



Seeking the God Who Would Be Found

Brownsburg Church of Christ

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PM Assembly



Introduction:

“Without faith it is impossible to please [God], for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him” (**Hebrews 11:6**, ESV). The greatest reward a seeker receives is to find what he is seeking. God rewards those who seek Him with His presence. As we learned in our previous lesson, if you seek God, He will be found by You. In fact, He has done the truly hard work it takes to find Him. But we don’t want to just talk about seeking God in some kind of ethereal, mystical sense and walk away still wondering what we must do to really seek God. After all, if He has done the hard part, the “impossible” part, then why not go ahead and do our part? Af”ter all, since God has done the hard part, our part will actually be successful (cf. **Philippians 2:12-13**). If you want to find God, you can and will. So, how do you go about searching? Do you need to take a pilgrimage to holy places or climb some high mountain to meet some special guru or get closer to God? Do you need to burrow deep down within your inner conscience, trying to empty your mind of every thought so you can find God within? Do you need to discover secret and hidden knowledge, learning special passwords and ritual paths through the cosmos to find God? No. In **II Chronicles 15:2**, King Asa was told, “If you seek him, he will be found by you.” This chapter and its context give us a pretty good indication of what we need to do to find our God who would be found.

Discussion:

I. Learn God’s law.

- A. **II Chronicles 15:3** explains a huge part of Judah’s problem during Abijah’s reign before Asa came along with his reforms. “For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest and without law” (ESV). What was wrong? No one was teaching God’s truth. No one was teaching God’s law. No matter what God had done to be found, if they weren’t teaching God’s will, nobody was going to find God.
- B. Solomon was given a similar directive from his father David, being told that if he sought God, God would be found by Solomon (**I Chronicles 28:9**). Look in **I Chronicles 28:8** and see that David also directed Solomon, saying, “Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God...” (ESV).
- C. Do you remember when Uzzah was struck down for touching the Ark of the Covenant while David was trying to bring the Ark into Jerusalem? **I Chronicles 15:13** explains what the real problem was: “...because we did not seek him according to the rule” (ESV). That is, God is sought through His Word, revelation, and laws. We need to spend time in God’s will, in His Word. We can’t seek God apart from seeking His Word.
- D. Just as we would never seek an unknown location without some kind of map, we can’t seek God without the map He has provided and the lamp that light’s the way (cf. **Psalms 119:105**).

II. Get rid of idols.

- A. When Asa was told that if he sought God, God would be found, he got rid of the idols and the high places in Judah (**II Chronicles 15:8**). He was so thorough that he even removed Maacah, his mother, from being the queen mother because of her detestable image for Asherah (**II Chronicles 15:16**). If we are pursuing and seeking idols, we’ll find them. We won’t find the one true God. Idols distract us from pursuing the true God.
- B. An idol is not simply a statue that we bow before. An idol is anything we place before God. An idol is anything we trust, rely on, fear, and worship. An idol is anything we believe we simply cannot live without. An idol is anything we pursue even though we know it will mess up our relationship with God. As **Colossians 3:5** expresses, covetousness is idolatry, even if it doesn’t lead us to a shrine or an icon to bow before. **Philippians 3:19** talks about those whose God is their belly, that is, their physical passions and fleshly desires.
- C. If you want to draw near to God and find God, you have to cut down, burn up, and crush the idols that distract you from that pursuit.

III. Worship God.

- A. While Asa was tearing down the high places and idols’ shrines, he repaired the altar of the LORD (**II Chronicles 15:8**). Then he called Judah, Benjamin, and those who had fled the northern kingdom of Israel to worship God. They offered numerous sacrifices (**I Chronicles 15:11**).

- B. If you want to pursue God, worship Him. Delight in Him. Certainly this will include attending the church's assemblies, worshipping with your brethren. But don't just seek God here amid the brethren. Seek God in your personal life. Spend time on your knees in prayer (cf. **Matthew 6:6**). Praise the Lord in word and song even in the midst of trial. Consider the example of Paul and Silas in prison in **Acts 16:25**.
- C. Back in **II Chronicles 14:9-11**, the Ethiopians had come with an innumerable host to attack Judah. Asa's response? Worship God. He praised God, saying, "O LORD, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak. Help us..." (ESV). He worshiped God and God delivered them.
- D. Spend time each day worshipping. Don't wait until Sunday or Wednesday night. But don't abandon those times of worship with the brethren either. Do you want to find God? Worship Him.

IV. Rely on God.

- A. The account in **II Chronicles 15** is the central piece to what actually ends up being a tragic story. And it all centers around this point. We've already noted the attack of the Ethiopians in **II Chronicles 14:9-11**. In addition to worshipping God, Asa said, "Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude" (ESV). **II Chronicles 14:12** says, "So the LORD defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled" (ESV). Asa and Judah relied on God in the face of their enemies, and God delivered them.
- B. There was a second part to Ahaziah's statement to Asa. He did say, "If you seek him, he will be found by you..." He also said, "...but if you forsake him, he will forsake you." Sadly, for all the success and peace God gave Asa while he sought God, after 35 years, Asa forsook God. We see this in **II Chronicles 16:1-6**. Israel came against Judah. Instead of relying on God for victory, Asa sent money to get help from Syria. So God said, "Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand" (**II Chronicles 16:7-8**, ESV).
- C. Jesus drives this home in the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 6:25-34**. We live in a very materialistic culture. We tend to think money solves every problem. And so we tend to seek after finances and fortune first. We can't imagine that God would want us to be poor, so we act like we are pursuing God when we pursue finances first. That allows us to live in nice houses, drive nice cars, wear nice clothes, and all the while assume the financial benefit is the sign of God's blessing and approval. But relying on God means seeking His kingdom and righteousness first. God's kingdom and righteousness is what drives us, what governs our actions, behavior, speech. Then we trust God to take care of us in whatever way He sees fit.

V. Work hard.

- A. As we have said, God has done the hard work that it takes for us to find Him, by sending His Son into the world to be the sacrifice that bridges the gap between Him and us. But that doesn't mean we sit on our back-sides and do nothing. No. In fact, it means we work hard. And why not? God's work means our work can actually accomplish something. In **II Chronicles 15:7**, God told Asa, "But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded" (ESV).
- B. If you would seek God, don't do so with half a heart. Don't do so with weak will. Half measures avail nothing. Weak attempts accomplish nothing. God has done the hard work so we can work hard. Take courage, if we seek God we will find Him. He will be with us. He will give us success. He will give us victory.
- C. **II Chronicles 15:12** tells us about the covenant Judah made. "And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul..." (ESV). They were going to seek God with all they had. They weren't going to seek God with just part of their heart. They were going to seek with their whole heart. They weren't going to reserve part of their heart for an idol or worthless pursuit. They were going to do anything and everything they could to seek God. They were going to work hard at knowing God's will and learning His law. They were going to work hard at getting rid of their idols. They were going to work hard at worshipping God. They were going to work hard at relying on God.
- D. If we want to seek God, He has promised that we will find Him. So let's not give it half-hearted measures. Let's give it our all. Let's seek Him with our whole heart and soul.

Conclusion:

I don't know what you've done. I don't know how bad you've been. Here is what I do know. I know that if you seek God, you'll find Him. Can we help you give up your idols and seek God right now? Can we help you work hard at seeking Him?