

Seeking God in Our Lives

Jeremiah 29:10-14

“This is what the LORD says: “You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² In those days when you pray, I will listen. ¹³ If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. ¹⁴ I will be found by you,” says the LORD. “I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land.”

Today, we are going to center our attention on verse 13 of our text, "If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me " **As we come to this idea of seeking God, we must realize that the child of God is involved in a three-fold process of seeking.** (1) There is an **initial seeking** which takes place at conversion, as seen in Isaiah 55:6-7, “Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. Let the wicked change their ways...for he will forgive generously. (2) There is a **continuous seeking** that is repeated throughout the Christ's life, as seen in Philippians 3:13-14, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (3) There is a **final seeking** that is consummated at death or the second coming of Jesus Christ, as seen in Philippians 3:20-21, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from where also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our lowly body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious body, according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Today, we are going to focus our attention on the continuous seeking of God that is involved in our everyday lives, as we relate to

the Lord of glory. And we are going to look at our **continuous seeking** in at least three areas.

First of all, we are to seek God exclusively. The writer of the book of Hebrews 11:6 says this about seeking God, "But without faith it is impossible to please him (God); for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The greatest thing that God is asking from us today is not our **service**, but our **seeking!**

You might be thinking, "Why should I seek the Lord, I've already found Him. I'm already a Christian." Let me remind you of the words of Paul as recorded in Philippians 3:8,10, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ...That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death." **Paul was already saved.** Paul already knew Christ. It was this same man that wrote just two chapters earlier, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." **Paul is simply saying that although he has known Christ in salvation, he want to know Him experientially in every avenue of his life.** The Christian life is not simply starting with Jesus and graduating to something better - **The Christian life is starting with Jesus, staying with Jesus, and ending up with Jesus!** Paul is not saying **how can I serve Him more**, but **how can I know Him better!**

Look with me once more at verses 12-13 of our text, "In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me." We are living in a time when people are seeking some kind of **gift**, or some kind of **experience**, or some kind of **emotion** or **feeling**, or some kind of **service**, or the **perfect church**, but the Word of God makes it very plain that we are to seek one thing and one thing only, and that is the Lord, as seen in Matthew 6:33, "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need."

Listen to me today; if a person goes "to seed" on anything else but Jesus, he is trouble in his Christian experience. If a person goes to seed on the *Holy Spirit*, it won't be long before he is involved in *extremism* and *emotionalism*. If a person goes to seed on *doctrine*, then it won't be long before he is ignoring the Great Commission and soul winning. **If a person goes to seed on the Church, it won't be long before he becomes bogged-down in organizations and legalism.** But, beloved, when a person goes to seed on *Jesus*, then his life will be in perfect harmony with the rest of the Word of God, for all the Scriptures tell us about Jesus!

You might be thinking, "How can I seek God exclusively?" By seeking Jesus Christ, for **Christ is God's everything**, as seen in Ephesians 1:10, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." And then we are told in Colossians 2:9-10, "For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power." In Revelation 1:8 Jesus made this statement, "I am the Alpha and the Omega - the beginning and the end," says the Lord God. "I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come - the Almighty One."

In my study I have over 1,000 books. In our family's bookshelves we have a set of Encyclopedias, plus a set of medical books, plus other books that belong to our family. And did you know that there are only 26 letters used to convey that vast amount of information? **There are 26 letters in our alphabet, and you need not go outside of that alphabet to write the longest book or the simplest letter.** And let me tell you tonight, that you need not go any further than Jesus to seek God exclusively, for He is everything from the A to the Z of the Godhead!

Second, we are to seek God earnestly. Verse 13 of our text says, "And you shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart." You will notice that we are to seek the Lord

"with all your heart." Remember, Hebrews 11:6 says, "And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. I am afraid the reason that many of us never seem to find that "peace that passes all understanding" and that "joy unspeakable and full of glory" is because we are only seeking half-heartily!

Therefore, look with me at two truths that are given for us as we "seek" the Lord:

First of all, we must seek God out of desperation, as seen in verse 14 of our text, "I will be found by you," says the LORD. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land." **The children of Israel had rebelled against God, and God allowed them to go into captivity, in order that out of desperation they might once more seek Him!**

It is human nature that we will not seek God, we will not trust in God, until we feel that out of our desperation we have no other choice. We turn to drugs, we turn to illicit sex, we turn to alcohol, we turn to materialism, and when we find that our backs are to the wall, and we have gone as far and as low as we can go, out of desperation we turn to God! Listen to Psalm 4:1, where David said, "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; have mercy on me, and hear my prayer." And in Psalm 18:6 he says, "But in my distress I cried out to the LORD; yes, I prayed to my God for help."

I am reminded of the story of the woman who had an issue of blood in Luke 8:43, "And a woman, having an issue of blood twelve years, who had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed by any." And in Matthew 9:21 we are told, "For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be well." She had tried every other means available, and now out of desperation, she was

willing to go against the crowd, and was willing just "to touch the hem of his garment."

My friend, God meets us at the point of desperation! Jesus said in Matthew 5:6, "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." How *hungry are you* today for the righteousness of God to swell up inside of your very being? If a **Sunday morning snack can satisfy your spiritual hunger**, then you have **not yet started to hunger after righteousness!**

Second, we are to seek God with determination. Verse 13 of our text says, "And you shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart." The indication here is that in addition to the "seeking" there is a "searching" that shows the **determination** involved!

Today, we need the determination of the Shunammite woman who helped Elisha and his servant Gehazi. Elisha wanted to do something to repay her for her kindness, and Gehazi said, "she has no son, and her husband is old." And in 2 Kings 4:7 we are told, "And the woman conceived, and bore a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her according to the set time." **But when the child had grown up to be a young man, he was out in the field helping his father, and evidently had a sun stroke and died.** The mother picked up the body and carried it to the bedroom, and shut the door. She got on her mule and went looking for Elisha, and when Elisha saw her coming we are told in verse 29 of that after Elisha had received the news of the lad's death, "Then Elisha said to Gehazi, "Get ready to travel; take my staff and go! Don't talk to anyone along the way. Go quickly and lay the staff on the child's face." Now most of us would have been satisfied, but we are told in verse 30, "But, when they got to the house, Elisha gave the staff to Gehazi and told him to go up and raise up the child." And verse 31 says, "The child has not awakened." Gehazi went back to Elisha and said, "The child is still dead." Therefore, Elisha returned, and verse

32-37 says, "When Elisha arrived, the child was indeed dead, lying there on the prophet's bed. He went in alone and shut the door behind him and prayed to the LORD. Then he lay down on the child's body, placing his mouth on the child's mouth, his eyes on the child's eyes, and his hands on the child's hands. And as he stretched out on him, the child's body began to grow warm again! Elisha got up, walked back and forth across the room once, and then stretched himself out again on the child. This time the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes! Then Elisha summoned Gehazi. "Call the child's mother!" he said. And when she came in, Elisha said, "Here, take your son!" She fell at his feet and bowed before him, overwhelmed with gratitude. Then she took her son in her arms and carried him downstairs."

What would have happened if she would have settled for Gehazi instead of Elisha? Her child would never have been raised.

Today, some of us that have started out looking for God, but we have met a "Gehazi," and we looked no further! Along the way some of us met service and we stopped with him. Along the way some of us met church and we stopped with him. Along the way some of us met gift and we stopped with him. Along the way some of us met experience and we stopped with him. Along the way some of us met preacher and we stopped with him. But my dear friends, our search is not over until we are walking daily with our Lord, and our God!

Thirdly, we must seek God continually. We have these words of Jesus in John 15:4-5, "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."

Remember that the Christian life is not starting with Jesus and graduating to something better, it is starting with Jesus, staying with Jesus, and ending up with Jesus!

The problem that we have today is that we have lost our prospective of the sovereignty of God in our Worship! The attitude of our present day Sunday morning Worship Service is something like this - when our music begins, the musicians are the performers and the congregation is the audience. When the preacher stands to preach, he is the performer and the congregation is the audience. And because of this attitude, we measure our success on the response of those around us! But that is not according to the plan and purpose of God! You see, the Bible teaches that God is the audience and we are to be the praisers!

All of that simply means that it is not man that we are to please, but God! You see, it is one thing to live a life that is acceptable to others, but it is all together something else to live a life that is acceptable to God!

Look once more with me at Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Let me ask you this question today - Are you honestly seeking God in your life today? Do you really find a hungering and a thirsting after righteousness in your life today?

If you are not saved, why not today?

Please stand for prayer.

Father,

Give me the courage to seek You with all my heart as I seek to serve You more. In Jesus' name. Amen.