

(Apostolic Vision) Seeking God's Face

by Dale Heisey

Dale Heisey emphasizes the necessity of seeking God's face and restoring a personal relationship with Him for spiritual revival.

Duration: 52:03

Topics: "Seeking God", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by posing a question to the audience: would they be satisfied if they had a relationship with Jesus like a bride has with her bridegroom? The speaker emphasizes that this question is meant to be a devotional one, not a trick question. The sermon then explores the idea of seeking God's face and turning away from wicked ways. The speaker suggests that something has come between humanity and God, creating a spiritual eclipse, and encourages the audience to seek God's face and restore their relationship with Him. The sermon also suggests that the Song of Solomon, often seen as a love song, is actually a spiritual allegory of the relationship between a Christian and Jesus.

Transcript

In the name of our Lord Jesus, it is a blessing to be here, a humbling experience to be here in this house of worship with those who have gathered together to call upon his name out of a pure heart. A great joy to be with the people of God. And the brother prayed this morning for God's people at other places.

And there are people that are suffering this morning in the worship of Jesus. It's something we know virtually nothing about. We don't know how much it costs many people to be Christians, and how much it costs them to identify with him.

And it should probably cost us more than it does. But it's a great joy to be in the house of the Lord this morning. We want to see God's face together.

I don't know if you have ever thought about that interesting phrase that's found in the classic revival formula, the classic revival verse that's recorded for us in 2 Chronicles 7, 14. Is there anyone here this morning that could stand to your feet and quote 2 Chronicles 7, 14? Is anyone here? Quote that very, very classic, very well-known revival text, that revival formula. 2 Chronicles 7, 14.

And everything that's in that verse, we easily understand what it means, and we could probably have no difficulty letting somebody know how to do it. But there's one phrase in that verse that is not easy to

understand, and not easy to explain to somebody else how to do it. Now, we need first of all the verse, then we can look at this phrase.

Does someone have the verse? Well, then someone stand and read it then. Thank you, brother. Thank you, brother.

That's what it says. It's very, very well-quoted. And we were already told this morning that we should humble ourselves and we're given examples of revival characters who did.

And we have been taught to pray. We know the importance of that. And then it says there, and seek my face.

And if you were set out starting at 11 o'clock this morning, and you submitted your purpose to seek God's face, then what would you choose to do? And if you, obviously that means that you have not been doing it. Obviously, when it says there, now my people must do something. And he's saying that they must do something that they have not been doing it.

If we are needing revival, that means there's something we need that we don't have. And if we don't need revival, then we don't need to do those things. But there's some change that must come to the people of God.

If my people, which are called by my name, well, now they're my people and they're called by my name, but there are some deficiencies here. What's wrong? They're called by my name, but they're proud people. Now there's something wrong here.

This is a contradiction. How can you be the people of God and be proud? Well, this can never be. How can you be the people of a humble God and be a proud person? And so you must become like I am.

You must be humble like I am. You must be humble. And you must pray.

Well, they must not have been praying. Well, of course they were praying. They were praying, they were avid prayers.

They were certainly praying. They stood in the corners of temples to pray. They were well known for their prayers.

They were a praying people, but they weren't praying to God. One man stood and prayed with himself, the Bible says. And so there was something wrong with their prayer life.

And then he said, and seek my faith. Now Tony, if you look at ways, you know, you stop your gambling and you stop your fornicating and turn that television set off and stop watching those videos and change your music you're listening to and stop that radio programming. We can turn from our wicked ways.

We can forget this divorcing and quit this adultery. We can let this stealing go and stop saying those bad words. We can turn from our wicked ways.

But what does it mean to seek my faith? Have you thought about that? We want to think about that this morning. Seeking God's faith. Something has come between us.

When we must seek God's faith, something has come between us. Something has created an eclipse. We've had a spiritual eclipse.

Something has come between us in the face of God. All kinds of things can come between us in the face of God. But there's something that has come between.

And it was never God's intention for us, for any of His people, to live apart from Him. To live in a broken relationship with Him. This was never God's intention for His people that we live in a broken relationship with God.

It was His will for us to live in conscious communion with God. Conscience of His presence with us. Not where is God? Not what has happened to God? Not where is the face of God? Not where did God go? What has happened here? But living in the conscious presence of God.

This is the sweet privilege of the child of God. To live with Him. To know Him.

And so, revival in one sense of the word is returning to God. And if we don't return to God, we cannot have revival. And there's no revival apart from returning to God.

Now, if we don't need to return to God, then probably revival is not necessary. Everything's alright. We're in God's presence.

We're living with Him. God is with us. But revival is returning to God.

And God said, seek my face. Or He could have said, return to me as He said to many of the other prophets. Hosea said to them, return to me and I'll return unto you.

Malachi. We need to return to God. Now, I thought that probably to start us thinking this week about how we stand with the Lord God, I would take you to a very, very interesting passage of Scripture, yet one that is not very well known to us.

And I suppose that this passage of Scripture might be one of the least known parts of your Bible. In fact, this book of the Bible might be so strange to you that when you read over it, you might not understand what you're reading. You might have a strange sense, a feeling that maybe this passage of Scripture shouldn't be written in our Bible.

It shouldn't be included in the Bible. And maybe you have never heard a sermon from this passage of Scripture in your life. It's certainly not a very well-known portion of Scripture.

But I'd like you to turn your Bibles this morning to the very first chapter of the Song of Solomon. And if this Song of Solomon does not teach us anything else, it teaches us the need to live in the presence of God. And would teach us something about seeking the face of God.

And if it has no other purpose for being in our Bibles, then may this suffice as its purpose to help us know what the relationship is that God intends for us to have with Him. I'm going to read the first eight verses of this chapter this morning. And I might just ask you a question to stimulate your interest as you are hearing these first eight verses read.

I'd like you to answer a question in your own heart as you're listening to these verses. The question is, would I be satisfied this morning if I would have a relationship with the Lord Jesus like this lady had with

her boyfriend or with a bridegroom? And we can ask that question another way. Would our Lord Jesus be satisfied with us if we had the kind of relationship with Him that this bride had with her bridegroom? And that is not intended to be a trick question.

It's intended to be a devotional question. And I want you to read carefully and see just what kind of relationship she had with Him. Verse one.

The song of songs which is Solomon's. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth for thy love is better than wine. Because of the Savior of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth.

Therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me. We will run after thee.

The king hath brought me to his chambers. He will be glad and rejoice in thee. We will remember thy love more than wine.

The upright love thee. I am black but comely. O ye daughters of Jerusalem as the tents of Cedar as the curtains of Solomon.

Look not upon me because I am black because the sun hath looked upon me. My mother's children were angry with me. They made me the keeper of the vineyards but my own vineyard have I not kept.

Tell me O thou whom I so loveth where thou feedest where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon for why should I be as one that turns aside by the flocks of thy companions. If thou know not if thou know not O thou fairest among women go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents. Now maybe you consider that to be a strange reading for the first day of First Sermon of Revival meetings and a strange place to start to read and a strange place to stop.

I thought maybe a few words of explanation might help you understand why we read what we did here and help you understand why we chose those eight verses. The Song of Solomon is not a love song as it is considered today. Although it is a story of love but being a story of love it is not a story of sex.

In Latin America where we live it's difficult for the people to know the difference between those two words. And they think that the one means the other. It's not true.

There's a difference between love which is agape and love which is eros. This is not a story of eroticism. This is a story of true love.

And if we don't understand that as young people and as fathers and mothers, as Christians if we don't understand that then we're going to get the physical mixed with the spiritual in this story. This is not a story of physical relationships. It's a story of spiritual relationships.

And although there are graphic terms of physical activities involved in this story even as verse two would suggest to us yet the spiritual meaning is the important thing here. Nor is this Song of Solomon a mere story of a love affair between Solomon and a poor country maiden who would never have had the opportunity to ascend to such kind of regalism or such kind of attempt of palace living. It's a very strange thing how these two found each other.

Although that's included in the graphics of the story the drama that unfolds here that is not the purpose for the Song of Solomon. I believe the Song of Solomon is far more than a mere example of a pure and healthy marriage relationship between a man and his wife. Yes, I think you can go through the Song of

Solomon and find there teaching, instruction that should build Christian marriage.

But I don't think that's the purpose for the Song of Solomon. I don't think that's the main reason why it is in our Bibles. But I believe deeper than all those things it is probably a spiritual allegory of the true relationship that may and must exist between a Christian and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a story of that spiritual relationship that we have in Him and have with Him and have because of Him. It is the story this morning of the relationship that you as a person and I have with our Lord Jesus. And not only the relationship that we corporately have with Him as we are met together but the story of the relationship we should have personally with Him.

Now someone told me that there was a marriage here in October. Someone got married in October of last year. And so I don't know who those people are.

I've not met them yet. But they got married in October I was told this morning and went to church in the car. And they told me something about that courtship that happened before the marriage.

Now I was not here and I don't even know you people and I was never in the state of Oregon in my life and so I'm not guilty of anything I'm going to say. But I can just imagine that young man was a young man and a young lady involved I'm going to suppose. And I'm going to think that the only time he ever would have been that is to say she sits over here and he sits over here and we're all together and she sings soprano and he's singing bass and we're in this church service and we all kneel to pray we all get up walk out the door together and go home and she goes home.

I don't suppose that that courtship would have resulted in marriage if the only relationship they ever would have had with one another would have been public. But there was an effort made I'm going to suppose and I wasn't here but I'm supposing there was an effort made to in a private way in a personal way in a very close way without others shadowing and others interfering and others taking the place and others using up the time and others becoming involved just the two of them I'm sure something was done to bring those hearts together in something that resulted in the commitment of marriage.

Now let's just use that illustration and apply it to our relationship this morning with Jesus Christ and what is our relationship with him and is it is it basically a public relationship and that is the way many Christians live today their relationship with Jesus is a public relationship if you would take away from their lives the public expressions of Christ the public relationships with Christ the public worship services for example there would be very little private relationship left with Jesus very little time we alone very little time secret place very little time the door shut very little time only us very little time the inner secret relationship and that's why revival is needed that's the very day revival revival service needs to be born right there you know we kind of run through

the the daily strains and activities and assignments of life and kind of come exhausted you know into into God's presence kind of come exhausted into the worship service kind of come exhausted into the church building you'd want to call it that church is not a building it is a meeting house and in Costa Rica the song leader has a pencil has a pen this should never happen in Tangent, Oregon I suppose it doesn't happen here it should never happen here in Costa Rica it happens the song leader has a pencil has a pen and he comes into church and grabs a song book grabs a song book and takes his pen and writes one number down on the palm of his hand and he pages through that book and roots through that book and writes a number down on the palm of his hand and comes up to the front of the

service and looks at his hand and gives these numbers out that song leader looked at his hand again very very common people down there write on their hands they write all kinds of things on their hands you shouldn't do that but who took the time to prepare in the private in the personal way the intimate way the secret way for that public work too much of our church life too much of our Christian life is public life you take the public service out of it take the public service out of it maybe that was a beautiful devotion that you had maybe it was a beautiful reading of the words maybe it was a very edifying thing but listen did you prepare that devotional for the church service are you listening this morning or was that devotional prepared for yourself was that just one of the fruits of

your of the time you spend alone with God if you would not have had that public responsibility would there have been that same diligence in the seeking out of spiritual truth and for those of us who need to periodically stand before God's people to bring a sermon are we as diligent in searching the scriptures in searching the truths in searching the heart of God just because we wish to know him as we are diligent to try to find those thoughts which could feed God's people on that public occasion I'm asking us what is your relation with Jesus like and God said seek my face God said seek my face and it's good to seek the face of the people it's good to be with the people we need to be with the people the ministry takes us out to the people he said go out to these lost sheep find them you

have to make contact with the people but it all begins with that relationship with God seek me first so I was trying to explain to you this morning that this is an allegory of that true relationship that must exist between each one of us in our Lord Jesus Christ and it's a spiritual thing it's not a physical thing and this story becomes physical I'll show you maybe one aspect of that later on here in these verses that we read but there is a spiritual message here what is a spiritual life like now to help you understand the Song of Solomon a little bit and I'm not going to I thought about doing it I thought about preaching through the Song of Solomon this week and then leaving you here in the congregation leaving you and I guess I won't do that I might bring several messages from this book

I'm not sure but to help you understand and interpret and get a hold of the story that's here there are several ways we could look at this story maybe two ways that I have noticed and I'm not sure if I can tell you which of these two is correct but if I bring you these two views at least help you to focus and understand better but we begin with at least two people there's one view of the Song of Solomon that says there are two people involved and one that says that there are three and I'll take the three first there is this little maiden this country maiden she lives about 100 kilometers north of Jerusalem 60, 65 miles north of Jerusalem and she's working up there in a vineyard a vineyard that is not her own she is an employee working in a vineyard she has a responsibility there along

with many other people taking care of and these here are the royal vineyards these vineyards are the vineyards of the king he owns these lands up here and has these servant workers he has these peons he has these workers there taking care of this vineyard this girl is in there and she works out under the sun under the rain day and night during there she is and she works up there and this girl is in this story there is another person in this story a king that king of Solomon and we have him in this story and there are those in the field and the third person in the story is a shepherd boy a peasant shepherd now if that is true or not I'm not sure but let's look at the second way that the story is interpreted we have the same girl we mentioned before but the second person then is the second

and third person is the same one it's Solomon and the thought was that one day Solomon was in his chariot and he went north to check out his vineyards and while he was up there he saw this peasant

maiden working in his vineyard and as he saw this peasant maiden he said to himself listen I've got 300 wives and 700 concubines or was it the other way around 700 wives and 300 concubines I'm not sure which one it was I think it was 700 wives and 300 concubines and this one right here would certainly make one more but what do I do this is not Pharaoh's daughter I'm not sure if it would be I know how to handle that I know how to deal with royalty but what do I do in a case like this and so the thought was that Solomon thought he decided he's going to he's going to get some sheep and put it over

here in this pasture right beside the vineyard he's going to tend these sheep over here and maybe that will give him some contact to kind of get in here and get to know this young lady and maybe she will feel so strange to let this fellow who's got a crown on his head and got this fancy white horse in front of a chariot and he'll just kind of come in here as a shepherd boy now whether that's true or not I don't know either but there are figures here that make him at times a shepherd and figures that make him at times a king and in either case it is perfectly symbolic of our Lord Jesus Christ who is our shepherd king there are times when she is talking in the story there are times when he is talking in the story she talks more than he does and there are times when someone else is speaking

the story that is that there are daughters of Jerusalem who are watching this whole thing happen it's as if they were kind of observing this this relationship developing between these two and they look on and watch this and every once in a while they make comments as they did in the 8th verse the last verse I read was the daughters of Jerusalem speaking at times they are identified as they speak at times they are not but if you understand the story you know that they are here referring to the cry of the heart that came from the bride in verse 7 tell me O thou whom my soul loveth where thou feedest for thou makest thy flock to rest at noon for why should I be as one that turns aside but the flock is thy companion and then they ask her the daughters of Jerusalem ask her if thou knowest not

O thou firstborn woman they are speaking to her now obviously this is not the woman speaking she is being addressed do thy way forth by thy footsteps by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside thy shepherd's tents and so they speak at times in this story and when if you can identify the speakers you have a good key to understanding the message of the song of Solomon so then we have the bride here that is symbolic of us as the Christians this morning you and I as Christians and the bridegroom is Christ our shepherd king and if we can understand that then we have a clear we can begin to understand the story of the song of Solomon but I ask you already would you be satisfied if your relationship with Jesus this morning was the relationship she had with her shepherd king would you

be satisfied with that you might say well I don't know if I understand it well enough to know if I can answer the question I'd like to hear a little more I'm not real sure if I'm understanding everything that you read there it sounds like things are going pretty good here it's better than wine it says thy love is better than wine it talks about the savior of thy good ointments thy name is ointment poured forth it sounds like it's going pretty well it sounds like they've got a pretty good thing going here but I want to ask you a question where is the bridegroom where is the shepherd king and I want to ask you that question the bride does not even know something is seriously wrong yes they have known each other yes there has been love there yes there has been good times together there have

been pleasant moments spent yes there has been some relationship developed yes she knows him and in fact she can go on for long periods of time expressing his characteristics and talking about his fame and the expressions of her heart are very lofty she can go on describing him for lengthy periods of time but there is something wrong I asked you this morning where is that shepherd king and she did not know and

God says seek my face now you understand how it is beginning to tie together can't you see it and she did not even know where to look she did not even know where to look if I had asked you this morning to seek the face of God where would you start hunting where would you go to find the face of God this morning if I had said to you seek the face of God and this girl was she given all

the airplane tickets and train tickets and all the things she would have needed to go any place she wanted to go she would not have known where to look she would not have known what port to make for she would not have known where to go so far was she from him at this point in her life that brings us to an important point in our meditation this morning the dilemma of the unsatisfied life something wrong with the relationship something missing something here a vacuum a void that cries out and says where is where is thy God where is thy God the question that psalm was asked in the 42nd psalm the heart was planting into the water brooks and the heart will do that that's like a deer it will plant into that water it will go running and springing to find it sniffing the air to find it to plant

my soul to thee oh God my soul searches for God for the living God thirsts for God for the living God when shall I come and appear before God my tears have been my meat day and night while they continually say unto me where is thy God and how would you answer that question this morning where is your God where did you leave him because he did not leave you and every time we have this relationship broken in the song of Solomon it is she that has done it it was never he that did it and every time that there was an absence between them it was her fault that it happened the dilemma of an unsatisfied life something else has come in here the bride knew her lover she could speak volumes about him but they were not together now it was to her credit and I will tell you this I think it was to her

credit that she desired him it was two things to her credit this morning first of all that she desired him though he was not there she desired him and secondly it was to her credit that she realized that he was not there and that is further along than what some Christians are they have not realized that something has come between they have not sensed the absence they were not even aware that it was missing they were not aware of the fact that they were living this life without him being present there they thought that this is what the Christian life consists of they thought that I am living the normal Christian life they thought that what I am doing is the way all people do it they thought this is the way Christians normally experience it but this woman was aware this bride in this story

was aware of his absence and she desired his presence but he was not there that is a tremendous that is actually spiritual maturity when we get to a place in life we can understand that my relationship with him is not what it should be something is wrong with my relationship with my Savior it is to her credit she had that discernment she noticed that he was not here we need revival when he is not here when we notice that he is not here but we need far more revival when we cannot even notice that he is not here and that person is in serious spiritual condition now though things look outwardly superior very good that person is in deep spiritual difficulty that does not sense his absence and I will show you that before before we sense and feel and long for and feel the intolerable weight and

burden of his absence before we get to that point a lot of revival has happened already a lot of stirrings of God have happened already if we sense that he is not here and I wish he was here I cannot live any longer without him here dear brother and sister there should be nothing more intolerable in your life than my life there should be nothing more intolerable in your life than my life than the sense of the absence of God there is nothing that should be more intolerable for us than that I don't sense that God is with me and I heard someone say in the Sanskrit class this morning that that we don't need to have flames of fire

coming out of the heaven or lightning bolts to strike us down in order to convince us that God is real and that God is here but he said at times people who pray to

the Lord have sensed very very visible perceptible manifestations of God's presence but I would want to tell you that you do not want to live without that clear assurance and clear evidence that God is with you now you might say that brother Dale this was completely happenstantial that was completely chance that was just simply a fault in the VCR machine on the airplane you might tell me that and I will say fine then you just go ahead and believe that but we were riding to Atlanta, Georgia and they have these videos on these televisions on these screens and you have to you have to put them things in your ears to hear what they are saying and I will never put them on I will never do that on an airplane and there is nothing difficult to keep your mind pure keep your thoughts in order

without hearing all those bad words and listening to that terrible drama and following that those evil and suggestive and provocative movies but you cannot help riding an airplane with that many screens in front of you and this was a great big one right in front of my face there on that plane it was one of those little tiny boxes it was a big large screen and right in front of my face it's impossible to not know what's going on on that and it was a it was a a diabolical presentation in which it turned religion into a form of saint worship and I could tell you the title of the movie and you would recognize it as being a very popular thing that people are reading today but this thing got more and more filthy and you know that as a movie comes to an end the worst of the drama reaches its

climax the worst of the of the gory the worst of the violence the worst of the sexism the worst of the sadism the worst of it is at the end and my fear was becoming increasingly greed now the question is God's presence and the question is seeking His face and the question is being aware whether God is present or not and the point is that there should be nothing more intolerable in our lives than to sense the absence of God that should be the most intolerable thing in our lives the most intolerable thing is not the is not the Wall Street crashing the most intolerable thing is not the price price of gasoline going up and you have a you have cheap gasoline instead of Oregon our gasoline costs us three dollars a gallon for regular gasoline the high test is more than that you can be glad for

the price of gasoline you have here and that is not the worst thing for gasoline they said if this war starts and goes through gasoline will double in price it will be six dollars a gallon for regular gasoline that is not the most intolerable thing that happens the most intolerable thing is not a death in the family the most intolerable thing is not an audible accident or being discovered to have cancer that is not the most intolerable thing that can be that is not the most beautiful thing there is nothing wrong with going home to meet your Savior there is nothing wrong with you being united forever in the beauty of the Lord there is nothing wrong with that there is no problem there the problem is absence from God but you need the presence of God with you and so I was watching this thing

or seeing this was this going on I just could tell it was getting worse and worse and worse and my spirit would speak the grief and I started to pray I said Lord do something about this I said these people look at all these people in this airplane 767 a 767 Boeing all the people in this airplane watching this filthy thing filling their hearts with all these earplugs in there hearing this stuff and they are going to believe it they are going to be convinced that this is life they are going to be convinced that this is the way the universe is controlled in these days they are going to be convinced that this is the only power that is out there I said Lord how am I going to respond to this terrible movie and shortly after that that movie came to a stop the screen just got a blank a bunch of

dots on the screen and everything stopped I don't know what to do because I don't hear those sounds anymore or not I don't know and I heard people in the airplane start telling the people working in the plane the movie the movie get them and make that movie go and so someone made another mistake put the movie back on again put it on the beginning put it on the fast fast forward so imagine this movie that movie took an hour and a half to get to that point and now in about ten minutes time it does the whole thing so these people are jumping and running and it's going real fast real fast real fast like a fast forward there it goes and there's all this crazy kind of thing that you saw before happening three or four ten times faster than before and this movie went on and on until it came down

to the very place where the thing had quit before and then they slowed it down and now it's going regular speed it got to that exact same point it quit again and the people again began to put up their fuss and the boys came to the doctor and said we are very sorry we cannot seem to fix the movie and I said thank you lord you've got with you in your life in your life how far away is he who is in control who are you walking with who are you living for see my face there wasn't anyone in there place seeking god's face these people are seeking something else if god would just during this week want to show us what we are seeking then what would he say god would have the opportunity to put it on the walls of this church building this meeting house write it on the walls here shoot it up there

with a projector on the walls what you are truly seeking in life would you be satisfied for the rest of the congregation to see what is written there this woman was experiencing the dilemma of an unsatisfied life you see her relationship with the lord was an ebb and flow relationship it was a come and go relationship it was an on and off relationship it was now kind of near now very far and it was not that life of constantly abiding it was not a life in the secret place with the lord it was not that life which was hid with christ and god it was not that secret life it was not a constant abiding she did the blessed life of the inner chamber verse 4 draw me we will run after thee the king has brought me into his chambers she knew how to be glad and rejoice in him but if you notice before

verse 4 ends there is a sadness in her tone because it is something that she is remembering this is in her memory this is the way it was where is it today where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the lord where is the soul refreshing view of jesus in his words what has happened to that as a matter of fact we had back ten years ago back with brother so and so was here back back there in those years in the past back back there something happened god was among us in those days we knew how that was we remember that oh but listen brother nothing should be more intolerable than the fact that you have lost it and she lost it and god said seek my face the reason why I must seek his face is because we are seeking something else she said seeking the face of god because she remembered it was

back there but it was not here anymore so I want to just give you some of the evidences and we are not we are not going into this deeper this morning this is only a meditation it's only it's only a simple meditation my life with jesus is a public life not a private life it's time to seek god's face she could talk about it in there before the daughters of jerusalem she could bring it out and bring all that on and explain what it was but why aren't you with him now the daughters of jerusalem had reason for wondering about that you see she was out here in this vineyard verse 6 did you notice that she had a lot of activity she was very involved she was she was really busy doing her service but she made a serious mistake and those of us who are involved in christian service those of us who

give our full time to the work of missions the work of churches or the work of mission projects whatever it might be we have a very very serious danger there is a subtle mischief in the life of any person involved in

christian service let me tell you what it is I might not have a chance to refer to this later on in the week but there is a world of difference between being involved in service and being a servant there is a world of difference between the two you see this girl was was all wrapped up in the responsibilities she had and the tasks she was called to do and she was involved in this christian service and she was doing all these things and she allowed those things to substitute for caring for her own vine and branch relationship with Lord Jesus and while she was out there doing

all this stuff and feeding these people and making their machinery go and like the brother said in the class directing the traffic she was not keeping channels up with her dream God and I want to say something this morning that I'd like you to remember after the service was all the fruit in my life all the fruit in our lives that is not the result of abiding in Christ was produced by the flesh everything we ever did every Sunday class we ever taught every time we ever had another gospel track every time we went to a C.A.M. disaster site to put shingles on a house roof every time we've ever done a thing you have the all the fruit in our lives that was not the result of constant abiding in Christ was the result of the works of the flesh because that's all the power we had with which to do

and every sermon we preach and every devotional we read and every Sunday class and every Christian day school year that we teach without constantly abiding in Christ is the work of the flesh and how to expect the church to be built up as a result so this lady was very involved in service but her own vengeance she had not maintained she had not guarded that she had not tended the fruit she had not tended the relationship that this is fruit in her own life she was living on fast forward she was living on the CD that she recorded and just playing it back in her experience she was living on something else except the present relationship with the Lord and she became aware of something in verse 7 as she sensed this absence and this seriousness of her condition began to dawn on her she said tell

me and she's talking to someone who's not hearing she's talking to someone who's not hearing he's not there I realize that today we pray to God no matter how far from us he is he hears us when we pray tell me O thou whom my soul loveth where thou feedest where thou makest thy flux to rest at noon for why should I be as one that turns aside by the flux of thy companions I like the way the Spanish Bible says it why should I be an erring one one that turns aside why should I be errante the Spanish Bible says why should I be off here to myself off to the side off on a side road going the wrong way not finding you why should I be there and why should I be satisfied to be where your companions are when I really need to be where you are and I ask you something for me is it satisfying to you to

be with the people of God to be with those who know the Lord to be with those who walk with Him do you like to go to the bookstore and buy the books of the latest person that has some kind of a great story to tell or get a tape of some picture that sounds like you know it's really working in his life and you become a companion of those who know God and a companion of those who know the Lord when you ought to have that relationship yourself it's God's will for you pray one of His children that we walk with Him it is not enough to know those who know Him why should I be as one that turns aside by the flux of thy companions I like the way when it is thy very presence that I need this morning and she talked about Him but I ask you a question this morning do you think as she was talking she

was hearing from Him I'd like you to take your church pendant which you have there in front of you and your bench and focus the number 377 I just want to use the singing of this hymn as we close the service this morning I would just like the singing of this hymn to be a spiritual exercise to be a spiritual challenge to us when you sing this hymn this is one of the most beautiful hymns that you have in your song book and

there are phrases in this hymn that come from the song of Solomon that's why I chose it but as you sing this morning are you expecting God to hear your voice as you are singing or as you are singing will you hear God's voice as you are praying do you expect God to hear your voice or as you are praying do you not hear God's voice what is your concept this morning of

pleasing God do you think that God is pleased because I stopped my sinning I no longer go to the movies like I used to go I no longer sing smoke like I used to smoke.

I no longer swear like I used to swear. I no longer sit at the drag strip until four o'clock on Sunday morning like I used to sit at the drag strip until four o'clock on Sunday morning. Do you think God is pleased because we stopped sinning? Is that how we please God? Do you think we please God because we are not like other men are? I thank you God, but I'm not as other men are.

Do you think that pleases God? What pleases God? There's only one thing that pleases God. For I am my beloved's and my beloved's mine. For I am his and he is mine.

There's nothing between us and there's no absence and he is near and he's right here and he's welcome and he's a vital part of my life and I cannot live this day without him. I don't make this meal. I don't invite this guest to my home for dinner.

I don't make that contract on that sale there on the job. I don't buy that car, that pickup truck or that new tractor, that new piece of machinery without walking with God and talking with God. I don't buy my clothing.

I don't make a dress. I don't sit down at the sewing machine without the presence of God. I don't live without God.

I don't buy this book unless I know it pleases him. I don't buy this furniture unless I know it's his will. I don't put that dish under the house unless I know that's what God wants me to do.

I've talked to this angel with God and we've made good decisions together. Are you used to living that way? How much distance do you allow between yourself and God this morning? And as we sing 377, let us seek God's face.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18274.mp3>

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