

Seeking His Face and Not His Hands Only

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 July 2012

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] I've given you a study guide that will help you or help you interact at least with the study, be engaged with it.

The study that we're going to be starting tonight entitled Seeking and Finding God. And this is more of a devotional kind of study. It's not an expository lesson where I'm going to take several chapters and just take it verse by verse or word by word.

Though it will be expository because the passages we're going to be looking at, I hope, will be exposed so that we understand this, I think, very important truth.

About seeking and finding God. And all that goes with that. This is a very important study, I believe. And I think you'll agree with me as we walk through this together.

First thing I want you to consider is that God is not automatically present in everything we're doing as believers.

[1:14] Not automatically present. Now let me explain that. Because you might be thinking, well, God is always present. And, Pastor, you've already prayed tonight. You know, I know that you're present with us here tonight.

But you might have also heard me say that I pray for your manifest presence. Because, see, there's a difference between just the presence of God and the manifest presence of God.

There's a difference between those two things. God is present all the time. He's God. He's omnipresent. He is, as a preacher put it years ago, and I guess I've repeated it a thousand times. God is everywhere present and nowhere absent. You ought to jot that down. Have you ever heard that before? Well, you have because I've said it a number of times. It's not original with me. Something that has stuck with me. And I think really a pretty good statement or declaration of the omnipresence of God. God is everywhere present and nowhere absent.

[2:21] All right? That means you can't go anywhere where He isn't. He isn't there. That's the presence of God. And just by virtue of the fact that He is God, He's always present. But there's a difference between the presence of God and the manifest presence of God.

The manifest presence of God. Now, what does Jeremiah say? Jeremiah 29.13 is the first passage that I want us to look at. You know what?

I skipped something. I'm looking at your notes and not my notes. All right? Because I knew I was about to say something else, and I looked down at my notes, being a slave to the notes as I am.

And I thought, wait a minute, I've missed something here. Because I need to explain or maybe illustrate what I mean by the manifest presence of God. That's where I was going with this.

Let's just say, just for an example or an illustration, that this Sunday morning, we have a number of visitors. And it's great to have visitors. And I hope we do have visitors this Sunday morning.

[3:30] Let's say one of them is a multi-billionaire. Multi-billionaire. And he visits our church. Wouldn't that be great? I'd love to have a multi-billionaire.

And, you know, so maybe we can pay off our building. Something like that. But let's say when the offering plate is passed, Tom Holland, he's sitting on his side.

And Brother Tom goes by and passes the offering plate. And he goes by the multi-billionaire, but he doesn't put a thing in it. He's present.

But he didn't manifest his presence. Do you see the difference between those two? Or let me give you another illustration. Suppose you go to a baseball game. And seated two or three seats down from you is a doctor, physician.

But you don't know he's a physician. And no one around him knows that he is a physician until someone in front of you gets a hot dog stuck in his throat. And so you call out, is there a doctor in the house?

[4:37] And this man stands up, I'm a doctor. And he, you know, very quickly goes and ministers to this guy with the hot dog caught in his throat.

I guess that's possible in a hot dog anyway. See, the doctor's presence. But he didn't necessarily manifest his presence.

You didn't know he was a doctor until he manifested his presence as a doctor. Or a king decides to put on common clothing, walks through his kingdom just to see how things are going.

No one knows he's the king. And he's present, still king, and he's present throughout his kingdom, the places that he walks. But until he acts like a king or acts on the basis of a king with his authority, he is present, but he's not manifested his presence.

So that's pretty clear. Now, I don't know about you. I think I do know this about you. That you have a desire for God to manifest his presence.

[5:45] And I mean in your own life individually, personally. Do you not have that desire that God not just be present? Because he is that.

And there are plenty of places in the Bible that promises his presence. In your heart and in your life. He said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

God is always present in your life. But you have a desire that he would manifest his presence. I don't mean like a billionaire giving you a bunch of money. I don't mean that.

But manifest his presence in so many, many different ways. So that you know this is God. And that God is with you. And he is manifesting.

Don't you have that desire? And then on the larger scale, the corporate level, or the church. Say the church. We have a desire. I have a desire. That every time we meet.

[6:39] Wednesday night, Sunday morning, Sunday night. Any other time that we get together. That in our worship. Or in our service. Whatever we may be doing. That God would manifest his presence.

Make his presence known to us. In an undeniable way. In a very active way. And I don't mean just what we're probably all thinking.

I don't just mean that God would do something. Provide something. It's not always that. As we're going to see as we go throughout this study. But in multiple ways.

God would manifest his presence in our lives. And that's what I long for and pray for. And I hope that you do too. And so that leads us to what we need to do.

We need to seek him. And find him. Seek him and find him. Now we're ready for Jeremiah chapter 29. And I want to read just one verse.

[7:41] But we're going to read more of chapter 29 a little bit later. And then we're going to look at another passage in the Bible a little bit later as well in the study tonight.

And verse 12 says this. And I may have. Did I print that for you there? 13. 13. Alright. Well I want to read 12 and then you have 13 there. It's 12 and 13 that I want to read.

Then you will call upon me and go and pray to me and I will listen to you. And here's verse 13. And you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

That's a marvelous passage. Verse 13 especially. And one of my favorites in the Old Testament. One of my favorites out of Jeremiah. There are a number of Jeremiah.

And this one is tremendous. Let me read that again. Verse 13. Listen to it very carefully. And you will seek me. And what? Find me.

[8:44] When. Here's the condition. We'll get into that here in a minute. When you search for me with all your heart. Seek me. Find me. You'll seek me and you will find me.

When you search for me with all of your heart. Let me give you just a little bit of background here. For this verse of scripture. We need to first of all understand or see this passage in its context.

What's taking place. Though the principle applies on a broad scale. Even to our own lives as God's people. But obviously in this passage.

God is speaking through the prophet Jeremiah. Speaking to his people. Israel. And where are they? Can you imagine? They're in captivity.

As they were through most of the Old Testament history. That we read about in the Bible. They were in captivity and bondage to Nebuchadnezzar. King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.

[9:42] So they're in bondage. And they have preachers there. Who are preaching to them. We call them prophets. The preachers are prophets today. In a different sense than the prophets of the Old Testament.

But they had preachers. And they had two very different messages they were hearing. From the preachers of their day. First message. And it was the one they liked. We find in chapter 28 verse 11. From Hananiah. And listen to what he said. Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people. Saying thus says the Lord. Alright. Here's a word from God. Here's Hananiah preaching. Here's the first message they heard.

Saying thus says the Lord. Even so I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar. King of Babylon. From the neck of all nations. Within the space of two full years. Alright.

So. He preached a two year captivity. Right. Very clear. Now two years is a long time. But then along comes Jeremiah.

[10 : 41] And Jeremiah. If you would look. If you've got your Bibles open there. Chapter 29. And verse 4. Listen to what Jeremiah said.

Thus says the Lord. Alright. So he's kind of introducing his sermon. In the same way that Hananiah did. But his message is going to be quite different. In verse 4 it says. Thus says the Lord of hosts. The God of Israel. To all who were carried away captive. Whom I have caused to be carried away. From Jerusalem to Babylon. Build houses. So go ahead and build houses. Now wait a minute. Just going to be here two years.

So we're going to build. I'm sure they were perking up their ears. Build houses. Dwell in them. Plant gardens. Eat their fruit. You know how long it takes. You know.

To plant a garden. And harvest it. I said well. A couple of years. But it sounds like he's headed towards something else here. Take wives. Go ahead and get married.

[11 : 40] And beget sons and daughters. And take wives for your sons. And give your daughters to husbands. So that they may bear sons and daughters. That you may be increased there. And not diminish. And seek the peace of the city.

Where I have caused you to be carried away captive. And pray to the Lord for it. For in its peace you will have peace. For thus says the Lord of hosts. The God of Israel. Do not let your prophets and your diviners.

Who are in the midst deceive you. Nor listen to your dreams. Which you cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely to you in my name. I have not sent them. Says the Lord.

That included Hananiah. By the way Hananiah died. Because of his message. But that's another story. And so thus says the Lord.

After 70 years are completed. At Babylon I will visit you. Before my good word. Toward you. And cause you to return to this place.

[12 : 34] For I know the thoughts that I have. That I think toward you. Says the Lord. Thoughts of peace. And not of evil. To give you a future. And not of hope. 70 years. So he preached. A 70 year captivity.

Now if you had been there. Which church would you have joined? Hey. Do we not have.

You know. At least a part of us. Maybe a large part of us. That tends to. Desire. A more pleasing message. Something that. More agreeable to us.

Certainly two years. Sounds a lot better than 70 years. By the way. Jeremiah's prophecy. His preaching. Didn't make him a very popular preacher.

He probably suffered more than any prophet. We read about in the Old Testament. And. But quite different. Those two messages. And you know. If I might just make.

[13 : 31] An application here. Do you think that the average church member. Today. Wants. The truth. Sometimes the truth. Is not agreeable. I'm talking about.

Biblical truth. God's truth. We want the truth. As long as it's. You know. Agreeable to us. Kind of fits in with our. Desires.

And our. Our. Scheme. Of things. Our goals. And so forth. Makes us feel good. Why do you think. That there are so many. In our country today. Really around the world.

That are flocking. To. Churches. Where the pastor. Preaches only. You know. Good. And wonderful. And warm. And fuzzy things. And never preaches.

About the truth of sin. And. And so forth. All right. Now. Why was it going to take. Seventy years. I think.

[14 : 27] Verse. Eleven. And twelve. Tell us why. Maybe not. Explicitly. But certainly. Implication. Is clear. Because. Jeremiah.

Has said. All. What God. Wants them to do. Thus says the Lord. You're going to be here. Seventy years. Settle down. Settle in here. And I think. Verse eleven. Or verse twelve. Rather. Tells us why. Then. You will call upon me. And go and pray to me. And I will listen to you. And you will seek me. And find me. When you search for me. With all your heart. That God.

Because he's a gracious God. And because he's an all knowing God. He knows. What it takes. For us to finally seek him. And.

He wants us to seek him. Because he wants us to find him. So that we can know him. And so that we can love him. And this is the key to it all.

[15 : 23] So. God. Said. Seventy years. Not two years. But seventy years. Because that's how long it's going to take. For you to seek me. And find him. And God wants us to find him.

Seek him. And find him. Alright. Now how do we do it? How do we seek. And find God? Well there's a principle. From scripture. That we all need to learn. And I.

Have already said it. Or already. Spoke it. Just a second ago. But here it is. In plain English. Here's the principle. When you seek God.

When you seek him. You will find him. You will find God. When you seek God. You will find God. And when you find God.

You will know God. And when you know God. You will love God. And that.

[16 : 24] Is our whole purpose.

Because you see. Loving God. Is what you and I. Were created for. Loving God. Now that's. Kind of a broad. Loving God.

Includes our worship. Of him. And our praise. Of him. And our adoration. Of him. That's how. Our loving him. Is expressed. And our serving him. But it all. Falls under that.

That. That category. That. That. That one. Act. Of our heart. We. Love him. Loving God. Of what we were created. And.

I mean. Adam and Eve. Just think about them. In the garden. Of Eden. Before they said. And they walked with God. Cool of the day. They loved him. And commuted with him.

[17 : 35] Constantly. That's what we were created for. And loving God. Is to be the environment. In which we commune with him. Our communion with him.

Be it. That very specific time. Of prayer. Devotion. That you may spend with him. Morning. Or evening. Or whenever you may do that. Multiple times in the day.

But really throughout our day. We're communing with him. And love is the environment. Of our communion with him. Loving him. Loving God is the sole motivation. For obeying him.

We don't obey him out of fear. And we need to fear God. In the sense of respecting him. Because. It's a very serious thing. But love is the motivation.

For obeying him. And serving him. And I would also say. That love. Loving God. Is the only element. Of our Christian. Experience.

[18 : 35] Existence. That remains. All the way into heaven. And. Out into eternity. Now think about that. Remember that passage. In 1 Corinthians.

13. 13. The whole chapter. Chapter 13. 1 Corinthians. The famous. Chapter. The love chapter. But what does it say. In verse 13. Now abides.

Faith. Hope. Love. These three. And then what does it say. Greatest of these is love.

Why is that. Well. It doesn't take much. To figure that out. In heaven. Faith will be turned into sight. Any need for faith in heaven. It will be sight.

And. What about hope. In heaven. It will be real. Everything will be reality. Our hopes will turn into reality. But love. Love will still be love. In heaven.

[19 : 33] In fact. On out. Through eternity. However long eternity is. I don't think there is any end for eternity. Love is eternal. So the greatest of these is love. So, there's the principle.

Seek God, find God, know God, love God. Those three. It sounds simple. It really doesn't. Now, the whole key to this thing is the way we seek God.

We can't just operate on a bare principle and say, well, this is the principle. Seek, find, know, love. But how do we seek Him?

The way we seek Him is the key to the whole thing. And I think maybe it would help us to get a grasp on this principle if we work backward from the end to the front, from back to front.

So let's put it in those terms. You cannot love God if you don't know Him. Can you? Well, you can't love anyone you don't know.

[20:45] Can you? No. I think so. All right, but you cannot know God until you find Him. Now, let me add a little footnote here.

Clearly, God finds us first. But in our experience, we find Him. Even though He found us first. And then we find Him. But the principle here, you cannot know God until you find Him. And I might also add another little P.S. or little footnote.

When I say, use the word know, I'm not talking about just an intellectual exercise. An intellectual thing. An increasing of your intellect.

You know, because, well, in the first place, God is not some abstract concept. He's a person. He's a person. A real person. And so, what we're talking about when we talk about knowing, and certainly you know this, we're talking about a personal, intimate relationship with Him.

[21:55] Because He is a person. And He's a very personal God. He's the God of all the universe. And so, again, you cannot know Him until you find Him. You find Him.

And then thirdly, if we work backward, you cannot find God until you seek Him. Until you seek Him. As we've already said, or seen in the Scripture here in Jeremiah, God has promised to the prophet Jeremiah, you will seek me and find me when you seek for me or search for me with all of your heart.

All right? So, I've said all this. It's kind of an introduction to the series. But we're going to cover one particular aspect of how to seek and find God out of many others that we're going to be looking at. Here it is in practical, kind of the all-important practical truth. If you're going to find God, you must seek Him the right way.

God says, you'll find me if you search for me the right way. That's basically what He's saying. I suppose I don't really want to, but this is just an illustration.

[23:13] I suppose I want to go fishing. I'm not a fisher. I never could get that. I love to be outdoors. I love to be by the lake and different places.

But fishing, that's work to me. But suppose I wanted to go fishing. And I have a desire to catch a bass. I don't know the first thing about it. I don't know where to find them, what kind of bait to use. And so I go talk to my brother, Mike Dersham, over there because he's, you know, a bass master. You know, he's an angler par excellence. You've been dying in my work for a little while.

But I'm sure that I can't just go anyplace here in Bartlesville and throw out a line and expect to catch bass. There's a certain way that you have to catch them.

There's certain places they like to be. There's a certain kind of bait that they like and so forth. And so I'm seeking for bass, but I need some help to know just how to find them.

[24:14] Now, we're not seeking bass in our study here. We're seeking God. And we're going to find him when we seek for him the right way. And how do we seek God? Well, there are six principles that we're going to look at over the course of the next six weeks, starting tonight, if I will get to it.

Here are the six. At least you'll get this tonight. So you can fill in your little blanks. And anyway, here's number one. Seek his face and not his hands only.

That's what we'll look at here in just a minute. Number two, seek him with an obedient spirit. Seek him with an obedient spirit, the spirit of obedience.

Number three, seek him with a heart that is pure. Seek him with a heart that is pure. Number four, seek him with the language of praise.

The language of praise. Praise. Number five, seek him filled with the Holy Spirit. And then finally, seek him where he likes to be found.

[25:36] Or where God most likes to be. Where he likes to be found. All right. So tonight, seek his face and not his hands only. Think about that.

If you want to find God so that you can know God, so that you can love him, then you must seek his face and not his hands only.

Think about that. Let me read a couple of passages. In fact, there are a number of others we could look at that speak of the face of God. But here's 1 Chronicles 16 and 11.

In fact, let me read verse 10. I'd like to read the last half of this chapter. But let me just read these two verses. Glory in his holy name.

Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength. Seek his face evermore.

[26:41] Seek his face evermore. And then Psalm 27. And you can find that just holy because we'll spend the rest of our time in that psalm.

Psalm 27. Well, let me read verse 8 and that will at least capture what I think the psalm is really all about. Psalm 27, verse 8. When you said, seek my face, my heart said to you, your face, Lord, I will seek.

Your face, I will seek. Now, it could be. I don't know this about every one of you. I don't know this about any of you. But pretty safe to say that the reason why God is not manifesting his presence in your life as you would like for him to be.

Like for him to. And want him to. And maybe we ought to broaden this a little bit more and say the reason why God is not manifesting his presence in our church as we would want him to.

Desire him to. And need him to. The reason is very likely because we have been seeking only his hands and not his face. I would rather keep our thoughts on our own personal lives.

[28:02] But really, when each of us, as members of this wonderful church, each of us will get this for our own individual lives, it will make a tremendous, huge difference in our church.

And this is something that I constantly have to keep going back to in my own life. Because it's too easy to just see the hands of God and not his face.

We tend because we're needy people all the time. And at times more needy than at other times. But always needy.

And always wanting. We naturally gravitate toward seeking his hands only. And not caring very much about seeking his face.

You might be wondering what in the world are we talking about here. Well, if I were to take a piece of paper, and I'm not going to go to pieces of paper, and hand everybody a piece of paper. And if I were to ask you to answer, give as many answers as you could, to this question.

[29:15] Why do you want God? What would your answers be? There's the question. Why do you want God?

Why do you want God in your life? What would the answers be? Would most of them fall under the category, I want God for his hands?

Would they fall under the category, I want God for his face? For his face. There's a big difference between those two. Because, you see, if your answers to that question consist only, or even primarily, of the things you need God to do for you.

Or the things you need God to give you. If your answers primarily focus on that. And not, rather, on I want God because he is God.

Because he is God. And I love him. And I love his communion. That he is God alone. Then if your answers fall under the category of, I want him for his hands.

[30:35] Then, you know, I don't remember who it was years ago. I was thinking about this again today. Trying to rack my brain remembering who it was that said this.

Because I remember it so distinctly because I disagreed with him at first. He said that we, as believers, are guilty of religious idolatry.

Because we only care about what God can do for us. We only seek his hands. And it's, in a twisted sort of way, a religious idolatry.

They don't care anything about his person. And a personal communion with him. Now, I say we don't care anything about it. We do. But, as it works itself out in our thought life, in our prayer life, it primarily comes down to what God can do for us.

You know. What he can give us. And, by the way, you could apply this. And should apply this.

Because this is, I think, the sure indicator of where your heart is.

[31:46] Apply it to your own prayer life. Well, I, you know, we could apply it to the average church prayer meeting. We could apply it to our prayer meeting.

We just had a moment ago. Now, I blame myself because I'm the one leading. But, you know, we primarily, in our church prayer meetings, are looking for God's hands.

What he can do for us. And when we get together sometimes in maybe smaller groups, Sunday school small groups, or other than we have time of prayer, we ask for prayer requests. Anything wrong with doing that?

Nothing. Not wrong at all. We should do that. God invites us to do that. To bring our petitions. We're commanded to do that.

But if that's all we do, then we're missing something. We're not really seeking it. We're seeking only his hands and not seeking his face. And so our prayers are primarily, Lord, do something.

[32 : 44] Do this. Or do that. Or meet this need. Or meet that need. Or he will come so. Or, you know, whatever it may be. And those are all valid prayers. But think about it.

And I really want you to seriously think about it. About your own prayer line. Is there anything else in your prayer line? Other than giving God a list of needs.

Now we might add to that, you know, also giving God our dirty laundry list. So we primarily are asking him to give us things.

And then we tack on to the end. Maybe a little word about our laundry. Our dirty laundry. That is our sin. We want God to forgive us. And we usually kind of just lump that all under one sentence.

Forgive us. Forgive me for my sins. We might even make mistakes. If I sin, God, forgive me. And God says, yes. If. If we hear him speaking.

[33 : 47] Let me illustrate it this way. Suppose when I proposed to my wife some years ago.

How many was it? It's a good thing she's not here. 31 years ago. Suppose when I proposed to my wife. I did so.

You know, I wanted to marry her because of her musical talent. You know. And I'm thinking in my own mind, you know, she'd be a wonderful asset to my ministry.

So I proposed to my wife on that basis. Do you think she would have married me on that basis?

Well, she might have. I don't know. I doubt it. But you understand what I'm saying. Now, you know, I've got to confess to you as a pastor.

I've had to confess this a number of times over the years. Not always publicly. But I confess to you that often that is why I want God. I've got to tell you, God is a great asset to the ministry.

[34 : 57] To the, quote, success. And so, you know, I find myself praying and desiring God to do certain things here.

And they're good things. They're right things. But they're primarily coming from a motive that it would be good for me. And I want God's hands. And there's very little difference between those two. Whether I want my wife to marry me because she'd be an asset to my ministry. I want God in my life because he's an asset to my ministry. It's certainly more serious with God than it is with my wife.

But think about that in your own mind. Yeah. Listen, God will not be used. He will not be used. Now, He's gracious, you know, to manifest His presence just because it's His desire to do so.

And not because I have, you know, have a pure heart, a pure motives in my desires. God still does as He desires.

[36 : 09] But think about what our lives would be like as believers, individually, and as a church. If we sought His face way more than we sought after His hands.

And, you know, really reduced God to some high class servant. We would never dream of thinking that, you know, that that's what we're doing.

We do that. Well, what does it mean to seek His face? And I'll give these to you real quickly. And you can study these passages.

They all come from this psalm, Psalm 27. By the way, I'll add at this point that when you seek His face, you get His hands too. All right? So, it's not one or the other.

It's both. But it is our starting point. It is our chief desire that matters here in seeking, finding God. And our chief desire to seek His face and not His hands only.

[37 : 20] But when you seek His face, you get His hands also. And so, some of these principles that I'm going to give you that are answered for us here and are given to us in Psalm 27 are a mixture of both, face and hands.

But it's clear when you catch the tenor of this psalm that David is seeking the face of God. And he desires God, whether he ever gets anything from Him or not.

All right? Here they are real quickly. Number one, to seek His power. His power in your life. Verse 1, The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell.

Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. The war may rise against me. In this I will be confident. Confident in what? God's strength.

[38 : 30] And so, seeking God, seeking His face, means you seek His power. Number two, seek to seek His provision.

Please all start with the letter P, by the way. Go figure that. To seek His provision. Verse 4, One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek.

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. To behold the beauty of the Lord. And there's a marvelous mixture there.

This idea of provision. To dwell in His house. That is an idiom. It's an expression of provision.

All that's provided for. As a member of the household. The household of God. But it's a marvelous mixture. Not only the protection afforded us as we dwell in His house.

[39 : 32] But also, we dwell in His presence. In the beauty of His face. Three, to seek His protection. Verse 5, For in the time of trouble, He shall hide me in His pavilion.

In the secret place of His tabernacle. He shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock. Do you get this? These aren't just plain, simple requests for power or strength or provision or protection. These are all packaged in the overriding desire to be, to have God Himself. To experience Him. Seeking His face. And what comes with it? His whole being. His hands. For power and for provision and for protection. I dwell in His house.

I, you know, I behold His beauty. I, as He says here, verse 4 or verse 5, He hides me in His pavilion.

[40 : 47] His pavilion. See the closeness, the communion of this. See, what we tend to do is separate is separate God's presence and just communion with Him.

We separate that from our request for His provision. The works of His hands. As if we're, we're speaking to two different gods. But they all go together and David's primary concern is to, is to have God.

To know Him. to experience His presence in, and then for Him to provide all of our needs. And then it gets really deeper into this.

The fourth one is to praise Him. Verse 6, And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me. Therefore, I will offer sacrifices, joy, and His tabernacle.

I will sing, sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord. Praise Him. We seek His face to praise Him.

[41 : 55] We seek His face for His power, for His provision, for His protection to praise Him. And then number five, to seek His presence. Verse 9, Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my help. Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. Clear prayer or desire for the very presence of God in His life.

And then six, to seek His pleasure. To seek His pleasure when my father and my mother forsake me. Which is an example of the most extreme example David could think of of being abandoned, forsaken.

mother and father. But even if they were to forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me. Take care of me. And the idea is He takes pleasure in me, cares for me as His own child.

Number seven, and I think perhaps the most awesome truth about seeking the face of God, is to seek His person. to seek His person.

[43 : 16] And you'll see this in a number of places in the psalm. Verse one, the Lord is my light and my salvation. Not what He does, but who He is. His person. He's my light and my salvation.

Verse four, one thing have I desired, He said. What is it? Well, to dwell in the house of the Lord. We looked at this a moment ago, but to behold the beauty of the Lord.

His very beauty. This is the one thing I've desired. Verse eight, and I read this a moment ago, Thy face, O Lord, will I seek.

Your face, that's the person of God. In verse 14, wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart.

Wait, I say, on the Lord. And the word wait means to, literally, to stay right there. in His presence to stay with God.

[44 : 12] Or wait on Him. Alright, so, seeking God is spending time with God. Seeking God is looking to God. It's longing for God. It's waiting upon God.

It's staying right there with God. Do you remember what it was like before you were married? Nearly everybody married except, I'm sorry, a couple of you guys back there.

I think you'll understand the illustration even though it doesn't apply. But think about back before you were married. I mean, you'd spend, say, an hour, 60 minutes with your sweetheart and the time would just go by just like that.

60 minutes is gone. When was the last time you spent 15 minutes in prayer and the time went by just like that? You know, we usually find ourselves praying in five minutes.

We look at our watch five minutes. So we pray it all over again. We pray everything we think of for three, everything we think of three times and we look another five minutes. I think I can hold out another five.

[45 : 18] You know. I'm just being honest. Has this ever been your experience? There's a difference to see. But when you're in love, when you're in love and you're sitting there, you know, with your sweetheart, you might just sit there for an hour and not ever say anything.

not ever ask for anything because you just enjoy spending the time with your sweetheart. Why shouldn't that be any different?

Actually, it should be even greater than that with the Lord. But we've got to change our mind about that, mindset about that. We've got to somehow, not that we just dismiss all needs and never bring them to God.

It's not that. God wants us to. He invites us to. But our way of thinking has to change that we want God whether He ever gives us anything. That's why I would say that we ought to pray this kind of prayer.

Lord, God, I want You. And if You never give me anything or do anything for me, I still want You. And so my communion with You is enough.

[46 : 28] That is really a level of spiritual maturity that we all ought to see seeking His face and not His hands only.

.