What Dead Men Know

If the ________ could open and the dead could speak, we’d learn several important spiritual truths! Today, we’re exploring what the dead men know and we need to ______! God’s word opens the _____ to the most important treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The apostle Paul spoke of Jesus Christ and said, “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). We need that wisdom to know how to think and how to _______. We need that wisdom, because it’s the key to _________ life.

If you and I, as living people, could know what the dead men know, we’d see things from a new and a __________ perspective. As it is, we’re ________ in what we know and often distracted by the things of this world. When we get too focused on this present world, we may ________ the most important lessons that affect this life and the life to come. Paul prayed for the Colossians, asking “that you may be ________ with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you’ll walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to ________ Him in all respects” (Colossians 1:9-10). Have you considered what is necessary to please the Lord Jesus?

There are ______ ways people know things. First, people learn intellectually through listening, observing, and study. Second, people learn through ___________. Hebrews 5:8 says that Jesus “learned ________ from the things which He suffered.” The experience of His suffering on the cross ________ Him what obedience truly means. I’ve wondered, “How could one ________ Jesus anything, since He’s God’s Son?” But Jesus experienced in death something He had never experienced before; He experienced the ________ of crucifixion and death. It’s one thing to ______ about obedience; it’s another to give your life in obedience. That’s what Jesus did to save us from ______

Our reading today comes from Psalm 103:8-12.

Dead people know things about God and the afterlife from experience. We, today, know things by __________, since the Scriptures teach them to us; but the dead are now experiencing them. They know these things are _______ and they beg you to pay attention. Some people think that when we die, we’ll simply go to sleep and not ever know anything.

I hear people quote Ecclesiastes 9:5, which says “For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know __________, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten.” They would do well to quote this passage in ________, paying attention to verse 6, which says, “Indeed their love, their hate and their zeal have already perished, and they will no longer have a ________ in all that is done under the sun.” The phrase “under the sun” refers to the dead body not to what our spirits will experience in the afterlife.

Recently a man called me and said that Psalm 146 says our ________ to be conscious ends at death. Psalm 146:4 says, “His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his thoughts ________.” Sadly, he missed the context of this passage: Psalm 146:3-4 says, “Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his ________ perish.” The point here is not to ________ what men teach. Unlike God, the teachings

Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.
of men perish, but God’s teaching continues forever. So, don’t believe those who tell you, “When you die, you cease to know anything.” They’re leading you astray.

Here are some of the things the dead people know and wished live men took seriously. First, the dead will have consciousness in the afterlife. In Luke 16:19-31, the Lord Jesus ________ what happened to the rich man and to Lazarus after this life is over. Lazarus was in a place of ________ and knew it; the rich man was in a place of ________ and knew it. They both could see, could speak, could hear, and could feel what was happening to them. In Matthew 17:1-5 Moses and Elijah, though they had been dead several hundred years, were having a conversation with Jesus. In Revelation 6, the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God ________ ________ to God the Father wondering about avenging those who had killed them, and God gave them an answer. They were conscious of their past and their present. Many today mock the idea of God, but no one will mock that idea in the afterlife.

Second, they know the God of the Bible, the God of heaven, is ________. Some proudly proclaim they’re atheists or agnostics who don’t know whether there is a God, but there will be no ________ about God when this life is over. Ecclesiastes 12:7 describes death this way, “then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.” When we die, our bodies will return to the dust; but our spirits will go back to God who gave us that spirit. We’ll know what is happening around us. When Jesus died, that very day He went to ________ (Luke 23:43) and He committed into the Father’s hands His spirit (Luke 23:46). If we’re faithful to God we’ll experience the same _________. While we live in the flesh, we can’t ________ God; but when our bodies die, our spirits will go to Him. We’ll know He is real!

Third, dead people know every word in the ________, every word in this book is true. They know the prophecies are true, the promises are true, and the warnings are true as well. They realize that everyone who is “of the truth” listens to the ________ of Jesus Christ (John 18:37). They also realize many people have believed a ________ and had false hope. Many people fall for the deception of wickedness and perish, “because they didn’t receive the love of the ________ so as to be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:10). They will know that people who do not ________ the truth will not find salvation. They will also know that those who obey the truth and remain faithful will enjoy all the promises of God.

You may think, “It doesn’t matter what we believe”; but God’s Word in Scripture determines the spiritual truth that saves ________. Don’t imagine that God is going to set aside His Word just to ________ you. You must ________ His Word and ________ Him. Remember the words of Jesus when He answered Satan, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every ________ that proceeds out of the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4). Whether something is biblical or not matters to your ________ life. God never said, He never says anywhere in scripture, or even suggests that “It doesn’t matter what you believe.” The devil is a ________ and the father of lies; and this notion, that it doesn’t matter is really from the devil not from God. The Bible declares there is but one ________ in Galatians 1:6-9 and one ________ in Ephesians 4:5. The Lord Jesus said that He was the ________ way to the Father, in John 14:6. Dead people will know the Lord means what He says, and we need to learn that in this life.

Fourth, the dead know that life can end _________. They know the words of James are true, “Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You’re just a ________ that appears for a little while and then ________ away” (James 4:14). David said, “As for man, his days are like grass; As the flower of the field, so he flourishes. When the wind has passed over it, it is no more, And its
place acknowledges it no longer” (Psalm 103:15-16). The Scriptures are clear: “it is appointed for men to _____ once and after this comes judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). Each one of us has an __________ coming with death and judgment.” Death and judgment are appointed and certain.

As a minister, for many years I’ve had the sad _____ to have to bury infants, small children, teenagers, and adults of all ages. Friends, we have no assurance that we’ll live _____ and do all that we wish to do in this life. God is in ________, and He may require our souls this very day. Please don’t fail to ______ your soul for eternity. Once this life is over, we don’t get a ________ chance to make things right with God. We must come to the Lord, and obey the gospel, and stay faithful.

This leads us to our fifth thing that dead people know: they know death is when our __________ is settled. In Luke 16:22 the poor man who was right with God “died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom, a place of comfort. The rich man in this story was not right with God; he also died and was buried.” Verses 23-24 say, “In Hades he lifted up his eyes being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and he said, ‘Father Abraham, have _______ on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in ________ in this flame.’” Abraham couldn’t send Lazarus, because there was a _________ chasm fixed between those who were righteous and those who were unrighteous, and no one can cross that chasm (Luke 16:25-26). The Lord Jesus reveals the unfaithful and unrighteous are __________ from God and from His blessing from the time that they die.

That ought to wake us up and cause us to __________. We must do what is right by loving God, keeping His commandments, and loving others! Romans 13:11-14 says, “Do this, knowing the time, that it’s already the hour for you to awaken from ________; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the _______ of darkness and put on the _______ of light. Let us behave properly as in the _____, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the _______ in regard to its lusts.”

We put on the Lord Jesus Christ first by believing in Him and by being __________. 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 (put on, or) clothed yourselves with Christ.” It’s not enough simply to become a child of God, we must _______ on putting on Christ throughout our lives here on earth. We do this by how we think, how we speak, how we treat others, and how we live. People who want to live with Christ in eternity put away _________ behaviors and live like Christ keeping the morals He taught. Don’t let wickedness _________ you. Being a Christian means _________ in the light as He is in the light. You can’t walk in spiritual darkness and then expect to have the __________ of God. Many people celebrate sin and laugh about it in this life, but no one will be laughing about sin in the life to come.

Sixth, dead people know there is a great __________ in God’s eyes between the faithful who are saved “in Christ” and the lost who are “outside” of Christ. Those who are _________ of Christ are “separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12). But those who are “in Christ” are “no longer strangers and aliens, but you’re fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household” (Ephesians 2:19). If you’re in Christ, you’re a fellow _________ with the saints; you’re God’s son, you’re God’s daughter. You matter to Him because you’re _________ to God. As God’s child, you have an inheritance with Him in heaven! Nothing you will ever do is as important as maintaining that faithful relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
Last, the dead know there is a __________ Day. Second Corinthians 5:10 says, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his _______ in the body, according to what he’s done, whether good or bad.” Some imagine, “God is too ______ to condemn anyone.” When they say that, you can be sure they’ve not _______ what God said in Scripture but have listened to other people. Second Peter 2:4-9 speaks of God condemning angels when they sinned, condemning the ancient world in the days of Noah, and condemning Sodom and Gomorrah for their immorality. He concludes in verse 9, “then the Lord knows how to ______ the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under ___________ for the day of judgment.”

You can’t refuse to repent and still escape God’s judgment! You’re only fooling yourself. God is holy and He is a just God; He will punish those who choose sin and ignore Him.

The Judgment Day doesn’t have to be a judgment against you. At the close of his life, Paul said, “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I’ve fought the good fight, I’ve finished the course, I’ve kept the faith; and in the future there is laid up for me the ______ of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to ______ who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

If the graves could open and the dead could speak, they would _______ to each of us clearly and emphatically, “Draw close to the Lord and obey Him. Don’t let anything come __________ God and you.” The wicked dead and former unbelievers wouldn’t want you to __________ their steps and end up where they are. The righteous dead would plead for you to put your trust in the Lord and _______ Him. They would passionately urge you to stay faithful to the Lord Jesus. They know how serious a matter salvation truly is. Are you getting this? Wouldn’t it be foolish to ignore this warning and find yourself lost like the rich man of Luke 16?

Our Father in heaven has no _________ to see you lost. First Timothy 2:3-4 says, “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be ______ and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Our Father in heaven hopes you will look at the cross and come to _______ the Lord with all your heart. No one loves you like the Lord loves you. No one wants your salvation more than the one who died on the cross for your sins.

You can find salvation from sin and judgment in the grace of our Lord Jesus who shed His blood for our sins. Trust in the Lord Jesus, turn from sinful thinking and behaviors to serve the Lord humbly and repent, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ by an immersion in water for the forgiveness of your sins. Study Acts 2, Acts 22, and Romans 6. The Scriptures will teach you the truth about baptism into Christ. And then get involved in the church and stay faithful.

Focus your heart on God, do it today by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. There’s probably a church of Christ in your area. If you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll be happy to help you find one.