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*Program  
Study Guides*

**For  
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June 4, 2017

## A Friend to Jesus John 21:15-17

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

Everyone needs a friend, and the \_\_\_\_\_ friend you'll ever have is Jesus Christ. Today, we're exploring the friendship we have with Jesus. We go to God's Word, because we \_\_\_\_\_ God is our friend. He loves us fully and freely. His love is \_\_\_\_\_ than we can imagine. Romans 8:32 says, "He who did not spare his own \_\_\_\_\_ but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?" Few treasures in life exceed the \_\_\_\_\_ of friendship. Heaven is beautiful, not only because God made it so, but more because of \_\_\_\_\_ will be there. The Lord yearns to be our friend, now and forever. I know you're thankful for His love. Someone said, "A friend is one who knows all about you and \_\_\_\_\_ likes you." The Lord Jesus went to the \_\_\_\_\_ for sinners. He gave His love freely to people who didn't deserve His love. Yes, He knows all our sins and our weaknesses. He knows our thoughts, good and evil. He knows all our secrets. In spite of it all, He created us and gave Jesus to save us from sin. He loved us as sinners, but wanted to provide something better for us than the pleasures of sin.

The more we get to know God, the more we \_\_\_\_\_ Him. The more we love Him, the more we want to \_\_\_\_\_ Him. The more we serve Him, the more abundant our \_\_\_\_\_ become. Friendship with Jesus is the greatest \_\_\_\_\_ of life. Let's explore friendship with the Lord.

**Our reading today comes from John 21:15-17 – Jesus has a conversation with Peter.** Love is not just about \_\_\_\_\_ we love someone, but also \_\_\_\_\_ it out in our lives.

Throughout His days, Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ people who wanted to take His life and end His ministry. Matthew chapter two tells how Herod tried to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus as an infant after the wise men inquired about the birth of the king of the Jews. Sadly, Herod did kill \_\_\_\_\_ infants in Bethlehem, fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy that Rachel would \_\_\_\_\_ for her children. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, is buried in Bethlehem; you can visit her tomb even to this day.

The New Testament tells of Jesus coming to His hometown of Nazareth to \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord taught things they didn't wish to \_\_\_\_\_. They had a hard time believing a hometown boy could be the Messiah. Luke 4:28-29 says, "When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with \_\_\_\_\_. And they rose up and they drove Him out of the town and brought Him to the brow of a hill on which their town was built, so that they could \_\_\_\_\_ Him down the cliff." Jesus was able to \_\_\_\_\_, but you can imagine His heartbreak and disappointment over the loss of His lifetime friends at Nazareth.

John chapter eight tells of the experience Jesus had in the \_\_\_\_\_ in Jerusalem as He defended Himself before the Jews. Jesus spoke of Abraham's rejoicing to see His day. John 8: 57-59 says, "So the Jews said to him, 'You are not yet \_\_\_\_\_ years old, and have you seen

Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, \_\_\_\_\_ Abraham was, I \_\_\_\_\_.’ So they picked up \_\_\_\_\_ to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.”

Again, in chapter ten of John, Jesus revealed to the Jews that He and the Father are \_\_\_\_\_. But this didn’t set well with the Jews. They thought He was blaspheming by \_\_\_\_\_ to be the Son of God. So John 10:31 says, “The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.”

John chapter eleven tells how Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ Lazarus from the dead. When the report of this miracle reached the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Pharisees and chief priests, they convened a council. They said, “What are we to do? For this man performs many \_\_\_\_\_. If we let Him go on like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation” (John 11:47-49). Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said it would be \_\_\_\_\_ for one man to die than for the whole nation. From that day on they made \_\_\_\_\_ to put Jesus to death. Matthew 26:4 says they \_\_\_\_\_ together to arrest Jesus by stealth and to kill Him.

The disciple, Judas Iscariot, whom Jesus named an apostle and entrusted the moneybox, became greedy and was a \_\_\_\_\_. **Read Matthew 26:14-16.** The Bible says, “And he came up to Jesus at once and said, ‘Greetings, Rabbi!’ And he \_\_\_\_\_ Him” (Matthew 26:49). Ah, this kiss must have broken the Lord’s \_\_\_\_\_. It was cruel and selfish. There was no \_\_\_\_\_ to be found in that kiss. They bound the hands of Jesus and they led Him away.

During His trials and crucifixion, they humiliated Him; they mocked Him falsely; they accused Him, slapped Him, scourged Him; and they \_\_\_\_\_ Him to carry His own cross. Pontius Pilate found no \_\_\_\_\_ in Him worthy of death, so he tried to find a way to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus by offering to release a prisoner the Jews wanted. The people refused to free Jesus and cried for Barabbas.

When Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus who is called the Christ, the people showed no \_\_\_\_\_ on Jesus. Matthew 27:22-23 reveals that they all said, “‘Let Him be \_\_\_\_\_!’” And Pilate said, ‘Why, what evil has He \_\_\_\_\_?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Let Him be crucified!’” Though Pilate \_\_\_\_\_ his hands of this matter in front of the crowd, the people said, “His blood be on us and on our children!” These bloodthirsty people callously called for the \_\_\_\_\_ of an innocent man because they were envious and they were afraid of what Rome might do.

So, they \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus away to Golgotha, and there they crucified Him. While suffering on the cross, His \_\_\_\_\_ showed no mercy. They were not \_\_\_\_\_ just to do away with Him; they had to humiliate and slander Him as well. **Read Matthew 27:39-44.**

Jesus endured terrifying physical \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross; but when the crowds watching added insult to injury, it must have pierced his heart. Jesus could see a \_\_\_\_\_ picture. He went to the cross to \_\_\_\_\_ the very sinners who put Him there. The Lord endured \_\_\_\_\_ against Himself without becoming \_\_\_\_\_ to others.

The Bible says, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an \_\_\_\_\_, so that you might follow in His steps. He committed no sin, neither

was \_\_\_\_\_ found in His mouth. When He was reviled, He didn't revile in return; when He suffered, He didn't threaten, but He continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. He himself bore our \_\_\_\_\_ in His body on the tree, that we might \_\_\_\_\_ to sin and \_\_\_\_\_ to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:21-24).

Jesus blesses us and blesses all, even when people do their \_\_\_\_\_ to Him. He bore our sins, so that we might \_\_\_\_\_ an old life of sin to live to righteousness. The Lord so befriended us that He \_\_\_\_\_ the way for us to have a new and better life, filled with faith, hope, and love. The Lord Jesus does not \_\_\_\_\_ people where He found them. He heals what is \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives. He lifts up those who are down. He \_\_\_\_\_ our sins. He gives us \_\_\_\_\_ that we can leave old habits of which we're ashamed and can have new lives filled with love and righteousness.

No one will ever be a \_\_\_\_\_ friend to you than Jesus Christ. Proverbs 17:17 says that a friend loves at \_\_\_\_\_ times. The Lord loves you for who you are and who you will \_\_\_\_\_. Remember, God \_\_\_\_\_ what we can become with His grace and help. By His grace, He forgives our past, helps us day to day, and guides us to an \_\_\_\_\_ home in the future. His love \_\_\_\_\_ us every step of the way.

Christianity is friendship, friendship with God and with everyone who loves God. The New Testament describes Jesus as the "friend of \_\_\_\_\_" in Matthew 11:19. Jesus called His disciples "friends" (Luke 12:4 and John 15:14). He wants everyone to \_\_\_\_\_ with Him, not \_\_\_\_\_ Him. He wants their friendship to be \_\_\_\_\_, to be strong, and to last forever. He wants \_\_\_\_\_ than to just be an acquaintance or fair-weather friend. He wants people who will \_\_\_\_\_ their faith and loyalty to Him.

The Lord Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone \_\_\_\_\_ his life for his friends" (John 15:13-14). Then He said, "You are my friends if you do what I \_\_\_\_\_ you." Jesus was willing to die for you to save and \_\_\_\_\_ you. Do you really think He would do anything to \_\_\_\_\_ you or to lead you astray? He asks that you befriend him by being \_\_\_\_\_ to His commands. The Lord wants you to obey Him because you love Him. But the Lord is not being overbearing or cruel to us when He asks us to obey Him.

The Lord is not trying to \_\_\_\_\_ us with His commands. This is crucial. Some hear the word command and they get the \_\_\_\_\_ idea. The Lord never gives us a command to \_\_\_\_\_ us, to manipulate us, or to subdue us. God's commandments don't enslave; they set us \_\_\_\_\_. Some people don't like following the \_\_\_\_\_ or being told what to do. Our Father in Heaven is indeed a \_\_\_\_\_ Father to us. He gives us His commands because He knows that His instructions will bless our lives and keep us from \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves.

Every commandment, in the Word, leads to \_\_\_\_\_. Every commandment helps us to \_\_\_\_\_ the pitfalls of life. Every commandment keeps us on the straight and narrow road that \_\_\_\_\_ to an abundant life. Love leads us to do what is \_\_\_\_\_, what is best, and what brings a blessing to all. The commandments of Jesus are designed to \_\_\_\_\_ us how to do just

that! The more we walk in the Lord's way, the more we see how God was loving us \_\_\_\_\_ His commandments. God's commandments are God's \_\_\_\_\_ to us.

In the Old Testament, Moses reminded Israel as they were about to enter the Promised Land, "For what great nation is there that has a god so \_\_\_\_\_ to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we \_\_\_\_\_ upon Him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this \_\_\_\_\_ that I set before you today?" (Deuteronomy 4:7-8). If that were true of the Law of Moses, how much more true is it of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus in the New Testament? We have a great God who has blessed us with the \_\_\_\_\_ of righteousness. Oh, what a wonderful \_\_\_\_\_!

The Lord has also blessed us with a spiritual family, the \_\_\_\_\_, who are friends. The little epistle of Third John ends with the words, "The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name." The Lord has blessed me with the opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_ all over this country and into other countries to meet my brothers and sisters in Christ. Because of Christ, they are my brethren and also my friends.

The Bible calls us to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15). Friendship means that we \_\_\_\_\_ about others personally, sharing their joys and their pains. We take care of each other. Being a friend to Jesus means being a friend to His \_\_\_\_\_ and all the people who are in it. They are indeed \_\_\_\_\_.

Being a friend to Jesus means that we'll take our \_\_\_\_\_ with Him. We believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We pledge our lives to \_\_\_\_\_ Him and Him alone. We lovingly, respectfully but firmly stand up for His teaching and for His teaching alone and for His morals. To be a friend to the Lord Jesus means we \_\_\_\_\_ Him fully and freely. What He calls sin, we recognize as \_\_\_\_\_. What He calls false, we recognize as \_\_\_\_\_. Friendship with Jesus calls us to serve Him, to preach the gospel, and to sacrifice ourselves. Oh, we do this with love, and joy and thankfulness for the opportunity. Are you a friend of Jesus?

As the Gospel of John closes, the Lord Jesus has his first personal conversation with Peter after the resurrection. Only days before, Peter had denied the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ times. **Read today's text again – John 21:15-17.**

I've wondered if the Lord Jesus might \_\_\_\_\_ that question to you or to me today, "Do you love me?" or "Do you love me more than these?" Friend, how would you answer? Can you say that you have been \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord, that you're attending church faithfully, you're reading your Bible, you're praying daily, and you stand up for what is true and right? Are you a friend to Jesus? To become a friend to Jesus, the Lord said we should \_\_\_\_\_ His commandments. You must \_\_\_\_\_; without faith it is impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ God (Hebrews 11:6). Then you must turn from everything sinful and offensive to Jesus and turn to what is right and pleases the Lord. That's \_\_\_\_\_. Confessing Jesus as the Son of God is also necessary and being \_\_\_\_\_ into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins is also necessary just as the Bible teaches in Acts 2:38.

## The Message Preached 1 Corinthians 1:21-25

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

What do you think about the \_\_\_\_\_ and its message? Do you know of its \_\_\_\_\_? Today, we will examine the treasures found in God's Word! You might think the Bible is old, or boring, or confusing, or even irrelevant; but have you taken the time to \_\_\_\_\_ it for yourself? The Bible actually contains some treasures that you \_\_\_\_\_. It may be old, but it's stood the \_\_\_\_\_ of time. You might think it boring, but a closer reading and a knowledge of its background will \_\_\_\_\_ you how exciting and interesting it can be. You might think it confusing. Of all the books you'll ever read, \_\_\_\_\_ are as relevant as God's Word. Your circumstances of life are not so unique that the Scriptures cannot guide you and help you through your \_\_\_\_\_.

Some people look at the Bible and look at preaching negatively. They regard the Bible and preaching as something that makes them feel \_\_\_\_\_ about themselves. Some act as if preaching were something dreadful and punishing. But the message preached is actually your greatest treasure and \_\_\_\_\_. Nothing will bless your life more than the knowledge of the gospel found in your Bible. The Bible is your treasure!

Paul said, "Now I make known to you, brethren, the \_\_\_\_\_ which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:1-2). The message preached and welcomed was the \_\_\_\_\_ of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is good news, because it gives us the information that we need to have the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

**Our reading today comes from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1, verses 21 to 25.** God is wise and strong. We need to \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.

Whether we realize it or not, \_\_\_\_\_ makes people feel badly about themselves. Nothing will make you feel small and worthless in your own \_\_\_\_\_ more than sinful behavior. God made us with a conscience, that moral \_\_\_\_\_ inside of us, that constantly evaluates what we do. Even people who know little of Scripture have a \_\_\_\_\_ sense of right and wrong. **Read how Paul described people who didn't know much about God in Romans 2:14-16.**

Our conscience works every \_\_\_\_\_ telling us about what we did or we didn't do. It accuses and rebukes us when we do something \_\_\_\_\_ and excuses us when we do something \_\_\_\_\_. The conscience makes us like the judge, the defendant, and the witness all in one. The witness always knows the \_\_\_\_\_ about what we did or didn't do. When it condemns us, we know that we're \_\_\_\_\_. We can \_\_\_\_\_ the truth from other people,

but our conscience knows what we did. That guilt causes us to be \_\_\_\_\_ of ourselves. Our behavior determines our guilt, but shame comes from our disappointment with ourselves. A person who's never forgiven himself feels shame in his \_\_\_\_\_ every day.

We must all live with the nagging \_\_\_\_\_ of our sins, and the Scriptures teach us what is right and wrong. We may reject the Scriptures, ignore the Scriptures, or deny what the Scriptures teach; but that doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ what they say or relieve our consciences. Inside, we know the truth about ourselves. Nothing will make you feel small and worthless in your own eyes more than \_\_\_\_\_ behavior. Nothing will make you feel \_\_\_\_\_ about yourself than doing the right thing!

David committed adultery with Bathsheba and arranged for the death of her husband, Uriah. **Read how he cried out to God in Psalm 51:1-3, and how he accepted responsibility for his sins and asked God's forgiveness in Psalm 51:7-12.** David understood that he would never feel \_\_\_\_\_ about himself until he restored a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with God. Neither will we!

Unlike David, some people seek to find every way possible to \_\_\_\_\_ their sins rather than face them and deal with them. Some run off to a far \_\_\_\_\_ like the prodigal son. Some hide in the \_\_\_\_\_ like Adam and Eve. Some \_\_\_\_\_ others for their faults. Some blame culture, or their parents, or the media, or the internet, or a teacher, or their DNA, or some other thing for their own \_\_\_\_\_ in life. Many think that if they \_\_\_\_\_ God and the Scriptures that they all of a sudden are free thinkers, but they're only fooling themselves. When someone rejects God and rejects His morality because he wants to continue his sinful behavior, what he does is he \_\_\_\_\_ himself to sin. The answer to the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin is not more sin. You can't drink or drug your way out of a guilty conscience. You can't destroy God's Word or vote God out of \_\_\_\_\_ the universe. You can't change God's \_\_\_\_\_ in the Word. Remember, God has the last say at judgment. Psalm 119:160 says, "The sum of your word," speaking of God's Word, "is truth, and every one of God's righteous rules endures \_\_\_\_\_."

The book of Hebrews \_\_\_\_\_ people not to drift away from God or the Scriptures. **Read Hebrews 2:1-3.** God didn't give you the Scriptures to suppress you, or manipulate you, or discourage you, or to enslave you. God gave you the Scriptures to \_\_\_\_\_ you from injuring yourself with sin and \_\_\_\_\_ you a better way of life. God wants the best for you! He's your friend, so listen to Him please!

Many Christians have wandered away from the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and have ended up with hardened hearts. Hebrews 3:12-13 warns, "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to \_\_\_\_\_ away from the living God. But \_\_\_\_\_ one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." Don't let your sins deceive you into thinking that you don't \_\_\_\_\_ God. When you reject God, you \_\_\_\_\_ everything that you hold dear.

We need God's love, God's grace, and God's wisdom to \_\_\_\_\_ abundant and prosperous lives. The Bible itself is a treasure \_\_\_\_\_ beyond anything this world can provide. It contains for us great wisdom. **Read Proverbs 3:13-18.** David calls the Scriptures "sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb" (Psalm 19:10).

God's way is the way of hope, of forgiveness, and of \_\_\_\_\_ over. You might look at yourself and because of your \_\_\_\_\_ despise what you see, but there's hope for you. There's a way to \_\_\_\_\_ the past and start fresh. You can be born again! Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." Rather than looking at Christ and the Scriptures as putting you down, see them as the way to a better life, \_\_\_\_\_ from guilt and shame.

You can \_\_\_\_\_ your life and your relationship with God. You don't have to be stuck in sin, stuck in guilt, or stuck in being ashamed of yourself. God can help you \_\_\_\_\_ above your past to something far better and nobler. You can start looking at yourself not as a sinner but as a \_\_\_\_\_ of God. Please don't fall for the devil's \_\_\_\_\_ that you cannot change your life. Don't fall for the lie that God will accept you whether you \_\_\_\_\_ or not. He won't! God expects us to \_\_\_\_\_ our sins and to live in righteousness. Galatians 6:7-8 says, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

Many fail to realize that they have sinned or what the consequences of their sins \_\_\_\_\_. A large number of Americans fail to \_\_\_\_\_ their Bible and they fail to go to \_\_\_\_\_. Recently I learned of a couple who was simply living together without \_\_\_\_\_. They didn't realize that what they were doing was \_\_\_\_\_. I also recently learned of a person who supported herself by prostitution, and she didn't know what she was doing was wrong; no one had ever \_\_\_\_\_ her better. Nearly 40 percent of Americans have grown up without any spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ at all. My friend, when you break one of God's laws, you not only sin against God, you endanger your own \_\_\_\_\_. You sin against yourself.

Isaiah 59:2 says, "your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have \_\_\_\_\_ His face from you so that He does not hear." Sin breaks your relationship with God and leaves you without \_\_\_\_\_. Paul described what sin does.

**Read Ephesians 2:1-3.** What a terrible condition!

The Lord Jesus came to deliver us from the \_\_\_\_\_ in our world and to transform our lives into godly people. Titus 2:11-14 says, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing \_\_\_\_\_ for all people," that includes you and me, "training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed \_\_\_\_\_, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good \_\_\_\_\_."



We can be born again; we can leave the \_\_\_\_\_ man of sin behind and we can start a \_\_\_\_\_ life. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17). You can have a new life if you are willing to believe in Jesus Christ, turn from sin, and \_\_\_\_\_ the truth in baptism. Romans 6:4 says, “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” The apostle Peter wrote, “Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Peter 1:22-23). When we obey the Word of God, the Bible, God purifies our souls and causes us to be born again through an imperishable seed. We must listen to the Word of God and obey it.

Wouldn't you like to have \_\_\_\_\_, to start each day knowing that you have a right relationship with the Lord Jesus? God is not \_\_\_\_\_ you. He wants you to \_\_\_\_\_ by being born again to a newness of life, a life better than you've ever known. God wants to \_\_\_\_\_ you; He wants to \_\_\_\_\_ you from sin and give you eternal life, hope, peace of mind, and joy. If you ignore or reject Him, just think about what you're \_\_\_\_\_. You only have one life. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ your opportunity to be right with God.

Our time on earth is brief, so don't waste your life. Don't imagine that you'll get right with God one day. Remember the \_\_\_\_\_ virgins who failed to have oil for their lamps in Matthew 25. When the bridegroom arrived with the wedding party, they had gone in to town to buy oil and they \_\_\_\_\_ the homecoming. So he closed the door and rejected them. The foolish virgins had good intentions, but didn't \_\_\_\_\_ for His coming. To suggest that the Lord will forgive us anyway, even if we're not prepared, is also foolish.

The Scriptures show people were so excited and ready to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord in repentance and baptism that they didn't \_\_\_\_\_ their obedience in the least. Three thousand gladly received Peter's message; they repented, and were baptized on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:38-41. They didn't wait! Acts 8:12 says, “But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.” They didn't wait! When the Eunuch saw water in Acts 8, he asked what \_\_\_\_\_ him from being baptized. He didn't wait! Paul baptized the Philippian jailer at \_\_\_\_\_! He and his family didn't wait! Ananias urged Saul of Tarsus in Acts 22:16 not to delay but to rise and be baptized and wash away his sins.

Why did they all do this? They didn't want to spend even \_\_\_\_\_ day without the grace of God. They acted with \_\_\_\_\_, because getting right with God is an urgent matter! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and confess Him as the Son of God; repent of your sins and decide you're going to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus; and be baptized into Christ, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of your sins. When you do God's will, God will cleanse you with the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus and add you to His family. You won't regret doing the right thing!

June 18, 2017

## Passing on the Faith Deuteronomy 6:4-9

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

Every Christian wants to go to heaven, and they want their \_\_\_\_\_ to go to heaven as well. Today, we're looking at the \_\_\_\_\_ to pass on the faith. Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will \_\_\_\_\_ My commandments" (John 14:15). We carefully examine the Scriptures to know what the Lord commands. Loving Him means listening to Him and \_\_\_\_\_ Him every day.

God blessed our home with \_\_\_\_\_ precious children. Jackie and I never considered our children as burdens, but as \_\_\_\_\_. We were happy to pass on our faith in Jesus Christ to our children. We prayed that they would \_\_\_\_\_ and pass on the faith to their children. When children are small, they \_\_\_\_\_ their parents' faith and commitment. When parents are committed to God, their children are more \_\_\_\_\_ to be committed. Little children may not understand all the \_\_\_\_\_ why they should believe, but they know by their parents' behavior whether God matters.

As children reach elementary school, they want to be \_\_\_\_\_ their parents and identify with their parents' faith. In middle school, they begin questioning things and \_\_\_\_\_ for reasons to believe. They realize that some don't \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ or take the Bible seriously. They see Christians who profess faith but fail to \_\_\_\_\_ it. This causes questions, so parents must \_\_\_\_\_ their children find answers to their questions.

First Peter 3:15 says, "but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being \_\_\_\_\_ to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the \_\_\_\_\_ that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." Children usually ask their parents first for \_\_\_\_\_ about their faith. What are you doing to pass on the faith to your children?

**Our reading today comes from the book of Deuteronomy 6:4-9.** That was the teaching of Moses to the people of Israel and it's good \_\_\_\_\_ for us.

The book of Deuteronomy contains three lengthy speeches that Moses gave to Israel shortly before his death. These lessons \_\_\_\_\_ his desire for Israel to remain faithful to God and serve Him with all their heart and soul. Every godly \_\_\_\_\_ and every godly \_\_\_\_\_ wants those who follow Him to continue in the faith. **Read what Moses said in Deuteronomy 6:1-3.**

Moses died soon after these speeches, and God chose Joshua to \_\_\_\_\_ Israel into the Promised Land. God promised Joshua, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be \_\_\_\_\_ to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success

wherever you go. This book of the law shall not \_\_\_\_\_ from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is \_\_\_\_\_ in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have \_\_\_\_\_” (Joshua 1:6-8).

The people remained \_\_\_\_\_ to God during the life of Joshua. Judges 2:7 says, “The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel.” For a while things went well; but Judges 2:10-12 says, “there arose another generation after them who did not \_\_\_\_\_ the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Then the sons of Israel did \_\_\_\_\_ in the sight of the LORD and they served the Baals, and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the LORD to \_\_\_\_\_.”

One generation may be faithful, while another generation falls away and does \_\_\_\_\_. Through the history of Israel, one can see how the nation went back and forth in their \_\_\_\_\_ to God. We must devote ourselves to the Lord and to the spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ of our children, so they will not forsake the Lord and follow the people around them.

God gave parents the \_\_\_\_\_ responsibility of spiritually training their children and teaching them the will of God. God said of Abraham, “For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him” (Genesis 18:19). The apostle Paul said to Christians, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to \_\_\_\_\_, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

There are several reasons to \_\_\_\_\_ Christian values and standards in our children. First, we must help our children \_\_\_\_\_ God and His Word, and that they are the ultimate authority. The Word of God must be impressed upon our hearts if we are to impress them upon our children’s hearts. The Word of God applies to \_\_\_\_\_ situation in life. No one is better suited to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ God’s teaching to every area of life than a parent. Parents cannot \_\_\_\_\_ their children where they are not going. That’s the \_\_\_\_\_ why we must teach them the Word of God. Romans 10:17 simply says, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

The command in Deuteronomy 6:8 to bind God’s Word “as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead” emphasized the \_\_\_\_\_ remembrance and attention. They should keep the Law before their eyes constantly, so that wherever they looked and whatever they did, they would \_\_\_\_\_ God’s teaching. In our complex and confused world, our children need the constant \_\_\_\_\_ and values of God’s Holy Word. Psalm 119:105 says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.” We must establish

Biblical guidelines, so that our children will \_\_\_\_\_ right from wrong. We must also \_\_\_\_\_ them discretion between what is wise and what is foolish.

Second, we must give our children the family \_\_\_\_\_ that they will need as parents. We rear our children to be Christians and to be \_\_\_\_\_ for their children. They need to know how to be good \_\_\_\_\_ and good parents. They will \_\_\_\_\_ it from Scripture and from our example. Times change, but knowing how to listen, to love, to forgive, and to be a Christian never changes. Your children will likely parent your grandchildren the \_\_\_\_\_ that you parented them. Solomon said, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck" (Proverbs 1:8-9).

Third, we must open the \_\_\_\_\_ to a personal relationship with God. Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not \_\_\_\_\_ from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Children whose parents are faithful servants of the Lord are more \_\_\_\_\_ to be faithful servants of the Lord themselves. Children whose parents remain close to God usually remain close to God themselves. The goal of spiritual training is to \_\_\_\_\_ mature, loving Christians. This is a lifelong \_\_\_\_\_ and doesn't end just when the child is baptized. Baptism is not the \_\_\_\_\_ but the beginning of the Christian life. We must teach our children to \_\_\_\_\_ faithful as long as they live.

Paul saw in the young man Timothy a \_\_\_\_\_ faith. This didn't happen by accident! Paul wrote, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt \_\_\_\_\_ in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well" (2 Timothy 1:5). Timothy was faithful because his mother and his grandmother taught him the Scriptures! Paul urged the young man, "But as for you, continue in what you have \_\_\_\_\_ and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you \_\_\_\_\_ for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and \_\_\_\_\_ for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

Our children need what the Scripture gives. They need teaching so they will know what is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. They need \_\_\_\_\_ to avoid and forsake the dangers of sin. They need correction so they can \_\_\_\_\_ the burdens and the guilt of sin. They need training in righteousness so they can be equipped for every good \_\_\_\_\_. God wants not only to save us but also to transform our lives so that we will be a \_\_\_\_\_ to everyone that we touch.

Solomon said, "My son, do not \_\_\_\_\_ my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So that you will find favor and good success in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and

man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not \_\_\_\_\_ on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones” (Proverbs 3:1-8).

Last, we must give our children the practical \_\_\_\_\_ to life. Solomon taught his sons what he learned from his own father, David. The book of Proverbs provides God’s \_\_\_\_\_ for parents in so many areas of life. Solomon is addressing his sons with needed \_\_\_\_\_ in life. Good parents get \_\_\_\_\_ with their children’s education in every area of life. They expect their children to \_\_\_\_\_ and to learn. If school, and sports, and driving a car are important to life, then one cannot take a \_\_\_\_\_ approach to the spiritual instruction that will take them into eternity. Your children will \_\_\_\_\_ God’s way is best, and the value of persistence in the faith, and patience by watching and listening to you.

Solomon said, “My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your \_\_\_\_\_ attentive to wisdom and inclining your \_\_\_\_\_ to understanding; if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives \_\_\_\_\_; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of His saints. Then you will \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul” (Proverbs 2:1-9).

As you read the book of Proverbs, you can hear a father pleading with his son to \_\_\_\_\_ to wisdom and to \_\_\_\_\_ the ways of sin. When children fail to \_\_\_\_\_ to the wisdom of godly parents who know and love the Lord, and know the Bible, they can wind up in a great deal of \_\_\_\_\_. Remember the prodigal son. But when children learn wisdom and insight, their lives can \_\_\_\_\_.

**Read what Solomon said in Proverbs 4:1-13.**

**Read Psalm 78:1-8.**

There is no greater \_\_\_\_\_ in our world today than for Christian parents, especially fathers, to bring their children up in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord. Bible schools and youth ministers have great value, but God gave \_\_\_\_\_ the responsibility of spiritually training their children.

God’s grace and love are abundant, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of serving the Lord are without end. That means we must get right and remain right with the Lord, if we wish to live with Him throughout \_\_\_\_\_. To get right with God, place your trust in the Lord Jesus, repent and turn from sin and come to the Lord’s way, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins—just as Acts 2:38 teaches. Won’t you do that today?

## Does Jesus Care?

### Mark 4:35-39

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

Life can suddenly become harsh, causing us to \_\_\_\_\_ whether the Lord cares about us. When I'm hurting, does Jesus care about me? We know that the Bible will give us the truth, so we keep on looking to it for the \_\_\_\_\_. Our goal is to \_\_\_\_\_ God because we love Him and we want to be close to Him. Longing to be close to God is \_\_\_\_\_, especially when you're hurting. The sons of Korah described the heartache of longing for God – **Read Psalm 42:1-3**.

When tough times come, many feel that God is \_\_\_\_\_. They wonder if the Lord is watching or if He cares. They long for God's help and \_\_\_\_\_. Does Jesus care when our hearts are broken with grief, when the bills pile up, when the children are hungry, or when we can't seem to get well? Does God know what you're going through and hear your \_\_\_\_\_?

Nothing escapes the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. Luke 12:6 says that not even a \_\_\_\_\_ can fall to the ground apart from God's knowledge. God not only sees what happens outwardly, He can also see the troubles \_\_\_\_\_ your heart. He knows all about you, because He created you. He knows your every need and knows your every heartache. There's never been a single moment in your life when God has closed His heart and not wanted to be close to you and \_\_\_\_\_ you.

### **Our reading today gives us details about an event in the life of Jesus, in Mark 4:35-39.**

Frightening, life-threatening \_\_\_\_\_ happened suddenly on the sea of Galilee. In this storm Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_, with "his head on a cushion." The disciples cry out "Master, don't you \_\_\_\_\_ that we are perishing?" We all ask questions like this, and we need an answer. We see the world's agonies and \_\_\_\_\_ if God is paying attention. We need help from Someone bigger than we are and we need His help \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus didn't answer their question immediately. Instead, He rebuked the storm and made the water \_\_\_\_\_. Then Jesus asked the disciples, "How is it that you have no \_\_\_\_\_?" In so many cases in life, the question is not whether God cares, but whether we \_\_\_\_\_.

Of course, Jesus cares. Mark five, in the first 20 verses, describes how the Lord Jesus delivered Legion, a demon-possessed man who lived like a \_\_\_\_\_. Later in the chapter, verses 25 to 34, Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years; and then later on, verses 35 to 43, He \_\_\_\_\_ the daughter of Jairus.

Someone objects, "But why doesn't God \_\_\_\_\_ every problem? Why is it the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ asleep and uncaring?" Here is the assumption: if God doesn't stop \_\_\_\_\_ our problems, He doesn't really care about us. We want God to keep us \_\_\_\_\_ from any struggles or difficulties. It's tempting to question God's love when we \_\_\_\_\_ challenges or disappointments. We think if God loves us, He will protect us from any and \_\_\_\_\_ problem. But, is a painless world free from any problems, really the \_\_\_\_\_ for us? It may be convenient and comfortable, but is it best for our character? Doesn't the person who faces no problems and gets everything his

own way think that the whole world revolves around him?

Challenges shape us into people of \_\_\_\_\_. James 1:2-4 says, “Consider it all \_\_\_\_\_, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect \_\_\_\_\_, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” We may see trials and struggles the \_\_\_\_\_ way. God permits them because He sees a greater \_\_\_\_\_ with them than without them. Struggles help us become the \_\_\_\_\_ people that God desires. So, let’s rejoice in our trials, because God uses them to \_\_\_\_\_ us into His people.

James 1:12 says, “Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” It doesn’t say, “Blessed is the man who has no troubles,” but “blessed is the man who perseveres under trial.” He’s the man who won’t quit on God on a rough day. Because he loves God, even in tough times, God will reward him with the crown of life.

The Lord demonstrates that He cares. You might ask the question, “How?” First, He shows that He \_\_\_\_\_ suffering in that He himself suffered for our sins. He Himself \_\_\_\_\_ the punishment that rightfully was our own. First Peter 2:24 says, “He Himself bore our sins in His \_\_\_\_\_.” It was personal, and He did it on the cross, “so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” God loved His Son Jesus, but He didn’t \_\_\_\_\_ the crucifixion. Jesus prayed with \_\_\_\_\_ in the Garden to let this cup pass, but God sacrificed His Son because He loved you and me, just as He loved His Son. Atoning for sin was more \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus Himself than freedom from suffering. Have you considered how greatly our Father suffered in sacrificing His Son? No one has grieved over human \_\_\_\_\_ more than God Himself has. No one has suffered more than Jesus, who bore the cross for our sins. He showed unmistakably how much He loved us. This loving God asks us to \_\_\_\_\_ Him when we and our loved ones cry out for help.

**Read 1 Peter 2:21-23.** This is what the disciples in the boat needed and what we need: trust God! First Peter 5:7 urges us to cast “all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

**Read the question the apostle Paul asked and the answer he gave in Romans 8:35-39.**

God didn’t stop the apostles from being \_\_\_\_\_; He didn’t stop Stephen from being \_\_\_\_\_; and He didn’t stop James from being beheaded by the sword. God didn’t keep Paul from imprisonment. They knew God would \_\_\_\_\_ by them. Suffering may \_\_\_\_\_ us to quit on God. Remember, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not \_\_\_\_\_ to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted or tested beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

These temptations or tests don’t single us out, but they are common. We all suffer, and that suffering can challenge our \_\_\_\_\_. God isn’t \_\_\_\_\_ when the trials come. He is faithful! You can trust Him! Nothing that you encounter today, nothing tomorrow, or nothing at any time will ever be \_\_\_\_\_ than what God and you together can handle. He doesn’t remove all of our problems, but God does give us the strength and the ability to \_\_\_\_\_ those challenges and

those temptations and those tests. When the problem gets so big that we can't handle it, God makes a way of escape so that we'll never be overcome by it.

God sometimes uses the physical struggles that we face to keep us from doing ourselves \_\_\_\_\_ harm. God gave the apostle Paul some tremendous, miraculous revelations to help him in his ministry. But, God didn't want Paul to \_\_\_\_\_ himself, so He gave him "a thorn in the flesh" to torment him and keep him from exalting himself (2 Corinthians 12:7). Paul prayed three times for the Lord to take away his "thorn in the flesh"; but God refused and said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for \_\_\_\_\_ is perfected in weakness."

Paul realized that this thorn was not going away. Was he bitter? No! He learned something valuable: God's power is perfected, made stronger, in weakness. Paul said, "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather \_\_\_\_\_ about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Struggles remind us that we \_\_\_\_\_ God. Many folks think that they can manage without God; but in our darkest moments, we see how much we really need God.

God's grace is indeed sufficient. Yes, it is! Suffering may torment your body, but it can't take away your \_\_\_\_\_. Suffering may open up for you an opportunity to see the great power of God, to help you \_\_\_\_\_ yourself even in times of weakness. Jesus does indeed care. Just as Jesus wept with Mary and Martha at the \_\_\_\_\_ of Lazarus, so He weeps with us. The Lord knows when we \_\_\_\_\_, and He provides comfort and strength that we need, to overcome.

Sometimes people continue to ask, "Why the Lord doesn't stop all evil right now?" But if the Lord stopped all evil, wouldn't that also include the evil that you do? You know if we ask God to stop all evil, we need to consider the wrongs that we do. Your sin hurts; it hurts God; it hurts you; and it hurts others. The Lord patiently loves you enough to lead you to a better way. He asks you to \_\_\_\_\_ your life by repenting.

Repentance is not punishment, but \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord knows that there is a \_\_\_\_\_ person inside of you, wanting to come out. He knows that your repentance will not only bless your life, but bless all the people that you \_\_\_\_\_. When you come to Christ and stop the old way of sin, you bless people that you formerly \_\_\_\_\_. He graciously gives us time to repent. "The Lord is not \_\_\_\_\_ about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for \_\_\_\_\_ to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Jesus loved you and gave you the righteous \_\_\_\_\_ to follow. He showed us how to \_\_\_\_\_ and how to be forgiven. He gave us his Word to \_\_\_\_\_ our lives. He could say, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you \_\_\_\_\_. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Times of crisis call for the \_\_\_\_\_ in people. Bravery, heroism, love, self-sacrifice—all of these things flourish in times of \_\_\_\_\_. People who exhibit such traits are cherished and honored as having gone "above and beyond the call of \_\_\_\_\_." Was this not the very point that



Christ was making when He said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his \_\_\_\_\_” (John 15:13).

The most important question is not, “why did this happen to me?” but rather, “what shall I do now?” Some reject God and abandon Him when \_\_\_\_\_ comes their way. Some turn \_\_\_\_\_ in self-pity. Others exercise their \_\_\_\_\_ and find that God has not forgotten them. They entrust their souls to Him and find His \_\_\_\_\_ is true, which says “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

Not everything that happens to us is \_\_\_\_\_; but let’s not assume that the only way that God can care for us is to \_\_\_\_\_ our troubles. God also shows His care by taking the harshest things in our lives and using them for \_\_\_\_\_, not only to bless us, but also to bless others. God has the power to prevent; and we have no idea all the \_\_\_\_\_ from which He has protected us already. But, God also has the power to take the things that are at their \_\_\_\_\_ and make good out of them. He can also do that for you.

Instead of blaming God for \_\_\_\_\_, look to Him for \_\_\_\_\_. Struggles remind us that God never intended this world to be our \_\_\_\_\_. We are \_\_\_\_\_, and our lives here are brief. Paul said, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the \_\_\_\_\_ that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18). We too must learn to see with the \_\_\_\_\_ of faith and trust. The last chapter of our lives has not yet been written. When Jesus comes again, He will bless and comfort His own.

Jesus cares about you. He wants to be your \_\_\_\_\_. He cares about your physical welfare, your finances, your family, and your future. More than anything, Jesus cares about your \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord Jesus knows all about you, the good and the bad. He even knows the number of hairs upon your head. In spite of it all, He loves you and He cares greatly about every detail of your life.

Sometimes we concentrate so much on our longing for God to \_\_\_\_\_ that we forget God is longing for a relationship with us. The Lord deeply \_\_\_\_\_ that we draw close to Him. When we forget Him or get caught up in \_\_\_\_\_, He yearns for His people to come back. The Lord Jesus died on the cross for \_\_\_\_\_ people, yearning to have a relationship with them.

Do you have a close, loving relationship with God? Does the Lord see you as someone who is \_\_\_\_\_ to Him? In your quiet moments as you look into your \_\_\_\_\_, do you see yourself as a friend to God? If you have not given yourself to the Lord; today, is the right day to come to Him. Come to the Lord in \_\_\_\_\_, trusting in Him and His Word. Confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. In repentance, make Jesus your Lord; let Him \_\_\_\_\_ your life.

Having done these things, be \_\_\_\_\_ in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. In baptism, the Lord will cleanse you from sin (Acts 22:16); He’ll cause you to be born again (John 3:5); He’ll give you newness of life (Romans 6:4). In baptism, the Lord will also add you to His \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:47). When you become a Christian, you’ll find the strength and grace to \_\_\_\_\_ with all of life’s struggles. God cares enough to give us the strength to bear what He does not take away. Trust Him! Trust Him!