



IN  
**SEARCH**  
OF THE LORD'S WAY<sup>®</sup>

*Program  
Study Guides*

**For  
December 2021**

## Thy Will Be Done

At the hardest \_\_\_\_\_ of His life, the Lord Jesus said, “Thy Will Be Done.” We want to say “Thy Will Be Done” in our \_\_\_\_\_ too. We’re here to search God’s Word for the Lord’s Way to salvation and to \_\_\_\_\_ the Christian life. God’s Word always gives us the \_\_\_\_\_ that we need to know the truth and to draw close to God.

One lesson we must \_\_\_\_\_ is that God is God, and we are human. God \_\_\_\_\_ our lives, and we should live according to His will. When the Lord Jesus came into this world He \_\_\_\_\_. He was here to do the will of His Father in heaven. We too must do His will. Every facet of our lives \_\_\_\_\_ to God our Father. Troubles and evils arise when people \_\_\_\_\_ His will. We must learn to \_\_\_\_\_ and to live a life that proclaims, “Thy will be done.”

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray in the Sermon on the Mount, He said, “Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on \_\_\_\_\_ as it is in \_\_\_\_\_’” (Matthew 6:9-10). What if the will of God were done on earth like it is in heaven? What if people were \_\_\_\_\_ to set their sins aside and give their lives to the will of God? What if we all stopped setting our hearts on \_\_\_\_\_ and started setting our hearts on righteousness?

Struggles and problems come at the expense of people doing their \_\_\_\_\_ will and ignoring the will of the Father. The selfishness, the greed, the lust, and the arrogant pride of our time cause our lives, our homes, and our society untold \_\_\_\_\_ and ruin. We desperately \_\_\_\_\_ God’s will in our lives. “Thy will be done” is not only a prayer; it’s a \_\_\_\_\_ of life.

**Our reading today comes from the Gospel According to Mark 14:32-36**, and Jesus is on His way to the cross, but first He goes to the Garden of Gethsemane, to spend hours in prayer.

Let’s pray together. “Heavenly Father, we pray that we may do Your will always, that whatever the cost we may be willing to give up ourselves and to follow You, to take up our cross. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.”

“Thy will be done.” Jesus must have found it both difficult and yet fulfilling to \_\_\_\_\_ that the Father’s will be done. While Jesus hated the thought of a scourging and an agonizing death, He knew that it was necessary to fulfill His \_\_\_\_\_ in life. While He hated the thought of bearing the punishment for the sins of the world, He loved the world and wanted it to be \_\_\_\_\_ from sin.

The Bible presents a number of paradoxes about the Lord on the \_\_\_\_\_. A paradox is a situation that seems to be absurd or contradictory, in yet it is in fact \_\_\_\_\_. For instance, the Bible says, “For our sake he made him [that is, Jesus] to be sin who \_\_\_\_\_ no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Or 1 Peter 2:24, which says “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree [the cross], that we might \_\_\_\_\_ to sin and live to righteousness. For by his wounds you have been healed.” The holy Lord Jesus bore our sins at the cross so that we could become \_\_\_\_\_.

Hebrews 12:2 says that the Lord Jesus “for the \_\_\_\_\_ that was set before him endured the cross, despising the \_\_\_\_\_, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Yes, He despised the pain and the shame but He loved the \_\_\_\_\_ of what He did on the cross. He looked to the joy set before Him, the joy of people finding \_\_\_\_\_ in His sacrifice. He didn’t want to die, but His desire for our eternal salvation was \_\_\_\_\_ than His desire to live in the flesh. He rejoiced in the \_\_\_\_\_ not the temporary, and He was glad to do the Father’s will.

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**Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.**

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This study sheet is prepared by Jerry Campbell – [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org)

Doing the Father's will was not a \_\_\_\_\_ concept or behavior to Jesus. From the time He was born, He realized that He had \_\_\_\_\_ into this world to do the Father's will. At age 12, Jesus was in the Temple \_\_\_\_\_ His Father's business. Later on, when the devil tempted Him at age 30, Jesus said, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord your God and him only shall you serve'" (Matthew 4:10)

In John, chapter 4, Jesus passed through Samaria. Stopping at a \_\_\_\_\_ near the town of Sychar, Jesus sent his disciples into town for some \_\_\_\_\_ while He rested. At the well Jesus had a remarkable conversation with a woman who had been married five times and was living with a man. When she learned Jesus was the Messiah, she \_\_\_\_\_ into town and told all the men of the town and the disciples returned with the food.

Then John 4:31-34 says: "Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, 'Rabbi, \_\_\_\_\_.' But He said to them, 'I have food to eat that you don't \_\_\_\_\_ about.' So the disciples were saying to one another, 'No one \_\_\_\_\_ Him anything to eat, did he?' And Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His \_\_\_\_\_.'" The Lord Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ to do the will of His Father in heaven.

In John 5:30, Jesus explained, "I can do nothing on My \_\_\_\_\_ initiative. As I \_\_\_\_\_, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not \_\_\_\_\_ My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." Jesus regarded the will of the Father as the \_\_\_\_\_ standard of right and wrong. He didn't want to \_\_\_\_\_ from His Father's will in any way, so He listened to the Father. He made judgments of right and wrong \_\_\_\_\_ as the will of the Father instructed. He didn't \_\_\_\_\_ on His own initiative.

In Jesus' heart and mind, keeping the will of the Father, was how He remained in a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with His Father. The Lord said to His disciples on the night before He died, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; \_\_\_\_\_ in My love. If you \_\_\_\_\_ My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have \_\_\_\_\_ My Father's commandments and abide in His love" (John 15:9-10). Abiding in the Father's will was an \_\_\_\_\_ of love and devotion. Keeping the Lord's commandments is \_\_\_\_\_ we demonstrate our love to the Lord and remain in His love.

First John 2:3-5 says, "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we \_\_\_\_\_ His commandments. The one who says, 'I've come to know Him,' and doesn't keep His commandments, is a \_\_\_\_\_, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the \_\_\_\_\_ of God has truly been perfected." Our love for God \_\_\_\_\_ us to be obedient to His will and to keep His commandments.

When Jesus was told that family was outside and had come to speak to Him, the Lord Jesus asked, "'Who is My mother and who are My brothers?' And stretching out His hand toward His \_\_\_\_\_, He said, 'Behold My mother and My brothers! For whoever \_\_\_\_\_ the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother'" (Matthew 12:48-50). Jesus claimed a close \_\_\_\_\_ to anyone who does the will of His Father in heaven, and He wants to be close to us.

On the other hand, Jesus finished the Sermon on the Mount with these words, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who \_\_\_\_\_ the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will \_\_\_\_\_ to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I \_\_\_\_\_ knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness'" (Matthew 7:21-23).

The Lord knew people would \_\_\_\_\_ to have a relationship with Him, while they lived lawlessly. They wanted the blessing of Christianity but they didn't \_\_\_\_\_ to the will of the Father in heaven. The Lord Jesus never knew them. He never had a relationship with them. They never belonged to Him, because they lived life on their \_\_\_\_\_ lawless terms and would not \_\_\_\_\_ the will of the Father. You can't live by your own will and expect to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord.

You can't draw close to God while you turn your back on what the Father \_\_\_\_\_. You obey God by obeying what He teaches, not by \_\_\_\_\_ you love Him while living the way that you desire. A person who lives in lawlessness says to the Lord, "Not Your will be done but \_\_\_\_\_." He lives by his own \_\_\_\_\_ and ignores God's law. He hasn't set his \_\_\_\_\_ on the Father's will but on pleasing himself.

A person who plays by his own will \_\_\_\_\_ he is the exception. He thinks his sins aren't as \_\_\_\_\_ as other people's sins. He does as he \_\_\_\_\_ and presumes the Lord will still consider that as obedience. He counts on his own \_\_\_\_\_, not God's will, to assure him a place in heaven. The Lord's rejection is going to \_\_\_\_\_ him.

We should strive to \_\_\_\_\_ the will of the Lord. It will not only bless us, it will \_\_\_\_\_ bless everyone around us. The Bible says, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your \_\_\_\_\_, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). Doing God's will shows everyone the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord's way! It is good and acceptable and perfect.

Jesus taught us to \_\_\_\_\_, "Thy will be done." Have you thought about how radically different and better our world would be if people \_\_\_\_\_ did the will of God? God's will for our lives is no small matter. If people did God's will, crime would disappear, the moral climate of this country would drastically change, and people would be more loving and less selfish. We'd \_\_\_\_\_ the golden rule. The Lord Jesus taught that "In everything, therefore, treat people the \_\_\_\_\_ way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

If we did God's will on earth, as it is in heaven, God's Word would have a place of \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives and decisions. We'd be asking the question, "What does God's Word have to \_\_\_\_\_ about this matter or that?" We'd realize that the God who created us knows us better than we know ourselves and teaches us what is \_\_\_\_\_. We'd make our life choices and think of right and wrong on the basis of God's \_\_\_\_\_ not our opinions or our culture.

If we did God's will on earth, we'd begin to pray as a people again. We'd realize that nothing \_\_\_\_\_ can happen without God's blessing and favor. We'd seek His face. What does that mean, "seek His face"? It means we'd look to God for help and for the \_\_\_\_\_ of life. When Solomon became king, he asked God for \_\_\_\_\_ to know how to lead the people of Israel. He worried about what might happen if Israel \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord and faced famine and were defeated in battle. Solomon asked God to be willing to \_\_\_\_\_ His people.

The Lord God answered Solomon's prayer with this \_\_\_\_\_ found in 2 Chronicles 7:13-14, "If ... My people who are called by My name \_\_\_\_\_ themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will \_\_\_\_\_ from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land." God wants to draw close to His people, when they pray to Him with humble hearts, turning from wickedness, and then God will hear and heal them.

If God's will were truly done on earth, we'd stop \_\_\_\_\_ God's name being taken in vain and in filthy talk. Ephesians 4:29 says, "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is \_\_\_\_\_ for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." Words are important; and our speech would be gracious, seasoned with salt, as we ought to speak.

If God's will were done on earth, we'd set our hearts on things that \_\_\_\_\_ rather than concentrate on things that corrupt. The Bible says, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there's anything worthy of praise, \_\_\_\_\_ about these things" (Philippians 4:8). What we think about shapes our \_\_\_\_\_. When our minds concentrate on the good, we see good all around

us; and we become \_\_\_\_\_ people. The Bible says, “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals’” (1 Corinthians 15:33). When what is bad fills our minds, evil fills our lives.

If God’s will were done on earth, we’d think more about the Lord and about \_\_\_\_\_. The Bible says, “If then you have been raised with Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your \_\_\_\_\_ on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in \_\_\_\_\_” (Colossians 3:1-4).

Where are you going with your life? Does your life \_\_\_\_\_ that the will of God is good and acceptable and perfect? Are you doing the will of the Father? Are you living in such a way that by your words, by your deeds, by your attitudes, you are a \_\_\_\_\_. Or are you a hurt to those who are around you? Doing the will of God is not simply something that we do to \_\_\_\_\_ God, it also makes this world so much better. Oh, we ought to all say, “Thy will be done.”

Let us pray. “Father, we’re thankful for the example of Jesus who did Your will, by dying upon the cross for our sines. Help us Father to deny ourselves, to take up our crosses and to follow You. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.”

The Lord Jesus told Nicodemus unless he was \_\_\_\_\_ of water and the Spirit, he could not enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). Jesus was emphatic and said in verse seven, “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘that you \_\_\_\_\_ be born again.’” Some think the will of God is flexible and doesn’t matter, but nothing could be farther from the truth.

John wrote, “Jesus came to His own, and those who were His own did not \_\_\_\_\_ Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the \_\_\_\_\_ to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were \_\_\_\_\_, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:11-13). You can’t be saved by substituting some human \_\_\_\_\_ for God’s will. God is God, and we are human. We can’t edit or overrule the will of God. If we are saved by God’s \_\_\_\_\_, it will only be by His will. To know His will we \_\_\_\_\_ read and study the New Testament.

What does God will for us to do to be \_\_\_\_\_? Upon hearing the gospel of Jesus, we must \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. We must \_\_\_\_\_ of our sins and turn to righteousness. We must be willing to confess our faith in Christ Jesus and to be \_\_\_\_\_. Baptism is that new \_\_\_\_\_ in water and the Spirit. The Bible teaches that we must be born again. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that our sins will be forgiven. When we are baptized, God washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). I pray that you, today, will do the will of God.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everyone needs a church family. There’s probably a church of Christ that’s near you. If you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one.

June 3, 2018

## God Has Spoken 2 Peter 1:16-21

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

When Jesus spoke in the first century, scribes took down His words, and these words are in the New Testament. We search the Scriptures because they \_\_\_\_\_ from God. No other book contains the wisdom, the prophecies, and the righteous commandments found in the Holy Bible. The Bible is the only book in the \_\_\_\_\_ that offers objective evidence to be the Word of God. Only the Bible gives real \_\_\_\_\_ of its divine inspiration through its fulfillment of prophecy. No other book can give us the \_\_\_\_\_ about the beginning or the end of time. The Scriptures \_\_\_\_\_ us to Jesus Christ, providing testimony from witnesses of His death, burial, and resurrection. The more you \_\_\_\_\_ the Bible, the clearer your knowledge of God will become.

**Read how Hugo McCord explained the concept of inspiration.**

**Our reading today comes from 2 Peter 1:16-21.** Peter is describing how prophetic utterances, the Scriptures, came about through inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Have you considered the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Words? God speaks and things \_\_\_\_\_. "Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). God spoke \_\_\_\_\_ into existence. Psalm 33:6 says, "By the word of the LORD the heavens were \_\_\_\_\_, And by the breath of His mouth all their host." Verse 9 says, "For He spoke, and it was \_\_\_\_\_; He commanded, and it stood \_\_\_\_\_." If God could speak creation into existence, then He has far greater \_\_\_\_\_ than we can imagine or understand.

The Words of Jesus are likewise powerful and authoritative. Colossians 1:16-17 reminds us, "For by him \_\_\_\_\_ 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." When Jesus spoke, \_\_\_\_\_ happened.

Jesus taught with \_\_\_\_\_ in the synagogue in Capernaum. **Read Mark 1:23-27.**

Jesus not only had authority over unclean spirits, He also had authority over \_\_\_\_\_. This power is shown frequently in the New Testament. **Read Matthew 8:23-27.**

God speaks with great power and authority, and all of nature and the universe \_\_\_\_\_. Man is the only creature that can \_\_\_\_\_ what God says and ignore or disobey Him. When people \_\_\_\_\_ the Word of the Lord they face great consequences. Some people don't take God seriously, but God has shown through time that He \_\_\_\_\_ what He says. Some think God will not \_\_\_\_\_ anyone no matter what that person does.

When you hear the words of the Lord Jesus, remember that He \_\_\_\_\_ you and sustains your existence. Without His power over creation, you couldn't \_\_\_\_\_. He deserves to be

heard! One day the words that He has spoken will be the standard for your \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord Jesus said, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the \_\_\_\_\_ I spoke is what will judge him at the last day" (John 12:48), Since the words of Jesus will judge you, you should \_\_\_\_\_ what He said and take it seriously. The words of Jesus will not disappear, and Jesus will not \_\_\_\_\_ what He said. What Jesus said is just as \_\_\_\_\_ today as it was in the first century. Changes in time and culture do not \_\_\_\_\_ what the Lord said. No one can \_\_\_\_\_ the words of Jesus on the Day of Judgment. The Lord said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

The Lord Jesus said, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He \_\_\_\_\_ in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26). Many people regard Jesus as a great moral teacher, but then they feel \_\_\_\_\_ to disagree with Him or ignore Him. What Jesus says about moral issues \_\_\_\_\_ some Christians. They imagine that Jesus doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ whether they live righteously or not. They listen to what He says about salvation, but \_\_\_\_\_ what He says about repentance. They want Jesus as their Savior, but not as their \_\_\_\_\_ and Master. They want all of His \_\_\_\_\_, but they dismiss His commandments.

How we \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord matters, and what we teach and practice will affect how the Lord judges us. Second Peter 2:3 speaks about some disobedient \_\_\_\_\_ teachers. The apostle Peter said, "and in their greed they will exploit you with \_\_\_\_\_ words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep." The Lord is not asleep or idle; He sees and knows what the righteous and the wicked are doing. He will \_\_\_\_\_ us all.

Peter explains, "For if God did not \_\_\_\_\_ angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), then the Lord knows how to \_\_\_\_\_ the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment" (2 Peter 2:4-9). Since the Lord has a record of how He \_\_\_\_\_ with sin, we should take Him seriously.

When we become Christians, we \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus as Lord. Jesus built the \_\_\_\_\_ and purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). When we were forgiven, He redeemed us with His precious blood and \_\_\_\_\_ us to the church. The word Lord describes Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_, as the One who created us. Philippians 2:9-11 says, "God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is \_\_\_\_\_ every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every

tongue will \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Because He is Lord, everyone will be \_\_\_\_\_ to His authority. He is our Lord and Master, and there is no other. As Lord, He has \_\_\_\_\_ authority over our lives on earth and in the hereafter. 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.”

Because Jesus is Lord, His Words will judge our souls and determine our \_\_\_\_\_ in the hereafter. Hebrews 4:12-13 says, “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to \_\_\_\_\_ the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature \_\_\_\_\_ from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” God knows all about you and me; He knows the good and the bad. He knows our thought and our intentions. We cannot \_\_\_\_\_ anything from the Lord; He already knows all our \_\_\_\_\_. We ought to listen to the Lord!

I’m thankful the Lord Jesus spoke because He not only \_\_\_\_\_ right and wrong but also gives us the words of eternal life. He gives us great and precious \_\_\_\_\_. Paul said, “For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shown in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Without the Scriptures, without the Bible, we would not \_\_\_\_\_ many things. We wouldn’t know about where we came from, why we’re here, or what will happen to us after this life is over. The Scriptures give us \_\_\_\_\_ of eternal life with our Creator, who loves us and wants to bless us eternally.

The Scriptures \_\_\_\_\_ us about God’s grace and forgiveness. When we realize the extent to which God has gone to \_\_\_\_\_ our sins, we love Him more and more. We are all sinners saved by the grace of God through the gospel message by the blood of Jesus Christ when we \_\_\_\_\_ Him. The message of that salvation is found in Scripture and it’s crucial. Paul wrote, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). God powerfully uses His Word to reach into our \_\_\_\_\_ with the gospel. First Corinthians 1:21 says, “For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to \_\_\_\_\_ those who believe.” God saves people today through that message preached.

Jesus said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be \_\_\_\_\_ of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me” (John 6:44-45). God works in and through the preaching and teaching of the word to \_\_\_\_\_ men of sin and to bring about faith. Romans 10:17 says, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” When we \_\_\_\_\_ God’s Word, we come to believe in Jesus Christ and in His

teaching. This is why James says, “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in \_\_\_\_\_ receive the word implanted, which is able to \_\_\_\_\_ your souls” (James 1:21).

The Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, causes us to be \_\_\_\_\_ again. First Peter 1:23-25 says, “for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring \_\_\_\_\_ of God. For, ‘All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off, but the word of the Lord endures \_\_\_\_\_.’ And this is the word which was \_\_\_\_\_ to you.” When a person \_\_\_\_\_ the preaching of the gospel and \_\_\_\_\_ it, God causes him to be born again. The gospel story is filled with God’s love for mankind and His willingness to send Jesus to atone for our sins and grant us forgiveness. This true story comes from God and has all of His qualities. His goodness and kindness lead us to \_\_\_\_\_. His love causes us to love Him!

Because the gospel is good news, it brings about a \_\_\_\_\_ unspeakable! Sin is bad news, but forgiveness from sin that condemns us, is good news! Hope for eternal life is good news! The Lord Jesus preparing a \_\_\_\_\_ for us in heaven is good news! God has spoken through His Son Jesus and in the gospel message. What a blessing!

Peter, James, and John were on the holy mountain with Jesus when He was transfigured. Moses and Elijah were there as well. Matthew 17:4-5 says Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is \_\_\_\_\_ that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; \_\_\_\_\_ to him.” God, the Father, was well pleased with Jesus His Son, so He distinguished Him from Moses, the great lawgiver, and Elijah, the prophet. God said, “listen to Him.”

Hebrews 1:1-2 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.” God is now speaking to us through Jesus Christ. If we want to know God’s \_\_\_\_\_, we must go to the words of Jesus and His apostles and prophets that He commissioned to speak for Him. That’s found in the New Testament. Jesus is Lord, and there is no other!

If you wish to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord, then listen to Him. Hear what He says and \_\_\_\_\_ Him. Hebrews 11:6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” Repent of your sins and turn to righteousness. Confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Be baptized into Christ, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of your sins. God has spoken; let’s \_\_\_\_\_ what He says and \_\_\_\_\_ Him. Nothing is so important!

## The Greatest Gift

Today, we're discussing the greatest gift to the greatest number at the greatest \_\_\_\_\_ for the greatest benefit. We're looking at the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ. We want to focus on the one thing on which we can \_\_\_\_\_, the written Word of God. The Scriptures have stood the \_\_\_\_\_ of time as God's holy and true message. It contains God's truth, God's love, God's commandments, God's promises, and God's warnings. We can get what God desires and what He's doing by \_\_\_\_\_ into His Word. This is why we continually go to the Scriptures. We want to \_\_\_\_\_ what God has to say.

We may receive many gifts, but we have no gift as \_\_\_\_\_ as the gift of Jesus Christ Himself. Everything He is and did profoundly affects us all. Because of Him, our \_\_\_\_\_ are more blessed, richer, purer, and kinder. From Him we have faith, hope, and love. Jesus was indeed unique and \_\_\_\_\_ to us what no one else could give. He opened the \_\_\_\_\_ to forgiveness, to the church, and to hope beyond the grave. The Lord gave us God's Word, paid for our sins with His blood, rose from the dead, and built His church kingdom.

Second Corinthians 8:9 says, "For you know the \_\_\_\_\_ of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich." Because of His \_\_\_\_\_, we're spiritually rich indeed. Every spiritual gift in the heavenly places can be found in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3). Where would be without Jesus? We'd be immeasurably \_\_\_\_\_ spiritually and any other way. No one has impacted this \_\_\_\_\_ with greater morals and values than the Son of God, Christ Jesus. This world cannot do without Him, and you cannot do without Him either.

### **Our reading today comes from the Gospel According to John 3:16-21.**

I love beautiful hymns sung with hearts filled with love and praise. I'm grateful to the church at Edmond for decades of singing lovely hymns that encourage our souls.

Jesus Christ challenges us to \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves, to take up our crosses daily and follow Him. We realize this is a great, and life-changing commitment. Christ wants you to \_\_\_\_\_ your heart and change your life. The blessings He offers to those who \_\_\_\_\_ Him, however, is greater than we can ask or imagine. Yes, we must count the cost of following Christ; but we must also look to the \_\_\_\_\_ of our high calling. Why should we follow Jesus? Let's examine these reasons.

First, we should follow Him because of His great \_\_\_\_\_. Though you and I have been loved by family and friends, we can't find a greater love than the love shown to us by the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our \_\_\_\_\_ on the cruel cross. No one else has died for our sins, and no one else could. He showed us the love of God and \_\_\_\_\_ we should love God. First Peter 3:18 says, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might \_\_\_\_\_ us to God." Our sins separated us from God, but the love of Christ opened the door for us to be \_\_\_\_\_ with God, so that we could live with Him forever.

Though we were once in sin, He lovingly and sacrificially made it possible for us to be at \_\_\_\_\_ with God through the blood of the cross. Colossians 1:21-22 describes what He did: "And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his

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\_\_\_\_\_, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.” Through love and sacrifice, He brought us to God holy and blameless.

Second, we should follow Him because He brought us the \_\_\_\_\_. John 1:17 says that “grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.” Jesus described the blessing of the truth in John 8:32, “and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you \_\_\_\_\_.” The truth gives us the standard by which we can \_\_\_\_\_ what is right and wrong, what is moral and immoral, what is good and evil. We need this standard to \_\_\_\_\_ what we should be and what we should do rather than to fall for lies and wickedness. The Lord Jesus told Pilate, “You say correctly that I am a \_\_\_\_\_. For this I have been born, and for this I’ve come into the world, to testify to the truth. And everyone who is of the \_\_\_\_\_ hears My voice” (John 18:37). Are you listening to the voice of Jesus?

Peter explains how the truth purifies us and causes us to be born again, “Having purified your \_\_\_\_\_ by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you’ve been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding \_\_\_\_\_ of God; for ‘All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains \_\_\_\_\_.’ And this word is the good news that was \_\_\_\_\_ to you” (1 Peter 1:23-25). If we want to know the truth, then we must \_\_\_\_\_ to the words of Jesus found in Scripture.

Third, He is the One who can give us the \_\_\_\_\_ of sins. Few things in life are as troublesome as a \_\_\_\_\_ conscience. A guilty conscience punishes us and pierces our \_\_\_\_\_. It shames us to know that we’ve done something \_\_\_\_\_. We regret what we’ve done, we feel dirty inside, and we long for a \_\_\_\_\_ conscience. First Peter 2:24 says, “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might \_\_\_\_\_ to sin and \_\_\_\_\_ to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” The wounds of Christ \_\_\_\_\_ our souls and spirits through forgiveness. Forgiveness means God no longer counts our sins against us; that we’re \_\_\_\_\_ from the guilt and consequences of our sins.

When God through Christ forgives us, God no longer sees us as we \_\_\_\_\_ were. Before our forgiveness we couldn’t inherit the \_\_\_\_\_ of God or live in heaven with God. In forgiveness, however, “you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11). Through Christ God washed us and made us clean; God sanctified us and made us \_\_\_\_\_; God justified us and declared us righteous. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, “For our sake he [that is, God] made him [that is, Christ] to be sin who knew no sin [Christ knew no sin], so that in him [in Christ] we might \_\_\_\_\_ the righteousness of God.” What a blessing it is to be forgiven! What a blessing to be free from sin!

Fourth, He opened the door to the \_\_\_\_\_, the family of God. Jesus built the church (Matthew 16:18); He purchased it with His own \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 20:28). Paul described the church as “the household of God” and “the pillar and support of the \_\_\_\_\_” (1 Timothy 3:15). While the church is made up of fallible humans, it is perfectly and infallibly designed by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. It is God’s household or family. As God’s family, it’s filled with people who \_\_\_\_\_ God and want to live holy and loving lives. I’ve seen lives changed, hearts softened, and great sacrifices from those who call themselves Christians. They love, because Christ loved them. They give, because Christ gave to them. They serve, because Christ served them. There’s no greater privilege than to \_\_\_\_\_ in the family of God.

Sadly, not everyone who calls himself a Christian lives the \_\_\_\_\_ a Christian should live. Some never \_\_\_\_\_ to love, or to forgive, or to serve as Christ did. Some fall victim to every kind of \_\_\_\_\_. Yes, some lust after the flesh, lust after the eye, and fall to the pride of life. If we see \_\_\_\_\_

the weaknesses in the church however, we'll miss the good, the service, and the love found in so many others. If you call yourself a Christian and then act like you never knew Christ, you need to examine yourself and \_\_\_\_\_.

Fifth, Christ has given us a righteous way of life that is filled with \_\_\_\_\_. First Peter 2:21-23 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 \_\_\_\_\_, neither was deceit 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 righteously." As Christians, we are called to \_\_\_\_\_ in the steps of Jesus Christ. Jesus never sinned and never deceived others.

While we can't be perfectly sinless as He was, we should \_\_\_\_\_ to live godly lives and to speak the truth. We must keep our eyes focused on Jesus and doing the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. Hebrews 12:1-2 says, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which \_\_\_\_\_ so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the \_\_\_\_\_ that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus led the way in doing the will of God, and we must not allow circumstances and sin to keep us from \_\_\_\_\_ with endurance in our journey to do the will of God.

Sixth, we should follow Him because He is the Way to \_\_\_\_\_ life. The Lord Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. And no one \_\_\_\_\_ to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). The Lord Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well of the great \_\_\_\_\_ of eternal life. He said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will \_\_\_\_\_ be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a \_\_\_\_\_ of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14). If we wish to have eternal life, then we must not only believe in but also \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:36 clearly says, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; and whoever does not \_\_\_\_\_ the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." John 5:12 says, "Whoever has the Son has life; and whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."

What does it mean to have eternal life? It means that there will be \_\_\_\_\_ beyond that will last forever and ever. The words of Jesus are the words of eternal life, and this is why we must \_\_\_\_\_ in Him and in what He says. Jesus said, "And this is eternal life, that they \_\_\_\_\_ you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3). Eternal life means we have a relationship with the only true God and His Son Jesus. He is our Father in heaven, and we become His children.

Seventh, He promised us a place in the heavenly Father's \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord Jesus encouraged the apostles on the night before His death, "Let not your \_\_\_\_\_ be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's \_\_\_\_\_ are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come \_\_\_\_\_ and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I'm going" (John 14:1-3).

The Lord Jesus is now in heaven preparing a \_\_\_\_\_ for those who believe in Him, who love Him, and who follow Him. That place is in the Father's \_\_\_\_\_. We've been kept in His heart, and now we can live in His house \_\_\_\_\_. He prepared a place for each one who \_\_\_\_\_ in Him. Peter described that place, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he's caused us to be born again to a \_\_\_\_\_ hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by

God's \_\_\_\_\_ are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5). Just think of it, a place prepared for us and kept in heaven that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading! What a blessing!

This great gift is yours, if you'll take \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ. This gift is free, but it isn't \_\_\_\_\_. It's not a gift to be taken lightly, to be forgotten, or to be forsaken. God won't bargain with you; He offers life according to His own \_\_\_\_\_. He's God, and we aren't. He gives His gift as He wills, and we can't expect to receive it by following our \_\_\_\_\_ will and ignoring His teaching and commandments. We can't substitute our way of salvation for His way. We must be wise to hear Him and act according to His words.

God is the greatest giver; Jesus Christ is the greatest gift; that gift is offered to all, the greatest number; and eternal life is the greatest blessing for the greatest amount of time. No gift can \_\_\_\_\_. Amazingly, God offers this gift for \_\_\_\_\_. Romans 6:23 says "the wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_, but the free gift of God is eternal \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus our Lord." Revelation 22:17 calls us to take hold: "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires to take the water of life without price." Jesus Christ paid the great \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation from sin, so He could offer it to you freely.

Will you accept it? Why wouldn't you choose eternal life? I've known some who thought sinful \_\_\_\_\_ was a great gift, but the flesh doesn't last. I've known some who thought \_\_\_\_\_ were the greatest prize, but you can't take your money with you when you die. I've known some who were so \_\_\_\_\_ of the life they had, they wouldn't think of following Jesus. They won't deny themselves, take up their crosses daily, or follow Him.

If you wish to follow Him, then trust in Him and believe what He teaches. Stop trusting in your own ways and turn to the truth. Turn from your sins and from selfishness. Out of love confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and be baptized into Christ. When you are baptized, God cleanses you and sets you free. He makes you His child and adds you to His church. When you meet God's conditions, trusting what God instructs, God blesses you with salvation. Won't you put your trust in Him and let Him bless you? God is looking to bless you and give you eternal life.

So focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everyone needs a church family. And there's probably a church of Christ near you. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one.

## The Second Coming

Many think of the first coming of Jesus, but what about His second coming? Today, we're exploring what will \_\_\_\_\_ when Jesus comes again. There's much \_\_\_\_\_ about the second coming, and that's why we turn to the Scriptures for answers.

Though some are skeptical, we need not \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus will come again. We have God's assurance! Acts 17:31 says that God "has fixed a day on which he will \_\_\_\_\_ the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to us by raising him from the dead." The resurrection of Jesus Christ \_\_\_\_\_ us of the appointed time when Jesus will judge us all.

The Scriptures \_\_\_\_\_ a second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus promised, "And if I go and prepare a \_\_\_\_\_ for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:3). The angels said to the disciples who were watching Jesus ascend, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into \_\_\_\_\_? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the \_\_\_\_\_ way as you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). First Thessalonians 4:16 assures us, "For the Lord himself will \_\_\_\_\_ from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God." Hebrews 9:28 agrees: "Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will \_\_\_\_\_ a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ will appear again in the clouds. Our task is to be \_\_\_\_\_ for Him. We don't want to be caught unaware and spiritually unprepared. On that day He will come with all \_\_\_\_\_ and will judge us all. Are you prepared?

### **Our reading today is from the Acts of the Apostles 1:9-11.**

Since the Lord is coming again, it's only right to ask \_\_\_\_\_ will happen and \_\_\_\_\_ will He return. The Scriptures clearly \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus will come openly, and everyone will know it. He won't be concealed, secret, or invisible. As we've read, Jesus will come again \_\_\_\_\_ in the clouds (Acts 1:9-11). Just as He was visible and rose up in the clouds, He will come \_\_\_\_\_ visibly in the clouds.

When Jesus appears, He will not come \_\_\_\_\_. Matthew 16:27 says, "For the Son of Man is going to come with his \_\_\_\_\_ in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done." Matthew 25:31-32 explains, "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious \_\_\_\_\_. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will \_\_\_\_\_ them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." Not only will Jesus bring angels with Him, He'll also bring back the \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ. First Thessalonians 4:14 says, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus." He's bringing these departed spirits back so that He can \_\_\_\_\_ them from the dead.

When Jesus appears, He'll come in flaming \_\_\_\_\_. Second Thessalonians 1:7-9 says, "the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not \_\_\_\_\_ the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will

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pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”

When Jesus appears, \_\_\_\_\_ will see Him. Revelation 1:7 says, “Behold, he’s coming with the clouds, and every \_\_\_\_\_ will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.” When those who have \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus see Him, they will wail and mourn. But the Christian who believes and loves Him has a great \_\_\_\_\_. First John 3:2-3 says, “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears that we shall be \_\_\_\_\_ him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who has this \_\_\_\_\_ in him purifies himself as he is pure.”

When Jesus appears, His coming will be unmistakable. First Thessalonians 4:16-17 says, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ will rise first. And then we who are \_\_\_\_\_ and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord in the air, so we shall always be with the Lord.” Yes, we’ll \_\_\_\_\_ the voice and the trumpet of God. Each of these will call our attention to what is happening. Did you notice that we will be caught up into the \_\_\_\_\_ to meet the Lord? The Lord Jesus won’t set \_\_\_\_\_ on the earth. Instead, He’ll be in the clouds; and we will meet Him there. When He comes again, we have to \_\_\_\_\_ this earth for a very good reason.

We do need to know, however, that this audible \_\_\_\_\_ of His appearance will come suddenly and unexpectedly. The Scriptures teach that the Lord’s coming will be “like a \_\_\_\_\_ in the night” (1 Thessalonians 5:2 and we simply don’t know when Jesus will come again; we know that He will come but not \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Peter 3:10). God has not revealed the \_\_\_\_\_. Deuteronomy 29:29 says, “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are \_\_\_\_\_ belong to us and to our children forever.” The Lord Jesus Himself reveals that the day of His second coming at the end of the world is a \_\_\_\_\_. Only the \_\_\_\_\_ knows when He will come again.

The Lord said, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my \_\_\_\_\_ will not pass away. But concerning that day and hour \_\_\_\_\_ knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the \_\_\_\_\_ of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the \_\_\_\_\_ they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and \_\_\_\_\_ them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man” (Matthew 24:35-39). Sadly, some today \_\_\_\_\_ what the Lord said and imagine they know exactly when this second coming will happen. They imagine they know \_\_\_\_\_ than Jesus. Many have predicted a \_\_\_\_\_ time and deceived others in the matter; and when the time passes unchanged, they show themselves to be \_\_\_\_\_ prophets, they simply don’t know.

Many people apply things found \_\_\_\_\_ in Matthew 24 to the second coming. People frequently speak of things that actually \_\_\_\_\_ to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and that includes the destruction of the temple. The passage, Matthew 24, clearly speaks of what is to happen \_\_\_\_\_ Jerusalem and \_\_\_\_\_ Jerusalem, and not what’s to happen worldwide. Jesus prior to verse 35 reveals numerous things to happen to people that were alive at that time and the need to \_\_\_\_\_ Jerusalem. On the other hand verse 36, speaking of the destruction of the heavens and earth begins with the word “but,” and is followed by an uncertainty of time. The destruction of Jerusalem is \_\_\_\_\_ the destruction of the world.

Three things will happen when Jesus comes again. First, Jesus will resurrect every person, good or evil, from the \_\_\_\_\_. John 5:28-29 says, “Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when \_\_\_\_\_ who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done \_\_\_\_\_ to the resurrection of

life, and those who have done \_\_\_\_\_ to the resurrection of judgment.” The resurrection mattered to Paul, and he spoke of its importance before the governor Felix. He said, “But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they (that is, the Jews) call a sect I do \_\_\_\_\_ the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets; having a hope in God, which these men (that is, the Pharisees) cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of \_\_\_\_\_ the righteous and the wicked. In view of this, I also do my \_\_\_\_\_ to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men” (Acts 24:14-16). Paul wanted to be right with God at the resurrection.

Death is the separation of the body from the spirit (James 2:26), but resurrection is when the Lord will \_\_\_\_\_ the dead, after which He will give them a new body. First Corinthians 15:50-52 explains, “I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a \_\_\_\_\_. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be \_\_\_\_\_, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.” At the resurrection, we’ll receive bodies designed for \_\_\_\_\_.

Second, when Jesus comes again, the earth and its works will be \_\_\_\_\_ up. We will leave this earth, because God has decided to \_\_\_\_\_ it. Second Peter 3:7 says, “But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for \_\_\_\_\_, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.” Again in verse 12 Peter notes, “the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will \_\_\_\_\_ with intense heat!” As we noted from 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Jesus will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that do not know God and those who do not \_\_\_\_\_ the gospel. Revelation 21:1 speaks of John’s vision, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had \_\_\_\_\_ away, and the sea was no more.” All that we know of the present heaven and earth will have vanished, destroyed by fire and intense heat.

Third, when Jesus comes again, He will make a final \_\_\_\_\_ on all people, the good and the bad. Second Corinthians 5:10 says, “For we must \_\_\_\_\_ 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.” The Lord Jesus Himself taught, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He’ll sit on His glorious \_\_\_\_\_. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will \_\_\_\_\_ them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He’ll put the sheep on His right, and the goats on His left” (Matthew 25:31-32). In verse 46 he clearly shows their \_\_\_\_\_ destiny: “These (goats who failed to serve the Lord) will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Lord Jesus proclaimed, “He who \_\_\_\_\_ Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the \_\_\_\_\_ I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” (John 12:48). You and I won’t be judged by our culture, by the creeds of men, or by human traditions. We will be judged by the words of Jesus found in the New Testament. Some think the words of Jesus only appear in \_\_\_\_\_ letters, but we can consider \_\_\_\_\_ the words of the New Testament as God’s teaching. Paul said, “If anyone thinks he’s a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I \_\_\_\_\_ to you are the Lord’s commandment” (1 Corinthians 14:37). The written word will be found at the Judgment. Revelation 20:12 says, “And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were \_\_\_\_\_ from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.”

If our final destiny will be decided at the second coming, shouldn't we get \_\_\_\_\_ for that day? Shouldn't we think about the destruction of the world and of our \_\_\_\_\_ destiny? Second Peter 3:11 says, "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in \_\_\_\_\_ conduct and godliness?" Do you look forward to the coming of Jesus or would you mourn at his coming? Revelation 1:7 says, "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and \_\_\_\_\_ eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen." People who don't know Him, people who don't believe in Him, and people who don't love Him will \_\_\_\_\_ at His coming.

I would rather be like Paul who said, "For I am already being poured out (that is, he is close to the time when he would die) as a drink offering, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of my departure has come. I've fought the good \_\_\_\_\_ (have you), I've finished the \_\_\_\_\_ (have you), I've kept the \_\_\_\_\_ (have you); 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 all who have \_\_\_\_\_ His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6-8). Will you love His appearing? Will you receive that crown?

First John 2:28 says, "Now, little children, \_\_\_\_\_ in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in \_\_\_\_\_ at His coming." The Lord Jesus said, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My \_\_\_\_\_, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:26). If we wish to \_\_\_\_\_ the kingdom of heaven we cannot be ashamed of Him or of His words. We must love Him, obey Him, and abide in Him.

There is a difference between being "\_\_\_\_\_" Christ and "out of" Christ. Many people have rejected or \_\_\_\_\_ believing in Christ Jesus. Others have bought into a \_\_\_\_\_ gospel and failed to follow the Scriptures. Such people will be \_\_\_\_\_ on judgment day when they won't be allowed to enter heaven. The wise hear the words of Jesus and \_\_\_\_\_ them; the foolish hear the words of Jesus but \_\_\_\_\_ to do them. The wise will \_\_\_\_\_, but the foolish will \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 7:24-27).

So be wise and \_\_\_\_\_ for the second coming of Christ. You must be holy and blameless at His coming. By God's grace through the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ you can be right with God. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26-27 says, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." To be children of God we must be baptized into Christ, immersed in water for the forgiveness of our sins. Then we must be faithful to the Lord till the end. If you've quit the Lord, or maybe you've quit His church, it's time to come back, to return.

Focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everyone needs a church family. There's probably a church of Christ near you. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be glad to help you find one.