

Many Do Not Seek God or Hear His Voice

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of seeking God wholeheartedly and the consequences of spiritual complacency.

Scripture: John 4:14

Topics: "Seeking God", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

Shane Idleman preaches on the importance of truly seeking God with all our hearts, emphasizing the deep hunger and thirst for God that should consume every aspect of our lives. He highlights the need for full surrender and allowing God to saturate every part of our being, not just seeking Him partially or out of convenience. The sermon challenges lukewarm Christianity, urging believers to embrace humility, happiness, and holiness that come from nearness to Jesus.

Transcript

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

"I would like to buy three dollars' worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk, or a snooze in the sunshine...I want ecstasy, not transformation. I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy three pounds of God, please" (Wilbur Reese).

Recently, I shared with our congregation that one of the most difficult challenges associated with pastoring is not sermon preparation or taxing counseling appointments, but witnessing the tragic results of spiritual dehydration--people dying spiritually with living water just steps away.

Sadly, we become so busy, so self-absorbed to drink of the living water that Christ often spoke of. The excuses are broad, the solution is narrow: "Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst" (John 4:14).

(Hear the new sermon, Hearing the Voice of God, by clicking: <http://youtu.be/osEh3j024Bs>)

Very few are truly hungry and thirsty for God. Although most of us quote, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled," many have never truly experienced it. Paul said that he wants to know Christ in the power of His resurrection and in the fellowship of His suffering (Philippians 3:10). King David cried out, "One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in

the house of the Lord all the days of my life" (Psalm 27:4).

Hungering and thirsting for God is an all-consuming passion that drives every aspect of life. One summer, I took a bike ride out into the desert with little water. As I turned around and headed back to my truck, I realized that I was out of water. Each mile brought a new level of thirst and desperation. My thoughts were consumed with water; nothing else mattered. The scenery and quiet that I enjoyed minutes earlier had lost its attraction.

Hope surged when I spotted my truck in the near distance. Within minutes, I dropped my bike, sprung the truck door open, and devoured the remaining water. Dehydration and exhaustion quickly gave way to a refreshing sense of satisfaction. The extreme thirst that I was feeling was now satisfied.

This reminded me of the thirst that God often describes in His word--those who truly thirst (seek) Him with all of their heart will be satisfied. This is not partial obedience, its full surrender; it's not trying to squeeze God in, it's about allowing Him to fully saturate every aspect of our lives.

Ironically, we can have the letter of the law, but not the heart of Christ. We can quote the Bible, but hearts remains hard as stone. We rule our homes with a rod of iron, but know nothing about compassion, gentleness, and humility. We often come to church to give God "His due," rather than to truly seek Him. There are also those who have replaced conviction with compromise. As a result, their passion for God has been quenched. If you find yourself saying, "I'm just not convicted about seeking God," it may be time for self-evaluation. If one is offended by the fully surrendered life, it may be a good indication that change needs to take place.

Seeking God with all of our heart, mind, and soul is a mark of the surrendered life. The surrendered life is not an option like a choice in a buffet line; it is the mark of someone who is genuinely filled with the Spirit of God.

The lukewarm church disdains the heat of conviction; thus it remains lukewarm. Lukewarm knows nothing of holiness, surrender, and the Spirit-filled life. It may have a form of godliness, but it denies God by its lifestyle (see 2 Timothy 3:5). Charles Spurgeon rightly noted, "There will be three effects of nearness to Jesus--humility, happiness, and holiness."

Why don't many truly seek God?

1. ■ First, it may be that one is not genuinely saved. They may have "religion" but not a true "relationship" with the living God. They have never repented of their sin and experienced "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

2. ■ Second, many are rejecting absolute truth as reflected in recent denominational decisions to endorse same-sex marriage. The Bible was written so that people would know the truth--the truth about God, creation, sin, and redemption. We are not called to make truth tolerable but to make it clear.

3. Third, many ■ simply ■ do not want to seek ■ God ■; they enjoy carnal living and satisfying the flesh. The excuse is often, "I just don't feel like seeking Him." But we must first discipline ourselves before desire comes. We must first empty ourselves in order to be filled. We must first obey before receiving the blessing. We must first break before there is restoration. We must first pray before there is transformation. We must praise Him before there is peace. And we must first seek Him if we are to truly find Him ■ ■ "He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (cf. Hebrews 11:6).

The fire of God, the manifest presence of God, does not fall on an empty altar: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God" (Romans 12:1). ■Return to God...return to the voice of Truth. ■Genuine faith is reflected in sincere humility, selfless love, true repentance, and a surrendered life.

Does your life reflect these characteristics? Are you truly seeking God? It's not too late.

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