

It's Time to Seek the Lord

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston's sermon emphasizes the importance of intentionally seeking the Lord for spiritual growth and blessings.

Duration: 1:11:38

Scripture: Psalm 63:1-2, Isaiah 55:2, Isaiah 55:5-6, Hosea 6:1-3, Hosea 10:12

Topics: "Seeking God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the importance of seeking the Lord in good times. He refers to the story of King Asa in 2 Chronicles 14 as an example of seeking God's blessings. The preacher emphasizes that seeking God should not be limited to times of crisis, but should be a regular practice for believers. The sermon encourages the congregation to set aside a week to seek God and to have a heart that desires to grow closer to Him.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings of love in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ this evening.

You just don't know what a blessing it is to be here, to see you all. You are a serious bunch of people. God bless you.

You know, I traveled from Rapid City, South Dakota to where I was this weekend. And I caught the tears of another pastor who's trying to lead a bunch of people who don't want to go anywhere. And every time I catch those tears, I always think of you.

What a privilege we have as elders here to lead people who want to go. Oh, bless God, Brother Aaron, Brother Emanuel. God bless you for being here on Monday night.

Let's go for the gold, huh? So I'm very grateful that I can be here. I'm tired, but I'm happy. I had a very nice weekend there at a homeschool convention.

I've never preached at a homeschool convention before, so that was a little different. But the Lord gave us many good open doors. Let's pray.

Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Lord. God, our Father, send revival. We need it, Lord.

I need it, God. This community needs it, God. Please, Father, send revival, God.

Thank you, Lord, for the assembling of the saints this evening. Father, we just pray. Set our sails, Lord, to catch the wind all this week, Father.

And oh, Father, after the sails are set, we pray that you will blow upon them, God. This is our prayer. Lord, help us this evening to say the right things and to say them in the right way, God.

That's all we ask, Father. Fill us with the Holy Ghost, preacher and hearers alike, God. Let us hear that wonderful, glorious, precious, still, small voice in our hearts tonight.

We pray for that. We trust you for it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Title of the message this evening, It's Time to Seek the Lord. It's time to seek the Lord. My burden and desire this evening is to set our sails in the direction of God's blessings this week.

That we might catch the wind of God's Spirit as He blows. Also, to establish our hearts that what we are doing this week is a clear Bible principle. And something that we ought to do.

Something that we should do on a regular basis. Something that should be normal for us to do as the people of God. To set aside a week and seek God.

Not because everything is falling apart, but because we love God. And we're not satisfied to stay where we are. As I look through the Scriptures and spend time meditating and preparing for the message this evening, it came so clear to me, again, that this is in fact a Bible principle.

A discipline of the people of God, may I say it that way, with great blessings upon it. Hear the words of the Apostle Paul to the church at Colossae. He says these words to us this evening.

If ye then be risen with Christ, and we are, praise God, we are, seek those things which are above. Where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above.

Not on things on the earth. Why, Paul? For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Isn't that a beautiful portion of Scripture to just kind of help us to set our sails on where we're going and what we're doing as we begin these meetings, as we begin to look out ahead and see what God the Lord would do for us, what God the Lord would speak to us? To hear words like this.

Seek those things which are above. That's what we're doing this week. Seeking those things which are above.

I thought about the Scriptures there in Ecclesiastes chapter 3, and you don't need to turn there, but I was thinking on this title, you know. It's time to seek the Lord. And there in Ecclesiastes chapter 3, it says, there is to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.

Isn't that beautiful? And so also, there is a season where the people of God set aside some time, and there is a purpose that God has for what we are doing this week. And it's purposed by the living God. And I read down through the list there, and I know that it may be a physical list, you know, but I just looked at it in a spiritual sense.

And just let me read to you the list of beautiful spiritual things that I found in Ecclesiastes 3. I think it's verse 1 through 3 or 4. A time to be born. Oh, I thought about that. Yes, Lord! It's time to have some births around here, dear God.

A time to plant. Yes! Planting spiritual seeds in our hearts that we may grow thereby, that those seeds would take root downward and bear fruit upwards. It says it's a time to harvest.

And surely those are some of the expectations of each and every one of us as we look at a whole week like this. It's a time of harvest. A time to heal.

Oh, glory! Yes! A time to heal, Lord. A time to build up. A time to weep.

Yeah! A time where we set aside where God has purpose. A time to weep. A time to laugh.

Yes, Lord! Give us some laughter this week also in the sweet fellowship of the brothers and sisters in the sweet times of rejoicing as God does work in our heart and by His grace He sets us free and leads us on. Yes, a time to laugh also. A time to mourn.

We plan to do some of that this week. Blessed are they that mourn. A time to embrace.

Beautiful. That's what we're going to do this week, isn't it, brothers and sisters? It's a time to embrace. A time to give.

A time to give. A time to be silent. You know, I read that and I thought of those precious moments when the Spirit of God is hovering so near that nobody wants to say anything.

Oh, God! Give us some of those this week that we just sit in awe in the silence of the presence of the living God. A time to be silent. And yes, a time to speak.

And we're going to do that. A time to love. And a time of peace.

And I looked at that list and I said, Lord, would You give us some of all of that this week? May God give us this and more as we seek His face this week. You know, the Bible is filled with accounts where God's people and individual people of God set apart a space of time to seek the Lord. I think of that beautiful example there of the prophet Daniel who was burdened and didn't understand what the 70 weeks was and what the 70 was and when the children of Israel would be led back out of captivity and go back to Jerusalem.

And he set aside a time to seek the Lord. My, was he rewarded so beautifully! A season to seek the Lord. We're going to look at an example of this a little bit later.

But, you know, I thought about Nehemiah's day, you know, after everything was done. You know, those thousands of people came back to Jerusalem and they rebuilt the temple and they sanctified the people and they rebuilt the walls. And then in Nehemiah's day, I think they spent two weeks just seeking God.

Half the day they listened to the Word of God. And half the day they responded to what they heard. And I thought about that and I said, Lord, do that for us.

Give us, Lord, ears to hear. And give us also responsive hearts that we would be responding all week long. See? That's what they were doing.

And those responses may be different for all of us depending on where we're at in light of whatever message we may hear. But all that God would give us responsive hearts like the children of Israel in those days of Nehemiah. So, in this message this evening, as we are just beginning down the road of this beautiful week, if you would just allow me to guide our hearts a bit.

God is no respecter of persons. We see these examples in the Bible of those who did exactly what we're doing. They set apart some time and they sought God.

And we see the beautiful results that they received because they, out of the sincerity of their heart, sought the Lord. Oh, I just think we need to trust God for the same thing. And know that the God who met their needs and the God who led them in such beautiful ways will also do the same for us because He is no respecter of persons whatsoever.

His promises and the conditions of those promises, they are for any and all who are willing to meet those conditions. Amen? The promises are yea and amen. Turn with me for just a moment to the book of Luke in chapter 11.

Just some reflections that I've had as we considered these meetings this week. And you know, I don't know what you came with. You know, we all have come with some expectations in our heart.

And I trust that our expectations are in the Lord. But you know, we all come from where we come from and whatever we're facing and whatever our needs are and whatever our burden is. You know, we come with all those things into this week.

These words in Luke 11, starting in verse 9, I believe are promises to us that we can lay hold on and rise up in faith and believe. Jesus admonishing His disciples and giving them instruction on prayer said these words, and I say unto you, ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find.

Knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth. And he that seeketh, findeth.

And to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Now listen to these words, brothers and sisters. Jesus is reasoning with them and God is reasoning with us this evening as we come to these meetings with whatever the needs are in our lives or our families.

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? And of course we know the answer. Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? Now these are absurd contrasts. You know, it's a rhetorical question.

We already know the answer. And Jesus already knew the answer. But he's reasoning with us.

If he then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Beautiful promise. As we look ahead through this week.

Beautiful promise. We come with different needs, seeking answers. And God has the answers.

We come seeking answers and we come seeking the God who has the answers, I trust. Let me give you a word of assurance, a word of assurance here, this evening. Hear the Word of the Lord.

If thou seekest Him with all thine heart, He will be found of thee. Isn't that a beautiful promise? If you lack wisdom, ask! Ask! We do lack wisdom, don't we? There are things we're not sure what to do with. There are things in my life that I'm not sure what to do with.

As I come to this week, I just think, praise God! Set aside the whole week. Lord, what do you want me to do in this situation? And what do you want me to do in this one? You need wisdom? Ask! But, let us ask in faith, believing, knowing, that God is our loving Heavenly Father and He will surely give us that which we need. We must have a posture of faith as we move into this week.

We must have a posture of faith. Hebrews 11, 6, remember? We must believe that God is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. And that's what we're wanting to do this week.

Diligently seek the One who rewards those who diligently seek Him. Oh, I just want to encourage every one of us this evening. I take the encouragement myself.

Let us rise up, brothers and sisters, and go for the gold. Not because we're falling apart, but just because we love God. Just because we love God.

I don't believe we should wait until everything is falling apart and then seek God. That's not right. Our God is a covenant-keeping God and He will keep His promises.

And I've come with expectations in my heart, expecting a blessing from the Lord. But I also have to acknowledge that there are some things that I need to do in order for those blessings to come. And I trust that's what your hearts are this evening.

Also, I believe it is, or you wouldn't all be here on Monday night. It just thrills my heart, you know. There's a big difference between having meetings and just letting somebody get up and give a message every evening, or for the whole congregation to say, we're going to seek God.

That God would meet our needs. We're going to seek God for a fresh revelation of Jesus. We're going to seek God for the fresh revelation of the wisdom that we need for our lives.

We're going to seek God for a fresh dose of blessings in our hearts and our lives for our families. There's a big difference between that and just having meetings and having somebody get up and give a message every night. Oh, let's do it this way rather than that other way.

I must do my part. I think of the words of David. Our brother David.

Oh, David, the apostle of a seeking heart. Just a few words from David here this evening. Which one shall I read? Psalm 62.

Truly, my soul waiteth upon God. And from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation.

He is my defense. I shall not be moved. Verse 5. My soul, wait thou only upon God.

For my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation. Oh God, Thou art my God.

Early will I seek Thee. David seeking God? Yes, a man who loves God. David, the man after God's own heart who shall do all my will.

God says, yes, David is seeking the Lord. Do you see what I'm saying this evening? Not because we're falling apart, but because we love God. He's seeking the Lord.

My soul thirsteth for Thee. My flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and a thirsty land where no water is. What are you longing for, David? Verse 2. To see Thy power and Thy glory so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.

That's beautiful. That's the heart of David. Turn with me now to Hosea chapter 10.

I just want to look at some of these verses in the Scripture that encourage us and admonish us to seek the Lord. Hosea chapter 10 and verse 12. Listen to these words.

Hosea 10 and verse 12. Sow to yourselves in righteousness. Reap in mercy.

Break up your fallow ground. Why? For it is time to seek the Lord. That's where I got my title.

It is time to seek the Lord. How long, Lord, till He come? For what, Lord? Till He come and reign righteousness upon you and me. That's what we want, brothers and sisters.

Till He come and reign righteousness upon us. Righteousness in our marriages. Righteousness in our homes.

Righteousness in our own personal lives. Till He come and reign righteousness upon us. Isaiah 55.

Look what God says in Isaiah 55. We're going to read verse 5 and 6, but let's read 1, 2, and 3 first and establish the context. Oh, everyone that thirsteth, come.

Brothers and sisters, this week, come. Come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, you come. Come ye, come by and eat.

Yea, come by wine and milk without money and without price. Then God challenges us a bit here. You know, and it's a good challenge for us because, you know, we can get all wrapped up in all kinds of other things all week long and just slip in for the meetings in the evening.

But God says, Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor, spend your labor for that which satisfieth not. Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good. And let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear and come unto Me, says God. Hear, and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Now, verse 6, Seek ye the Lord while He may be foul. Call ye upon Him while He is near. See that? The Lord is near this week.

He's going to be near. Seek ye the Lord while He is near. Don't just drop in for a meeting.

Seek the Lord. He's going to draw near to us. I promise you He will.

Let's get some mileage out of it. Let's prepare our hearts to seek the Lord. Let's push that food, that plate, away from the table some this week.

That our hearts come with an earnestness to hear the Word of the Lord. Because He's going to be near. I promise you.

He's near. Seek the Lord while He's near. And yes, let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord.

And He, the Lord, will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. And there's an encouragement to every struggling soul that may be in this room. He will abundantly pardon, says the Word of the Lord.

All these verses and many more can be traced back to a promise in a covenant that God made with Israel. All of these and many, many more. Let's turn there and look at that promise and that covenant in 2 Chronicles 7. Now, 2 Chronicles 7 is what I'm going to call Old Testament Pentecost.

May God give us a New Testament Pentecost. But here is what I'm going to call an Old Testament Pentecost. And it's in the context of this Old Testament Pentecost that God gives to Solomon a beautiful promise and a covenant.

And God promises to the children of Israel and to Solomon that He will keep His covenant, His promises with those who will keep His covenant. In chapter 7 and verse 1, we come to the end of Solomon's prayer. In his prayer, which is in chapter 6, twelve times, twelve times in Solomon's prayer, he said these words to God.

Hear Thou. Hear Thou. Twelve times.

Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the God who heard his prayer answered. The fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifice. That's the first thing that happened.

There was a sacrifice laid on the altar, but no fire. It was there, but there was no fire. But when Solomon made an end of his prayer, God answered his prayer with fire.

Something else happened. The glory of the Lord filled the house. The presence of God filled this new temple that was being dedicated.

And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Now, isn't that a beautiful scene? That's the context of this covenant that God made to Solomon.

God said to Solomon in verse 12, The Lord appeared to Solomon by night and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people, if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face, there it is again, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. This is God's condition.

He says to Solomon, I have heard your prayer and here are my conditions for that beautiful prayer to be answered and answered again, and answered again, and answered again. And may I propose to you this evening that this little covenant which God made with the children of Israel is not just when they get in trouble. Yes, it is for when they get in trouble.

But they are supposed to continue in the vein of that which God started there all the rest of their days. So let's look at this covenant just a little bit here this evening. God says, my people.

It's my people, God says. When things are not going right, it's my people, God says. If things aren't happening the way they should be happening in the community, it's my people, God says.

If my people. And that's what we have this week, isn't it? It's God's people getting together. The gathering of God's people.

And maybe you would look around you and say that things are getting worse. Should we reprove the politicians for all the problems that we have in our land? Should we march on Washington and let them know how upset we are with the way things are going? As if to shift the blame over on them when I believe that God would say the reason why things are in such sad condition in this land that we live in is because of my people. My people.

You know, what about this land where we live? You know, we live where God has planted us as a congregation. You know, we could ride around and we could drive around through this county and say, oh, things are so bad and this is so dead and these people are so wicked and what's wrong with those and all that? No, dear brothers and sisters, it's my people. It's my people.

God says keep on seeking my face. Let the responsibilities of what is happening in this community begin to fall upon our hearts. It's my people.

And that's a beautiful motivation for us through this week, isn't it? That God would work in our hearts in such a way that He would touch the community where we are living. We don't want to just seek the Lord for a greater blessing for us so that we can take it and keep it and hold on to it. No.

We want to be blessed by God. But we want to be blessed by God so that we can be a blessing to somebody else so that the blessing can flow out of this place. It's my people, says God.

Shall what? Shall humble themselves. Shall bring their heart low. If my people shall bring their heart low.

You know, brothers and sisters, we can do that. This week. We can bring our heart low.

Every one of us knows enough about our own life to know that we all have means. Let's just bring our heart low. This week.

God resists the proud. But He gives grace to the humble, to those who bring their heart low. He gives grace to them.

Pride in God's people is the greatest plague that there could be. Nothing will stop God's grace more than that pride in God's people. We need to seek God and ask God for a baptism of honesty.

A baptism of honesty. Look, we're all brothers and sisters. You know, we know each other.

We've been together a long time. Oh, that God would baptize us with honesty. You don't have to be perfect this week, dear brother.

Dear sister, you don't have to be perfect. Did you know that? To get the blessing from God and not to fall down upon your life and upon your family and upon your marriage and whatever your dreams and visions are, you don't have to be perfect. You just need to be honest.

Hallelujah! That means this for everybody. If we've got to be perfect. That's a pretty sad story, isn't it? But if all we have to do is be honest, the blessings are available to everyone.

Hallelujah! There it is. Hear the words of David again who learned very painfully, but very beautifully, that honesty is very important. In Psalm 51 and verse 6, he says this to God, Behold, thou desirous truth in the inward parts and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Isn't that interesting how those two are tied together there? Thou desirous truth deep down in my soul. And as truth and truthfulness and the truth about me settles down deep in my soul, wisdom shall be in the inward parts of my heart. Verse 16, For thou desirous not sacrifice, else would I give it.

Thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. O God, thou wilt not despise.

Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion. Oh, that's a good prayer for us to pray this week. Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Praise God! May God do good to Zion this week and build up the walls of Jerusalem where there's a hole, where there's a gap, where there's a gate that is burned or leaning on its edge, sunken down. May God do good unto Zion this week and build the walls of Jerusalem and make them strong and make them sturdy. Humble themselves.

That means being willing to acknowledge my needs. That's what it means. Being willing to acknowledge my needs.

Number three, Now you can pray. Pray? Cry out to God with my voice. Let us cry out to God with my voice.

Do you know how many times in the Psalms David uses that phrase? I will lift up my voice unto thee. Hear me when I cry. Cry out to God with my voice.

To pray is to acknowledge that God is the answer and that God has the answer to our every need. Let us pray in faith this week seeking God, believing that God will meet my need and direct my steps and loose me from all my bondages and deliver me from anything that is hindering me from walking close to Him. The history of Israel and the history of the church is filled with examples.

When God's people get desperate and begin to cry out to God, God begins to respond. Do you believe that this evening? It happens that way. It can be that way this week.

It will be that way this week. Don't doubt it. Expect it.

It will be that way. But you can't seek God unless you pray. Amen? Number four.

God gives the conditions of His covenant and seek my face, God says. I looked up that word seek. It must be that A.W. Tozer looked up that word seek some many years ago when he wrote his little book, The Pursuit of God.

Because that's what the word seek means. Pursue. To seek the face of God means to seek His presence.

To seek the face of God is to seek the presence of God and to seek the open face of God, to seek God until everything is open between me and God. That's what it means to seek my face. To seek His blessing.

To sense that all is clear and God is shining on me. Not because I'm perfect, but because I'm clear. Not because I've done everything exactly right, but because I'm honest and I'm sincere.

We'll see that a little later as we look at one king in the Old Testament. He wasn't a perfect man, but God called him perfect. He was perfect and upright all of His days.

And that's all God is asking of us. Seek my face until my face is smiling your way. Number five, God says to turn from their wicked ways.

That's repentance. We need to turn. We need to be open before God.

We need to go through the exercise of just being open before the Lord that God can put His finger on this or touch that in our lives. Turn from their wicked ways. Let's read in Hosea just a few verses.

Back over there in Hosea. Hosea 5 has some beautiful verses on this. Hosea 5 and verse 15, God has a controversy with His people here in Hosea and God explains and shares His heart through the prophet Hosea of what He's going to do and what response He's expecting from those who He does this to.

In verse 15 He says, I will go and return to My place till they acknowledge their offense and seek My face. There it is again. Till they acknowledge their offense and seek My face.

In their affliction, they will seek Me early. Now look at the response of the people of God. Oh, let this be our response, brothers and sisters.

Chapter 6 verse 1. Come, let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn and He will heal us. He has smitten and He will bind us up. Praise God.

After two days will He revive us. In the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.

His going forth is prepared as the morning and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. Now there's two things that I want to look at, brothers and sisters, in this little text that we're looking at. First of all, God would say to us, if things are not right, if life is falling apart, if everything has come crushing down upon us, God says, come to Me.

God says, you come. Come in faith. I'll meet your need.

I'll meet your need. But then there's another thing to look at here. And I believe this probably applies more to what we're doing this week.

If we follow on to know the Lord, if we keep on seeking the Lord more and more and more in our Christian life, then we're going to know His going forth is prepared as the morning and He shall come to us as the rain, as the latter rain and the former rain. Now that is a prayer that I can put my heart into this week. God, come to us like the rain.

The former rain, the early rain, and the latter rain. The light rains which come in the spring and the heavy rains that come as the crops are standing and the grain is beginning to form. The light rain and the heavy rains.

God will come like the rain upon His people. I can unite with that prayer, brothers and sisters. It's time to seek the Lord until He come and rain righteousness upon us.

Turn from their wicked ways. That has to do with things this way and it has to do with things this way. You know, we're a big congregation.

Sometimes we get hurt. Sometimes we hurt one another. Sometimes we have expectations and they don't get fulfilled.

You know, I thought about it as I was praying and meditating upon this week of meetings. You know, I thought, we're getting large. It's getting to be a big church again.

Maybe there's an offense, you know, this way. Maybe I've done something. Maybe I've offended someone.

You know, this is a week to seek the Lord. And just, you know, get the things clear this way and get them clear this way. And I want to invite you.

If I have, please come. I want to be clear. It's very possible that we have, as elders.

It's a big church. It's a lot of people. We don't know what we're doing.

But, the point is, I want everything to be clear this way. And I want it all to be clear this way. You know, if the whole week goes by and by the end of the week, everything's clear, you know, all this way.

Between all of us, you know, these lines could crisscross a hundred different ways here. Everything would be clear. Every way with everyone.

Oh, God would be pleased with that. God would be pleased. We want that.

Then God says, If you will act like this, then will I hear from heaven and forgive your sins and heal your land and heal your marriage and heal your family and heal your church. I will do it, God says. I will do it.

Oh, that God would do just that. Heal this land. God would heal this land around us.

That God would heal the people that are around us. All these religious people who are lost and multitudes of them are lost. Oh, that God would heal them.

Maybe it's your marriage. Maybe it's your family. Maybe you're in despair over your family.

Maybe it's a son. Maybe it's a daughter. It's time to seek the Lord, Mom, Dad.

It's time to seek the Lord. It's time to get desperate if you've got a desperate need. These promises have been tried and tested and proven over and over again, repeatedly in church history.

God keeps covenant with His people. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. Isn't that a beautiful promise for us to look at this week? Draw nigh to God.

Promise! He will draw nigh to you. Promise! He will do it. Let us prove the Lord.

Let us prove the Word of the Lord this week. And find those verses and all these verses to be true. Let's turn to 2 Chronicles now with a closing story that will probably take me 15-20 minutes.

But, I found this beautiful example in the Old Testament, so precious, that fits the heart of what we are seeking to do this week. This fits it beautifully. In 2 Chronicles 14, and we're going to just read a few verses here and there.

I don't have time to go over two whole chapters here, but it's 2 Chronicles 14. Seven chapters away from that covenant that we just looked at. Seven chapters.

Solomon is now gone. Rehoboam, the next son and the next king is now gone. Abijah is now gone.

And Asa is the king. The great grandson of Solomon. Asa is the king.

And here in these two chapters, we have a beautiful example of seeking God in the good times. Amen? And I would say, that's what we're doing this week. We're seeking God in the good times.

Oh, it's not perfect around here, I know that. There are needs among us, I know that. But yet, God is sweet and good to us as His people.

Here's an example of seeking God and the results that came from seeking God in the good times. Verse 1 So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa, his son, reigned in his stead.

In his days the land was quiet ten years. And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. He took away the altars of the strange gods and the high places.

He broke down the images and cut down the groves and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to do the law and the commandment. And it mentions a whole bunch of things that he did in response to seeking the Lord. Verse 7, he says, Therefore, he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities and make about them walls and towers and gates and bars, while the land is yet before us, because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought Him, and He hath given us rest on every side.

So they built and prospered. Then, which is so typical with the people of God, when they're seeking God and there's rest and things are going well, the enemy sticks up his ugly head and a one million man army from Ethiopia comes up against Judah and the people of Judah. A one million man army.

But Asa knew what to do. In verse 11, Asa cried unto the Lord his God. What kind of a cry do you suppose Asa gave that day? That was no, Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, I guarantee

it.

That man was desperate. Wasn't he? Asa cried unto the Lord his God and said, Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on Thee.

And in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord our God, let not man prevail against us. Now we're going to skip down to chapter 15 and verse 1, but I want to just let you know, God worked a miracle and discomfited the enemy before them and Israel only had half as many soldiers, or Judah had only half as many soldiers as the Ethiopians had, but God discomfited the enemy before them.

Now, here's the good part. And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah, the son of Oded, and he went out to meet Asa and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin, the Lord is with you, while ye be with Him. And if ye seek Him, He will be found of you, but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you.

Now look at those words. Why is he saying that now? Everything's going good. He's saying it now because God wants things to keep on going good.

See, Asa and the children of Judah had a right response to a real calamity in their lives. They sought God for the answer. And so God sends a prophet not just to tell them when they've done something wrong, but to bless them when they've done something right and encourage them to keep on doing it.

And I would say that's the word of the Lord to us this week to bless us and encourage us to keep on seeking God. Listen to what he said to him. Now for a long season, Israel, that's the ten tribes, had been without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law.

But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel and sought Him, He was found of them. And in those times, there was no peace to Him that went out nor to Him that came in, but great vexation were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation and city of city, for God did vex them with all adversity.

Be ye strong therefore and let not your hands be weak for your work shall be rewarded. I think that's far enough to read. God is encouraging Esau and Judah and Benjamin to keep on going and remind them of the destruction that happened to Israel, the ten departed tribes, because they did not continue to seek God.

So Esau took that up. And what does he do? He responds more. He puts away this.

He took courage. He put away the abominable idols and he renewed the altar and he gathered all of Judah and Benjamin together. And it says even in the end of verse 9 that even out of Ephraim and Manasseh and Simeon, for they fell to him out of the land of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.

So, I mean, something beautiful is happening here. This is affecting all those departed tribes because Esau and the children of Judah and Benjamin are responding and seeking the Lord. And you know, when you seek the Lord, there's a response, you know, because as you seek God, as you draw nigh to God, God begins to deal with things in our lives.

And if we respond to the things that God deals with, God draws nearer, brothers and sisters. He draws nearer. It's there.

So he gathered them together. Look at verse 12. And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul.

Look at that. No half-heartedness in that. That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

And they swear unto the Lord with a loud voice and with shouting and with trumpets and with coronets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with their whole desire, and He was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about. Now, it looks to me like it's a pretty serious matter.

I mean, the people who just decided, I'm not getting on board. Everybody's all uptight here and excited about God and seeking God, but I'm not going to get on board. Well, they died.

And praise God, we're in the New Testament and you're not going to die. Nobody's going to kill you. But it does show us the seriousness of just kind of sitting back and saying, well, let them have their fling and let them go, and I'm just going to stay where I'm at.

Kind of half-hearted, uncommitted, you know, just floating along. Watch it. Watch it.

I wouldn't do that if I were you. I'd get on board. Well, beautiful things happened.

He just kept on responding. And also concerning Maica, the mother of Asa, the king. He removed her from being queen because she had made an idol in a grove, and Asa cut down her idol and stamped it and burnt it in the brook Kidron.

Now, that means he's loving God more than he's loving his mother. Isn't he? He's putting God right up there in the front. But the high places, and here's the point I want you to notice, but the high places were not taken away out of Israel.

Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was perfect all of his days. Perfect, yet not perfect. Perfect up to the light that God gave him.

He continued to seek God. Now, there's a sad story in the next chapter in chapter 16, but we're not going to read that. It's at the end of Asa's life.

35 years into his reign. 25 years later, he was tested again. And instead of putting his trust in the Lord and crying out to God, he made a league with a wicked king and a wicked nation.

And God reprov'd him for it. But that's not the point here this evening. The point here this evening is we're looking at a principle that is clearly laid out in the scriptures.

A principle that God's people from time to time set aside some time and seek the Lord. That's the principle. Let's do that, brothers and sisters, this week.

Let's seek the Lord with our whole desire, with all of our heart, and with our whole desire. Let's seek the Lord. Let's bow our heads and close our eyes.

Is there a block standing in the way of you doing what I've been saying this evening? Is there a block there? Something looms up before your heart as you sit and listen to a message like this challenging you to seek God with all your heart. Has some block come up before you? I want to give you an opportunity this evening. We may not give an invitation every evening, but I want to give you an opportunity this evening and maybe we can even open things up for a response.

We'll leave that up to Brother Emmanuel, but I want to give you an opportunity this evening so that we can get off on the right foot from the beginning here. If there is such a block there, something that is hindering you, I just encourage you this evening, the beginning of this week, go for it. Get it clear right away.

Because the goal of this week, dear people, the goal of this week is not to find that one here and that one there who needs to get right with God. No, the goal of this week is for every one of us to seek the Lord and go on further with God. But if you are one of those that's blocked, I just want to encourage you, you can clear those things up tonight.

So, we're going to give an invitation after we have a prayer. What will be the song of invitation, brother? 870? We're going to sing 870. Let's pray first.

O God, thank You our Father and our God. Thank You for the example of the children of Judah and Benjamin and King Esau. Thank You, Father, that You're a covenant-keeping God.

And this evening, Lord, we do believe that covenant. O Father, we draw near to You, Lord, here this evening, and we ask You, God, that You would just do a work in our midst, God. We trust that to You, Father, I pray.

Settle down upon this meeting, God, with Your sweet Spirit. Settle down upon us, God. And God, do the work that needs to be done in every heart.

In Jesus' name, Amen. 780, is that it? 870. Do you have it? Let's sing number 870.

You come if you have a need.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12693.mp3>

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