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SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

*Program
Study Guides*

**For
June 2020**

Who Is Your Lord? Philippians 2:5-11

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

The most important _____ you'll ever answer is this, "Who is your Lord?" Today, we're going to explore what it means to _____ Jesus, "Lord." The New Testament is the _____ measure of Christianity. The true disciples of Jesus Christ _____ in His Words. They seek to _____ the Lord, not the world. They take their _____ seriously.

Read Matthew 16:13-17.

What you decide about Jesus is crucial to your _____ well-being. Ultimately, you have to _____ for yourself what you believe. You cannot _____ the Lord Jesus because one day you will come face to face with Him. Each one will face _____. Can you _____ Jesus and say what Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"? To say Jesus is the Christ is to recognize Him as the _____ Messiah, the One who fulfilled prophecy and set up His _____ in the first century that would last forever. To say Jesus is the Son of God is to recognize His Divine _____. Do you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Are you willing to make Him _____ of your life?

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, Philippians 2:5-11.

Read what the apostle Peter told the household of Cornelius in Acts 10:38-43.

God anointed _____ as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He will _____ us all on the last day. The Lord Jesus said, "He who _____ Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day" (John 12:48). We will not be judged by what people think, by what councils vote, or by opinion polls. We will be judged by the Words Jesus _____, Words that are found in the New Testament.

Since he is our _____ and our _____, we must recognize our accountability before Him. The apostle Paul told the Athenians, "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should _____, because He has fixed a day in which He will _____ the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished _____ to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). You can be sure that one day you will _____ before the Lord Jesus in judgment. God will hold you and me accountable for our _____.

We're accountable for our _____ toward other people. The Lord Jesus said, "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' But I say to you that everyone who is _____ with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' [that is, Raca, "empty-headed"] shall be guilty before the supreme court; and

whoever shall say, 'You fool,' [that is, you moron] shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell" (Matthew 5:21-22). God knows all that happens in our _____.

We're accountable even for our _____. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5:27-29, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell." When people _____ immoral thoughts, they sin against their spouses and they sin against God.

We're also accountable for our _____. The Lord Jesus said, "For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of *his* good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of *his* evil treasure what is evil. But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:34-37).

We are accountable for our _____. Second Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all _____ before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." God's Word further says, "He will render to each one according to his _____: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal _____; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does _____, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does _____, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality" (Romans 2:6-11).

More than that, we're accountable to Jesus whether we _____ it or not, whether we acknowledge it or not, or whether we _____ with it or not. Jesus, our Creator, who died to _____ us from sin, is also our Lord. Not only do we confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, we also confess Him as our Lord. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit proclaimed through Peter and the apostles to all the Jews that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified (Acts 2:36). God has made Jesus to be your Lord and mine.

The word "Lord" indicates _____ crucial concepts. First, to call Jesus "Lord" means He is divine, that is, He is deity; He is _____. The word "Lord" is often spelled with all capital letters in the Old Testament. "Lord" is the English word that is used to translate the Hebrew word "Yahweh." This is the word the Lord God used to identify Himself to _____ at the burning bush.

In Exodus chapter three, God called Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Moses was reluctant and he offered several _____ to God as to why he shouldn't lead them. At one point Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of

Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?’ God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am.’ And he said, ‘Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I am has sent me to you’’ (Exodus 3:13-14). The word in Hebrew “I am who I am” translates into Greek as “kurios” and into English as “LORD.”

When the Holy Spirit, through Peter, proclaimed Jesus as Lord on Pentecost, he was speaking _____ of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Philippians 2:6, which we read earlier, says Jesus also existed in the _____ of God. **Read Philippians 2:5-11 again.**

Jesus has always existed in the form of God, but He emptied himself and took the form of a _____, being fashioned as a man. In humility, He _____ His father by dying on a cruel cross. Because Jesus suffered and died for us, God exalted Him, gave Him a name above all names, and demands that at the name of Jesus, every knee will _____ and every tongue will confess Jesus Christ is Lord! This type of worship is not for men, but for deity, for God.

Second, to call Jesus “Lord” means you have decided that you will _____ Him. He is your _____, and you are his _____. The word “Lord” in the Bible often refers to the one who _____ slaves. When we became Christians, we became the _____ of Jesus Christ. A master owns his slaves and has the right to make decisions governing the _____ of his slaves, decisions the slaves cannot stop or change. You may not always understand His decisions, but you can always _____ that He will act for your best interests.

We are all _____ to someone or something. Romans 6:16 says, “Do you not know that if you _____ yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, *that* you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?” Some folks serve _____. They think sin will bring them happiness; and instead, it brings them a lot of misery; it fills their lives with all kinds of ruin and problems; and it makes them a _____. Sin fills them with _____ and it ruins their hearts and their lives. Hebrews 3:12-13 warns Christians, “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving _____, leading you to fall 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.”

What we choose in this life will affect our _____ destiny. Romans 8:12-13 says, “So then, brothers, we are _____, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will _____, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will _____.” Following sin and the flesh will lead only to many _____ in this life and separation from God in the life to come. Galatians 6:7-8 says, “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one _____, that will he also _____. 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.”

That is why repentance is so vital, so important! If we put to death the deeds of the body, we can live spiritually with God; but if we continue in sin, we can lose our _____. Isn't it

_____ to be the servant of One who loves and cares for us? Some enslave themselves to their lusts and pleasures, which only last for a time and later _____ them. Some become the servants of the _____, who uses them with cruel, false promises. The devil is never your friend; no matter what he may _____ you. If you choose to follow him, he will _____ you where you never want to go. When you take Jesus as Lord, you give yourself to the only One who will _____ love and take care of you. Jesus is he only one who can _____ you.

The question is not whether the Lord Jesus will be a good and kind master; oh, He will! The question is whether you will be a good and obedient _____. Obedience is not always natural to us; we have to _____ it. The Bible says of Jesus, "Although He was a Son, He _____ obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who _____ Him the source of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:8-9). If we are to _____ our Lord, we must learn to be obedient to His will. Obedience is how we _____ Him our faith and our love. Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, but you must _____ whether you will bow before Him now in this life or whether you will bow before Him when He comes again. But be sure of this, one day every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God our Father.

Someone has well said, "If Jesus isn't Lord in every aspect of our lives, He isn't our Lord at _____. If Jesus isn't Lord _____ day, He isn't Lord _____ day." Jesus doesn't want half-hearted followers, fair-weather friends, or convenient Christians. He expects us to _____ ourselves, to take up our crosses daily, and to _____ Him. He wants us to present our bodies a living and holy _____, acceptable to God. God wants us to live by _____ in the One who loves us and gave Himself for us. God wants you to _____ Him with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.

Sadly, many have become Christians in _____ only. They say they believe but you couldn't tell it from the words they use or the lives they lead. First John 2:3-6 says, "And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we _____ his commandments. Whoever says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the _____ way in which He walked." Are you walking like Christ or like someone who simply _____ to know Him?

We must _____ His Words, revealed in the New Testament. We must _____ Jesus Christ is the Lord, the Son of the living God. We trust what the Lord says, because we trust Him. In trust and love, we turn from rebellion and sin and turn to the Lord. So, whatever he asks, we're ready to do because we love Him—that's _____. Then upon the confession of our faith, we're _____. That is when He will wash away every sin. That is when He'll add us to His family, the _____. That is when He will save us and we'll become a child of God. Oh, won't you obey the Lord today?

July 9, 2017

A Servant Heart Philippians 2:5-11

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

I love the song that our young people sing, “Lord make me a _____, make me like You.” Today, we’re going to look at a servant’s _____. God’s ways are _____, and those who follow them find _____. But, some folks face a lot of _____ all of their lives, because they refuse to listen to the _____ of God.

If you could choose to be anything in life that you _____, you might choose many things: a doctor, a lawyer, a politician, an executive, or a leader. Would you choose to be a _____? Ah, the word “slave” conjures up for us many _____ ideas: chains and labor, pain, and misery. These are not desirable things. We despise the _____ of slavery and human trafficking. It’s demeaning and wicked. No one would _____ to be a slave like that.

As many as a _____ of the population in the city of Rome were slaves in the first century, and one in five throughout the Empire. We should know two important things about slaves in the ancient world. First, in the eyes of the law a slave was not a person, but a _____. A slave was totally dependent upon his _____. A master could do absolutely anything that he liked to the slave. A slave had no _____ at all. A master could beat him, sell him, throw him out, or even kill him. Second, slaves had no _____ that they could call their own; every moment belonged to the master.

But, there is a _____ of slave that is different! This slavery demands, but it also _____ beyond measure. Paul describes himself, “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God” (Romans 1:1). When you’re a bond-servant or slave of Jesus Christ, you _____ in the Lord. It’s only when you become enslaved to Him that you are truly _____!

Our reading today comes from the book of Philippians 2:5-11.

Our world seems to think that the _____ point in life is to be the boss, and to control what goes on around us. The rugged individualism of America calls out for self-fulfillment and _____ your own course. Many never realize that there may be Someone bigger than themselves; Someone that calls them to a life grander and nobler than living for your own _____. One in five Americans think that meaning and purpose comes from working hard to _____ as much as you possibly can and to make the most of life. Nevertheless, is this _____ there is to life?

The Lord Jesus provides a different perspective for us all; one that helps us to see what really _____ in life. In Mark 10:42-45 Jesus said to His disciples, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles _____ it over them, and their great ones exercise

authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your _____, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” In the Lord’s eyes, the greatest one must be the slave of all. He serves to please the Father and to please others. He sees something bigger than his own pleasures. We see the servant heart of Jesus when we see that He sacrificed Himself upon the _____. Because He knows what it is to serve, the Father highly _____ Him and gave Him a name that is above every name.

The apostle Paul grew up in a privileged Hebrew home and he was even schooled under the famous teacher Gamaliel, who was the highest _____ teacher in Jerusalem. Yet Paul said, “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might _____ more of them” (1 Corinthians 9:19). Winning souls was more _____ to Paul than freedom to do as he wished. He was _____ to sacrifice himself and serve others that he might win them to the Lord Jesus.

Paul willingly gave up his _____ among the Jews in order to _____ for Christ. **Read what Paul said in Philippians 3:4-11.** Some things are bigger, nobler, and worth more than what any of us put on our resumes. This is why Paul would give it all up, and why you should consider serving the Lord.

The Scriptures speak of slavery from the earliest times. The Old Testament Law actually _____ Hebrew slaves from being abused. In fact, some people even chose to _____ as permanent slaves. **Read what the Hebrew Law said in Exodus 21:2-6.** This man found life as a Hebrew slave in this household to be _____ than life in the outside world, and he wanted to remain!

Every Christian _____ to the Lord. When we become Christians, we confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as _____. Remember Philippians 2:10-11, “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the _____ of the Father.” To call Jesus “Lord” recognizes that He indeed existed in the form of God; but it also recognizes His authority over my life. He’s not just Lord; He is my Lord. “Or do you not know that your body is a _____ of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were _____ with a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). As Christians, we belong to the Lord Jesus body, soul, and spirit.

The Lord Jesus is our Master! He said, "No one can serve (be a slave to) _____ masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve (that is, be enslaved to) God and mammon (or money).” (Matthew 6:24). As Master of our lives, Jesus will not tolerate _____ master. If we belong to Him, Jesus must always be the undisputed master of our lives. We don’t ask, “What do _____ want?”; but rather we ask, “What does _____ wish me to do?” We serve at His pleasure in His _____. We are only _____.

A partial service to God or a faith that's "off and on" is not _____. The Lord said, "But seek _____ the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). We must live each day with God at the _____ of our hearts. Seeking His kingdom and seeking His righteousness means focusing our hearts on _____ Him as His people, doing His will.

The Lord Jesus Himself serves as the great _____ of a servant who seeks to please. The apostle Peter knew the _____ of servants in the first century. He taught them, "Servants, (you) be submissive to your masters with all _____, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly" (1 Peter 2:18-19). Then Peter points to Jesus, "For you have been called for this _____, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to _____ in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself _____ 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" (verses 21-24).

Jesus set the example of how to bear up under _____. He didn't strike back or berate the Jews who were berating Him. Instead He entrusted Himself to the Father who judges righteously; He left things in the Father's _____. He didn't focus on the _____ of the cross, but on the importance of doing what was right and the importance of what He was doing in saving mankind: the Bible says "by His wounds you were healed." He suffered so that you could _____ to sin and live to righteousness. Jesus chose to please the Father in bringing about the salvation of every one of us, if we follow Him, even if it meant going to the cross. Jesus knew His death would mean something to the Father. He said, "He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me _____, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him" (John 8:29).

Read the instructions that Paul gave to those who were slaves or bondservants in Colossians 3:22-25. People should do a day's work for a day's pay and be _____ to those that they serve. When you work heartily at the job, you're "serving the Lord Christ." By being faithful to the Lord in this life, even on the job, you can trust the Lord to _____ you in the life to come. Whether a master or a slave, the Lord will reward righteousness and He'll _____ evildoing.

As Christians, we must have a servant's heart. Paul urged the Christians, "And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to _____ for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner _____ of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:9-10). If you seek to please the Lord, you must know Him and you must know what He wills. Many people _____ God but they know little about Him. It does little good to own a Bible but never open it and read it and study it. Study

your Bible and then apply the words and the teaching there to your life.

Let's never _____ Jesus is our creator, our redeemer, our Savior, and our Lord. "He is the _____ of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the _____. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent" (Colossians 1:15-18). Jesus deserves first place in everything; we are _____ without Him.

The apostle Paul _____ his determination to keep his heart and his life right with God. He said, "Do you not know that in a _____ all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may _____ it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my _____ and I keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified" (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Paul went to great lengths not to lose out on his imperishable _____, and that's eternal life!

My friend, you too have the opportunity to _____ eternal life with God in heaven! Put on a servant's heart like Jesus, discipline yourself, and run in such a way as to _____! Don't let anything come between you and your Lord. Please Him in everything!

You choose each day whom you serve. You can serve anything that you want, if you don't _____ about consequences. You can serve yourself, your money, your lusts, our culture; but these things won't lead to _____. Only Jesus Christ can give you _____ life. Paul asked, "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, that you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Romans 6:16). Choosing to serve sin is a _____. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is _____." You will earn wages according to whom or what you choose to serve.

Paul said, "But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set _____ from sin, you've become slaves of righteousness" (Romans 6:17-18). They left their old ways of sin and obeyed the Lord from the heart, and God set them free from sin. God can also set you free from sin, if you too will obey from the heart the standard of teaching.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; believe in Him and in His _____. Repent of your sins; confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God; and be _____ into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. When you're baptized into Christ and His death, God _____ you clean from sin through the blood of Jesus. Peter clearly taught, "baptism now saves you—not the removal of _____ from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). In baptism, we appeal to God for a good conscience; and God saves us!

July 16, 2017

Because of Jesus Colossians 1:13-18

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

Where would we be? Where would we be _____ Jesus? Today, let's look at the important _____ that Jesus has in our lives! The Scriptures are how God _____ Himself to us today; and for this reason, we take time to examine them closely. We want to know everything that we can about the God who created us, sustains us, loves us, and desires to _____ us eternally. Our life, our identity, and our future are wholly _____ upon God. Every breath that we take, every drop of water you drink, and every bite of food that we eat comes from what He _____. Every _____ of life comes from God. Of course, we want to know all that we can about Him.

One can only imagine how _____ life would be without Jesus. Jesus is the Son of God, the Lord, the Messiah, the Christ, the light of the world, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Alpha and Omega, the Holy One, the Son of Man, the Word, the Savior, the Advocate, the Suffering Servant, the Lamb of God, the Great High Priest, the I AM, the Shepherd and Guardian of your Souls, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the pioneer and the perfecter of our faith, the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. No person who ever lived is like Jesus; no blood but His blood can _____ us from sin; no words but His Words will _____ us on the last day; no power but His power can _____ us up on the last day; and no way but His way can _____ us to the Father in heaven. You may meet some impressive people, but no one _____ to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is love; He is wisdom; He is kindness; and He is truth!

Our scripture reading today comes from Paul's Letter to the Colossians 1:13-18.

Does it _____ to you whether Jesus came into the world? Should it matter? My answer is yes; it must matter for many _____. First, because of Jesus, I know something about _____. **Read about the birth of Jesus in Matthew 1:18-23.**

Jesus is indeed "God with us." We can know what God is like by looking at Jesus, His Son. John 1:14-15 says about Jesus, "And the Word became _____, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." Someone once asked a preacher _____ John called Jesus Christ "the Word." It seemed a _____ description to him. The preacher answered, "Words are the means that permit us to communicate with others; John used it to show that Jesus Christ is the only _____ whereby God chose to communicate with man." Jesus Christ, then, is God's _____ or God's discourse to man. John wrote, "No one has ever _____ God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known." The New American Standard says,

“He has explained Him” (John 1:18). Jesus explains to us the character and the nature of God.

The Lord Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one _____ to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him” (John 14:6-7). Because God sent Jesus into this world, we can know the _____ to the Father; we have life in His name, and we can know the _____ about God. Jesus is how the Father _____ to us today. Hebrews 1:1-3 says, “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has _____ to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the power of His word.”

Second, because of Jesus, I know what _____ truly is all about. First John 4:7-10 says, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been _____ of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not _____ God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God _____ his only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” The Father’s willingness to _____ His Son, Jesus, and the Lord Jesus’ willingness to _____ the cross for our sins reveals the love of God in clear and touching ways. No one has ever loved you like Jesus loves you or died for your sins as Jesus did. No one else could!

The love of Jesus is far _____ than just being our atoning sacrifice. Jesus understands us and allows us to approach Him with confidence, even in times of _____. Hebrews 4:15-16 says, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been _____ as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the _____ of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Not only can we approach the Lord Jesus, our high priest, we can find grace to _____ you and me in dealing with our temptations. Jesus is doing everything He can to _____ us. He wants us in _____ with Him.

Jesus predicted that Peter would _____ Him three times before the rooster crowed, and Peter did indeed deny the Lord. But, I want you to see what the Lord said to Peter, even _____ that Peter would deny him. Luke 22:31-32 says, “Simon, Simon, (that’s, Peter) behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I (Jesus) have _____ for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” Have you considered that even when you _____, the Lord Jesus is praying for you? He loves you.

Third, because of Jesus, I can have my _____ erased. I can be clean and justified by the _____ of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist “saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who _____ the sin of the world!’” (John 1:29). Jesus sacrificed His body on the cross so that we might be _____ from our sins. The

passage we read, Colossians 1:13-14, says God “has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the _____ of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Jesus’ blood, not silver or gold and not some kind of precious metal, is what redeemed us from sin. Because Jesus suffered, and shed His blood, we don’t have to _____ the consequences of our sin.

The Lord Jesus gave you and me a second chance; He erased all the _____ of our past; and He allowed us to start over as a new person, born again. All this took place when we were _____ into Christ; when we were buried with Him, raised with Him, and received the _____ of life. What a blessing! When I was baptized into Christ, I _____ Christ according to Galatians 3:26-27. From that time forward the Lord regarded me as a _____ of God.

Jesus cares about everybody, even people that are _____ to love. He went to the house of the tax collector Zacchaeus, who may have been the most _____ man in Jericho. He talked to the woman at the well who had been married five times and was living with a man. He saved Saul of Tarsus, who was the _____ of sinners. He did this to show His perfect _____ to those who have sinned against Him. Saul of Tarsus _____ the apostle Paul. He said, “The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to _____ sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received _____ for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an _____ to those who were to believe in Him for eternal life” (1 Timothy 1:15-16). Jesus is the champion of grace and He’s also the champion of opportunities to _____.

Once we become Christians, the Lord Jesus doesn’t _____ us. He is with us every _____ of our Christian lives. First John 1:7 says, “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the _____ of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” The blood of Jesus is continually cleansing the Christian who _____ in the light. Nobody can be perfectly sinless, but walking in the light means that we _____ Jesus, and we’re forsaking our sins. First John 1:9 says, “If we _____ our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Jesus doesn’t save us and then _____ us. Hebrews 7:25 says, “Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who _____ to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” Jesus does indeed intercede for you and me as we draw near to God in _____ and in love.

Fourth, because of Jesus, we can _____ forever as an heir of God. Some people sadly imagine that there is nothing _____ this life on earth. Some even say that there is no resurrection. Paul told the elders of the church at Ephesus, “And now I commend you to God and to the _____ of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). Those who are cleansed by the blood of Christ do indeed have an inheritance in _____.

Read how Peter explains our inheritance in 1 Peter 1:3-5. According to God's great _____, our inheritance is kept in heaven for us, reserved for us. God is getting us ready for heaven and getting a _____ in heaven ready for us. We have a salvation ready to be _____ at the last time.

Paul speaks of this _____ from perishable to imperishable when Jesus returns to the earth at the second coming. **Read what he said in 1 Corinthians 15:50-54.** Christ will _____ His people from the dead, change their perishable bodies into imperishable ones, and take them home to heaven. Christ conquered _____, and we can also through His power. To live in heaven our bodies must be _____, and Christ prepares us for eternal life!

At the end of his life, Paul could say with confidence, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good _____, I have finished the _____, I have kept the _____. Henceforth 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 all who have loved his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6-8). Christ will not merely give us a home with Him, but will _____ to us a crown of righteousness and a crown of life. I look to the day God says, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; _____ into the joy of your master." My friend, what will He say to you? Will He say well done? When this life is over, the faithful will spend _____ with God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Heaven will be a _____ of joy and peace. Second Corinthians 5:1 says, "For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, _____ in the heavens." That speaks of the new, glorified _____ that we'll enjoy in a place that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. Because of Jesus, we can live forever in heaven. Philippians 3:20-21 says, "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will _____ our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself."

Sadly, some will _____ heaven because they reject or ignore the Lord Jesus. Because they didn't _____ Him or His Words, they won't enjoy His promises. When you ignore or reject the Lord, the Lord responds to your decision; and you will _____ eternal consequences. You cannot ignore or reject Him in this life and _____ His grace and blessing in the life to come. Hebrews 10:26-27 says, "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a _____ for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries."

Why not rather place your faith in the Lord Jesus and obey Him by repenting of your sins, by confessing Him as the Son of God, and by being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins? Because of Jesus, you have hope and promise. Don't miss out on all the blessings and joy that the Lord Jesus has prepared for you in heaven.

Is God Active Today? Proverbs 3:5-8

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

Some think God is _____ in our world today; and others say that God is _____. Is God alive and active in the world today and working for our _____? We want to know all we can about God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and the way to know God is through a _____ of His Word, the Bible. So we go again and again to the Scriptures.

How we view God matters greatly in how we view life and how we understand our _____ and role in this world. An atheist doesn't believe God _____ at all. An agnostic says he doesn't know whether God exists, because he _____ God is unknowable. Some believe God got the _____ going and then just abandoned it. Others believe God was relevant in _____ times, but now God is dead. They say we no longer _____ God.

Several years ago in graduate school, I spent a couple of semesters studying skeptics and atheists. One thing I found was that skepticism and atheism grew more out of an _____ than it did out of the _____. Atheists and skeptics tended to _____ on the disorder and the ugly in life. They seemed to _____ the intelligent order, the beauty, the grandeur, and the wisdom that's so evident in our universe. They were intelligent, but they missed the intelligent _____. I'm amazed at how easily people can slip into a very _____ view of life and of God. Some folks choose to close their eyes and their minds to the _____ of God and see only the _____. God is good and actively blesses us every day. Thankfully, we can _____ Him and what He has done for us to bless us and to give us eternal life.

Our scripture reading today comes from the book of Proverbs 3:5-8.

Paul said in Ephesians 1:18-19, "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may _____ what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe." God wants our hearts to be open to His _____. God's power towards us who believe is _____ than we think!

Have you ever had an "aha!" experience—awakening to some great _____ that had eluded you up until that time? That's what Paul wanted for the Ephesians. He wanted them to understand what God _____ to happen—God is at work! God has great power—and His power _____ in the lives of His people.

You might ask _____ God is at work. He is working in a variety of ways. First, God works in the _____. As a prophet of God, King David said, "The heavens are telling of the _____ of God; and their expanse is declaring the _____ of His hands" (Psalm 19:1). One can hardly look at the beauty, the order, and the wisdom of our universe and not see how

wise and powerful God is. The God who makes the sun shine and flowers bloom, the God who regulates times and seasons has such great power and wisdom that it is truly _____ our understanding. Paul proclaimed: "And in the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their _____ ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:16-17). All that we have, all of our blessings _____ from God!

Jesus is not only our Creator, He is also the one who _____ this world together. **Read what the Bible says in Colossians 1:15-17.** God's _____ and _____ cause our seasons, cause the earth to rotate every 24 hours making night and day, cause the moon to revolve around the earth every 28 days and controlling the tides of the ocean, and cause the earth to go around the sun every 365 and one fourth days determining our year and our seasons. This couldn't just happen on its own; God has been in _____.

The Lord Jesus taught us to pray: "Give us this day our _____ bread" (Matthew 6:11). We're blessed to have food to eat each day, food that God _____. Have you ever thought about the power of one _____ planted in the ground? One kernel of corn planted in the ground, watered, and fertilized can _____ an ear of corn with sixteen rows and 800 kernels. Many cornstalks will have _____ than one ear! God created that kernel of corn with the information and the ability to _____ itself in that marvelous way.

God is indeed powerful and wise! **Read what the Lord Jesus said in Mark 4:27-29.** God has been taking _____ of us in marvelous ways for a very long time.

Second, God is at work in our _____. God sent His only Son to die on the cross; God through the Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Bible including the gospel, which has the _____ to save; and Christ built His _____, who are the saved. From the beginning, God has been _____ toward our salvation. **Read what the apostle Paul by inspiration said in Ephesians 2:4-9.**

The salvation that we enjoy through Christ was _____. It's the gift of God, and for that we are thankful. Great gifts are never _____, and our redemption came at a _____ greater than silver or gold. God sacrificed his Son Jesus, and Jesus sacrificed His _____ on the cross. We must not take our salvation for granted or treat it lightly as if it were _____. People who mock the Lord, ignore the cross, and criticize the church are usually people who are unthankful for what God has done to _____ them. They don't realize what He sacrificed to give them _____ life. The Bible is the message of that life. Without the message of the Bible, we would all be in great peril—without _____ and without God in this present world.

The Bible teaches us how to come to Christ, and how the blood of Christ cleanses us, and how we can have _____ life with Christ. The Bible says, "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through _____ in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you _____ together with Him, having forgiven us

all our transgressions” (Colossians 2:12-13). It is God who is “at work” in baptism.

In baptism, God _____ us with Christ, and washes away our sins, takes away that old man of sin, buries us with Christ, and raises us up from spiritual death to life. In baptism, God adds us to the _____ and makes us His children. God is very _____ working on us in baptism. For this reason, I cannot understand why anyone would say baptism is unnecessary for our salvation. Read what the scripture says. Baptism is _____ God works on us.

God doesn't _____ us once we are saved as Christians, once we've been baptized. Every Christian still has weaknesses and still _____. Christians wish they could keep from sinning; they hate it _____ they sin and they want to stop it afterward. God knows that we're _____ but He has provided for our weaknesses. The Bible says, “He is _____ to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). That's what Jesus is _____ right now for us. He is interceding with the Father on our behalf, asking the Father to forgive us and to continue blessing us, even when we have sinned. I am so thankful for the Lord who _____ me enough to pray for me.

Third, God is at work answering _____. The Bible says, "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will _____; and while they are still speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). God wants to _____ your prayers. He _____ you to pray to Him. The Bible says, “Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from _____, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow” (James 1:17). God loves us enough to hear our prayers and to help us when we _____ Him. The apostle Paul reminds us, “Now to Him who is _____ to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the _____ in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Fourth, God is busy _____ our lives. He works in us. The Bible says, “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good _____ in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). God _____ His people to do His work, so we may live for an eternity in heaven with Him. What God is doing in us now prepares us for the life to come. The Bible says, “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your _____ with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12-13). God is shaping our hearts, our attitudes, our will, and our lives to _____ to His will, so that we might live with Him always.

God also saved us so that we might be His _____, doing good works and impacting the world for love and righteousness. The Bible says, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for _____ works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). So much good is being done in the world; _____ of the love of God and the teaching of the Bible, Christians feed the hungry, take care of widows and orphans, help unwed mothers, provide help to the lonely and homeless, and point sinners to

righteousness. Oh, yes! God is at work through the _____.

I saw a book the other day written by a skeptic, called, The God Problem. His subtitle suggested that God never addresses the problem of _____ in the Bible. I wondered _____ Bible he was reading, because it's _____ the Bible that I've spent my life studying. God knows about our suffering, and the cross of Christ demonstrates God's willingness to _____ for us. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for _____ to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." God doesn't stop every event of suffering, but He _____ even suffering to work for our good. We don't always understand what God is doing or why; but we know that God loves us and will use every circumstance in our lives, good or bad, pleasing or painful, to work for good in some way. We can _____ God!

Read what David, who was inspired of God, said in Psalm 103:1-5.

God has been working in our _____ a very long time. He isn't hidden or dead; and the Bible reminds us of all the good that God is doing _____ us and _____ us. The apostle Paul said, "And now I commend you to God and to the _____ of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). God's Word is far from being _____. It is the _____ of love and life and good and righteousness. We need the Bible every single day to help us _____ spiritually and in character, and to _____ like God intended.

I join Paul in His prayer: "and I pray that the _____ of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His _____ toward us who believe" (Ephesians 1:18-19). God can work in your life, IF you let Him. He won't twist your arm; He won't _____ you to do anything. But if you out of love and _____, put your life into His hands, God can do amazing things. It's not the _____ of God that's lacking. It's not the willingness of God to _____ in our lives that's lacking. What is lacking is our willingness to let God into our _____ and into our _____.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your _____ and do not _____ on your own understanding. In all your _____ acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." You must trust Him and let Him work in you. God desires that we believe in Jesus Christ enough to _____ Him and _____ His promises. Do you?

That starts by trusting Him enough to _____ of your sins and _____ the name of Christ before others. Christ doesn't want a _____ disciple. He wants you to confess with your mouth that He is your Lord and that you believe He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. After you've repented and made that confession, God wants you to be _____ into Christ where God cleanses you with the _____ of Jesus and makes you into one of His own children. Won't you do that today? Won't you obey the gospel and put the Lord Jesus Christ first? Will you let God work in your life?