word metanoia: “meta” means “after”; and “noia” means “thought.” Repentance then is an afterthought. People use an afterthought to _______ their ways, to _______ their thinking. An afterthought yields to us a _______ way of thinking, different from our former thoughts. Considering the destructive _______ of sin and the loving grace of God, penitent people have a change of heart and mind that leads to a change of life and behavior.

The Lord Jesus was, and still is, in the _______ business, but salvation includes transforming the life of those who follow Him. That transformation included what _______ would do for us in His grace and forgiveness, and what _____ must do. God _______ His people to believe and repent. The Lord Jesus _______ repentance to the Jews of His day. After his baptism and
temptation, Jesus ________ His ministry preaching throughout Galilee. Matthew 4:17 says, “From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at _______.’”

When the Pharisees grumbled at Jesus for eating with tax-collectors and sinners, Jesus replied, “It’s not those who are _______ who need a physician, but those who are _______. I have not come to _______ the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:31-32).

When Jesus sent the twelve out into the towns and villages of Galilee, He called for those cities to _________. Read in Matthew 11:20-24 what Jesus said when some of the towns rejected Him.

Jesus was serious. Jesus ________ sinners, but He ________ them to repent. Repentance is not _________. If we wish to ________ God and be right with Him, we ________ repent. Read what Jesus said in Luke 13:2-5. If we wish to please the Lord, we too must repent.

Read what the apostle Paul told the pagan philosophers on Mars’ Hill in Athens in Acts 17:30-31. God won’t do your repenting for you, as some people suppose. God ________ you and everyone to repent.

Peter likewise ________ men to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:38. The apostle Peter wrote, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not ________ for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). God doesn’t want anyone to be ________; but when people refuse to repent, they sadly ________ their sins over God. When people say no to God, they _________. On the other hand, the Lord God celebrates when people change their lives and ________ Him.

Read in Luke 15:4-7 the parable the Lord Jesus told to respond to the Pharisees who were grumbling because He ate with sinners. When a person turns his life around and leaves his sin, the God of Heaven _________.

Some people think repentance is a punishment, but actually it’s ________ for our souls. Some ________ about all the things they have to give up, but the heart that loves God finds new and wonderful ________ in righteous living. He trades the ________, destructive habits for a ________ and real joy in Christ. You don’t give up ________ pleasure to become a Christian. You give up the ________, sinful pleasures that end up enslaving and destroying you. But you take on new, ________ joys that are indescribable and everlasting. Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have ________, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Oh, we have an abundant life in Christ that keeps getting ________ and _________.

Repentance is ________ than ceasing to sin. While repentance requires a person to ________ doing evil, it also turns his ________ to the Lord. A penitent person learns to despise the ________ he did in the past, yes; but repentance also ________ in the heart a hunger and thirst for
righteousness. A penitent person wants to ________ God everyday and completely. The Ephesians made known their repentance by ________ from paganism and superstition, “bringing their books (of magic) together and ________ them in the sight of all” (Acts 19:19). I wonder if there are some sinful things in our lives that also need to be _________. They may be books, movies, or songs. We need to ______ our hearts of evil thoughts, ugly ways, and selfish intents.

When a person repents, he must also ______ his life with the Lord and His teaching. Read the illustration the Lord Jesus gave in Matthew 12:43-45. When a person is forgiven of sin but ______ to fill his life with the Lord, he becomes vulnerable to terrible sins coming back into his heart. One may cease to do evil, but real repentance means one lovingly fills his life with the Lord’s _________.

When a person repents, he’ll be truly ________ for his sin against God. He’s sorry that he hurt and grieved God by his transgression of God's _______. He’s also sorry when he realizes that Jesus _________ on the cross for his sin. The Bible says, “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). It was our sins, our lust, and our selfishness that _______ Jesus to the cross. Repentance means that we’ve taken ________ how grievous sin is to God and how destructive it is.

Sin ___________ us from God. Thankfully, God is willing to _________ when we repent. But once we come to God, we can no longer ________ in sin. Paul once asked, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2). Because we love God, we can’t ________ grieving God with our sins.

A penitent person is also sorry for his sins against other _________. He realizes that his sins have caused other people to _________. We hurt others with what we ________ and _________. When we sin, we ________ others to sin. Jesus said that one who sets a ___________ ________ before a little one sins grievously (Matthew 18:6-9). The penitent person also mourns because of the ________ that his sin has caused against himself. Solomon said, "His own iniquities will _________ the wicked, and he will be held with the cords of his sin" (Proverbs 5:22). Every person who sins eventually has to ________ the consequences of his sin. The sinner’s life unalterably ________ in misery and regret.

A person who loves God, however, wants something ___________. He wants an opportunity to _________ his life and live a clean and righteous life. After his sin with Bathsheba, David _________ for something better than his selfish, lustful, and hurtful ways. David prayed, “Create in me a ________ heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). Hungering
to do what is good and right ________ the heart of a penitent man. This sorrow for sin and hunger for righteousness means that he will ______ what is evil and ______ what is good. Romans 12:9 says, “Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.” This doesn’t say hate evil ________; it says hate what is evil.

If I love God, I will hate what is evil and hurtful. I can love a ________ while hating the evil that he does. I can love a ________ while hating the evil a drunk does to his ________ while he’s drunk. Christians call people to change their behavior because they _______ them, and they know how sinful behavior will cause them ________. We don’t speak out against sin because we are ________ of people. We speak out against sin because we hate the _______ and the _______ of sin. Christians love their enemies and ________ for them.

Paul describes how a Christian should ________ with those caught up in sin. Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26. God is truly in the ________ business, and so are we. But people can be so __________ by the devil that they think they’re all right spiritually when they’re actually lost.

So, we ask, why are we talking about repentance? Why are we ________ people to repent? We’re speaking this way because we love you and we want God’s ________ for you. You can’t be right with God __________ repenting of your sins and turning to Him. Sin can ________ your heart and cause you to be lost. Romans 6:23 says, “the wages of sin is ________.” We want you to know Christ and the _______ of forgiveness and eternal life.

Don’t let sin harden your heart and _____ you of eternal life. Don’t stiffen your neck and ________ to change your ways. You’re grieving God and just ________ yourself. Like the prodigal, come back ________ to God, and do it today. God won’t _______ you to repent, but He does lovingly ________ to you to repent. You need to know, however, that if there’s no repentance, neither is there any _________. The Lord promises forgiveness to penitent people who change their lives, but there’s no promise for the person who time after time refuses to _______ God. One day there will be an end to God’s ________ and a day of reckoning. Read Isaiah 55:6-7. If we _______ our repentance even one more day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.

Repentance is a change of heart that ________ to a change of life. We repent __________ we love the Lord and we believe in Him. Faith, love, and repentance ________ in the heart. I hope your heart looks at that old way of sin as something to be _________. I hope that you hunger for righteousness. If you believe and love the Lord and have repented of your sins, ________ Christ and be ________ in His name. Baptism is an immersion in water in the ________ of Jesus Christ. When you’re baptized, God will ________ away your sins; He’ll give you the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:38 and 22:16. Oh, obey the Lord today!
Baptism
Romans 6:3-7

Sometimes people ask, “Well, _______ is baptism so important?” Today we’re going to explore the _______ and the _______ of baptism. Please don’t ever take the Bible for _______. It’s not simply ________ religious book. It’s unique and filled with God’s _______. It’s the only book that can _______ us where we came from, why we’re here, and where we’re going. The Bible teaches us the _______ that lead to eternal life. The Word of God is settled in heaven but it can _______ our lives for eternity. If we’re born again at all, we’re born again through the _______ of the Word. First Peter 1:23 says, “for you have been born again not of _______ which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.”

Today we’re going to complete our series on how we respond to the _______ of Christ and what we must do. We’ve talked about the necessity of _______ the gospel and _______ what God says. We’ve shown the necessity of _______ in Christ and how faith is the foundation of Christianity. We’ve seen the necessity of _______, turning away from sin and to the ways of the Lord. Today we’re focusing on the need to be ________ to be saved.

Few people doubt the _______ to believe or repent in order to be saved, but there’s much controversy over baptism. People have mistakenly said baptism is a _______ that people do to earn salvation. This simply isn’t _______. While it’s true we’re commanded to be baptized, baptism is not so much about what we do as it is about what _______ does for us. We’re going to study what baptism into Christ _______ and why everyone who chooses to follow Christ should be baptized to be saved.

Our reading today comes The Letter of Paul to the Romans 6:3-7.

Webster's Unabridged Dictionary defines baptism as "a ceremony or sacrament of admitting a person into Christianity or a specific church by dipping him in water or sprinkling water on him, as a symbol of washing away sin." This definition describes what baptism means in the English language, considering there are many _______________ “Christian” groups that baptize in a variety of ways. But simply because the many denominations do things differently doesn’t mean that that’s what the New Testament ____________, or that they teach all these different ways to baptize, and that all of them are God’s ________.

So, what does the New Testament _______ in regard to the act of baptism? What _______ does the New Testament describe? The Greek word, baptidzo means to dip, to plunge, or immerse. It refers to the specific _______ of dipping or immersing in water. A different Greek word rhantidzo describes the action of ______________. If the Lord or the Holy Spirit had wanted us to ___________ for baptism, they would have moved the writers of the New Testament to use that word rhantidzo rather than baptidzo.

After an exhaustive survey of more than _____ examples in Greek literature and ancient translations, an author, Thomas J. Conant, in his book, The Meaning and Use of Baptizein, concluded: “That the word baptizein, during the whole existence of the Greek as a spoken language, had a perfectly ___________ and unvarying import. In
its literal use it meant, as has been shown, to put __________ into or under a liquid, or other penetrable
substance, generally water, so that the object was wholly __________ by the inclosing element.”

When the New Testament speaks of baptism, the event described points to an ________________ in water. In Matthew 3:16, after Jesus was baptized, He “went ___ _____ of the water.” In John 3:23 John baptized in
the Jordan River “at Aenon near Salim, because there was ________ water there.” Baptism or immersion
would, of course, __________ enough water to immerse an adult. In Acts 8:3-39, Philip and the Eunuch went
__________ into the water; Philip baptized the Eunuch; and they both came _____ out of the water. Whatever
happened in this baptism, it took place while they were ________ in the water.

The apostle Paul wrote, “Therefore we have been __________ with Him through baptism into death, so that as
Christ was __________ from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life”
(Romans 6:4). The ______________ of being buried and raised in water is striking here! It’s not an accident that
baptism is a burial and a resurrection that leads to __________ of life. Romans 6:5-7 says, “For if we’ve
become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His
resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done
away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.”

Baptism is that time when our old body of _______ is crucified with Christ and done away with. It’s buried! At
that point we’re no longer __________ _to sin. When we are __________ up with Him, we have new life just as
the Lord Jesus had new life when He was resurrected. The resurrection caused the new life for Jesus, and our
resurrection ________ Christ in baptism causes our newness of life. Before baptism we are ________ in sin, but
after baptism we are freed from sin and ________ in newness of life!

Commenting on this passage William Barclay said, “Commonly baptism was by ________ immersion and that
practice lent itself to a symbolism to which sprinkling does not so readily lend itself.  When a man descended
into the water and the water ___________ over his head, it was like being buried.  And when he emerged from
the water, it was like rising from the ________.  You see baptism was symbolically like dying and rising again.
And the man ________ to one kind of life and ________ to another; he died to the old life of sin and rose to the
a new life of grace.”

There is a second passage that __________ baptism to the burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Colossians
2:12-13 says, “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in
the __________ working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses
and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having ____________ us all our
trespasses.” Baptism is an act of ________ in the powerful working of God. In baptism we __________
our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We’re ________ with Him in His burial and
resurrection by baptism. Before we were baptized, we were dead in our sins, but in baptism God makes us alive
just as God made Christ alive. In making us alive, God __________ us of all our trespasses. Did you notice in
this passage how God is __________ in forgiving us and in making us alive.  Baptism is an _______ of faith on
our part. The command in Acts 2:38 and 22:16 is to “be baptized.” Grammatically, “be baptized” is a command,
but it’s a __________ command. God commands us to demonstrate our faith by __________ someone
baptize us in the name of Jesus Christ. “Be baptized” means someone ________ is immersing us in water.
Someone else is acting on us. We __________ the action. That’s what “passive” means.
Just as we receive the physical act of baptism in water, we receive God’s gracious __________ on us in the forgiveness of sins and making us alive. In baptism, we are born again or born from above with __________ of life. God is the One powerfully __________ on us. Baptism is not some work of merit on our part to __________ salvation. No! Baptism is an act of faith on our part whereby we __________ God’s powerful working in our lives just as He powerfully raised Jesus Christ from the dead. God buries our old man of sin; God raises us up; God makes us alive; God washes away our sins; and God makes us new.

When people say, “Well, you don’t have to be baptized to be __________,” they’ve missed the point. If baptism is the time when God __________ on us, then baptism would have to be necessary for us to be saved.

There is great __________ to immersing as baptism. We should __________ what God is doing to us by saving us in baptism or immersion. We have no right or authority to __________ sprinkling for immersing in fulfilling God’s commandments. If God is providing salvation to us through our baptism, then shouldn’t we be careful to abide by the Lord’s __________. Shouldn’t we __________ with what He’s told us to do. Sprinkling and immersing are __________ things; they’re not the same. While many have sprinkled people and called it baptism for centuries, sprinkling for baptism has no __________ in Scripture; you just can’t find it there. Baptism by sprinkling is an old, __________ tradition begun centuries after the New Testament.

Obeying the Lord doesn’t mean doing what’s conventional or doing what’s __________. Obeying the Lord means honoring the Lord to the point that you’re __________ to do what He says. Honoring and respecting God means you won’t ________ to God’s commands, take away from God’s commands, or ________ God’s commands to suit yourself. You simply, lovingly, humbly ________ the Lord.

So, ________ should a person who is penitent and believes in Christ be baptized. There are numerous reasons. Peter told the guilty people at Pentecost in Acts 2:38, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” People repent and are baptized so that their sins will be __________. Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16). Baptism is the time when God __________ away our sins.

Baptism is the time we __________ ourselves with Christ or become united with Him. Galatians 3:26-27 says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Baptism is a necessary _____ of faith. Placing your faith in Christ necessarily __________ baptism. The faithful sons of God today are baptized into Christ and clothed with Christ.

We’ve already seen in Romans 6:4-7 and Colossians 2:12-13 that baptism is the time that God ________ us with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. In baptism we are __________ with Him, buried with Him, and __________ with Him to walk in newness of life. Since the old man of sin is crucified with Him in baptism, God at that time frees us from sin and its ________. Baptism is also that time when we begin __________ our new life in Christ and with Christ. From that day forward we are new people who ________ to Him. His blood has cleansed and __________ us; we are no longer our own. We have been bought with a ________ (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

When we’re baptized, the Lord ________ us as God’s children to the church. The Bible says, “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” (1 Corinthians 12:13). Baptism unites us with Christ and with those who are in His body, the __________.

To be in the church is to be in God’s ___________. Paul wrote the church at Colossae, “For He (Jesus) __________ us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14). Forgiveness and membership in the church or kingdom are __________ of being baptized into Christ. This agrees with what the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of __________ and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). How are we born again of water and the Spirit? This is surely by baptism. The Lord says that without baptism we cannot __________ into the kingdom of God.

In Christ, we have the _________ and blessing of God. Ephesians 1:3 says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with _________ spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” In Christ, we have the promise of eternal life. First John 5:11-12 says, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us __________ life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; and he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.” The way to have the Son is to __________ to the Son by baptism when you confess Christ and repent of your sins. Baptism is certainly not the ________ thing necessary to faith. We’ve seen in this past month that hearing God, believing in Jesus, repenting of sin, confessing Christ as the Son of God are also necessary to ________ the gospel.

So then, why is baptism so important? Why are we talking about its necessity? Because baptism is that culminating ______ in our obedience. Our faith, repentance, and confession ________ us to baptism. But baptism is that point when God acts upon us, transforming us from people ________ in sin to people ________ in Christ. That’s when we are ________ ________ and become members of the Lord’s church. To talk about baptism means revealing how God unites us with Christ, ________ us, makes us His children. Oh, what a blessing! Nothing else could be so very important for today and for eternity! The New Testament gives us many ___________ of people being baptized. The 3,000 who obeyed the gospel at Pentecost in Acts 2:4 were baptized that ________ ________. In Acts 8:12, when the Samaritans believed the ___________ of Philip about Jesus and His kingdom, they were baptized right then. They didn’t _________. The Eunuch in Acts 8:36 asked to be baptized. It was ________! He wasn’t content to wait until another day. He came up out of that water _________. In Acts 22:16, Ananias asked Saul of Tarsus, “why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and ________ away your sins, calling on his name.” In Acts 16, the jailer and his household considered baptism so important that they were baptized in the middle of the _________. Why the urgency? Why the emphasis on acting quickly?

I’ll tell you why. Being baptized is necessary for you to be _________. It’s necessary for you to receive the __________ of your sins. Baptism is necessary for you to be ________ with Christ and to become a Christian. The Bible never contemplates the idea of a Christian who has ________ been baptized. Baptism is not something that you do ________ you have been saved; baptism is the ________ when God saves you. That’s when God takes the ________ of Christ and washes you free from sin and makes you His child. First Peter 3:21 says, “Corresponding to that, baptism now ________ you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Baptism is how we __________ to God to be saved and to have a clear conscience. Have you been baptized into Christ? If you believe and you’re repentant, won’t you be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins today?