



God's Hearing, Forgiveness, and Healing Pt 4: Seeking the Face of the LORD

January 22, 2023

Holy Text:

2 Chronicles 7:14 (KJV) *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, **and seek my face**, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

Series Primary Thoughts:

- We believe that there will be no lasting healing of the land without repentance; no Revival without a heart to return to the Scriptures (Reformation).
- We believe 2 Chr 7:14 (and verses like it) have some NT applicability because of the Great Commission and the power of the Gospel to transform nations! (Matt 28:18-20)
- Although we deny salvation by works, we believe these promises for practical blessing and restoration (and those like them) are **conditional upon obedience**.

What have we learned so far?

1. That this very popular and much needed verse is often **quoted but rarely obeyed**.
2. That our LORD's promises of Hearing, Forgiveness, and Healing are **CONDITIONAL**.
3. That Christians are a people "called by His Name." Our identity is "in Christ!" This truth should change our perspective about everything in life and cause us to declare our loyalty to Him above all others.
4. That we must humble ourselves (bow the knee!) to our LORD and His commands if healing is to be gained. God hates pride. He resists it! But He gives grace to the humble.
5. That the kind of praying God calls for is more than personal petition. Prayer that moves heaven is filled with an understanding of our wrongs, a willingness to intercede, and supplication: "a seeking or petitioning, an asking, an entreating" because there is a severe "want, need, or lack." Daniel 9 is a great example of such:

Daniel 9:3-6 (KJV) *And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: **4** And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; **5** We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: **6** Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.*

Our Motivations: Cultural Confusion and Spiritual Death! So much in our "land" needs God's healing!

- The widespread spiritual apathy and hard-heartedness that brings about so much devastation.
- Gender confusion, fractured families, the celebration of fornication, adultery, and immodesty, theft, violence and murder, inculcated falsehoods in education, idolatry, and much more.
- We need God to heal our land! So let us SEEK HIM...

Seeking the Face of the LORD

A Survey of Seeking: What does the Bible say?

- **Deuteronomy 4:26-31 (KJV)** I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. **27** And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you. **28** And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. **29** But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. **30** When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; **31** (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.
- **2 Chronicles 20:3-4 (KJV)** And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. **4** And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.
- **Isaiah 26:8-9 (KJV)** Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. **9** With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.
- **Isaiah 55:6-7 (KJV)** Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: **7** Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
- **Jeremiah 29:10-14 (KJV)** For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. **11** For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. **12** Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. **13** And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. **14** And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.
- **Psalms 10:4 (KJV)** The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.
- **Psalms 24:3-6 (KJV)** Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? **4** He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. **5** He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. **6** This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.
- **Psalms 27:4 (KJV)** One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.
- **Psalms 27:7-8 (KJV)** Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. **8** When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.
- **Psalms 34:1-4 (KJV)** A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed. I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. **2** My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. **3** O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his

name together. **4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.**

- **Psalms 14:1-3 (KJV)** The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. **2** The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, **to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.** **3** They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- **Psalms 105:3-4 (KJV)** Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. **4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.**
- **Psalms 119:10 (KJV)** With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.
- **Lamentations 3:25 (KJV)** The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
- **Matthew 6:33 (KJV)** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
- **Matthew 7:7-8 (KJV)** Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: **8** For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
- **Colossians 3:1-4 (KJV)** **If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.** **2** Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. **3** For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. **4** When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.
- **Hebrews 11:6 (KJV)** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that **diligently seek him.**

What does “Seeking the LORD” mean then?

1. When we normally used the word “seek,” we think of trying to find something or someone. Seeking presupposes that something is lost/missing and must be found! This is the mission of the seeker.
2. Definitions of the Hebrew word for seek: *bâqash*
 - To *search* out (by any method; specifically in worship or prayer); by implication to *strive after*: - ask, beg, beseech, desire, enquire, get, make inquisition, procure, (make) request, require, seek (for).¹
 - To go in search or quest of; to look for; to make search or inquiry; to endeavor to make discovery. To make pursuit.²
3. Another word for seek in the OT Hebrew: *dârash*. It means:
 - To *tread* or *frequent*; usually to *follow*; by implication to *seek* or *ask*; specifically to *worship*: to *care for* diligently, inquire, question, require, or search.³
4. In the New Testament, a common word for *seek* in Greek is *zēteō*:
 - To be (go) about, desire, endeavor, enquire (for), require.⁴
5. Keep in mind that **God isn’t lost; the seeker is! God doesn’t need knowledge, wisdom, or strength...the seeker does!**
6. *Seeking* God in Scripture carries the primary idea of **total life desire** on the part of the seeker. **To “seek His face” is to long to see the manifest purposes and plans of God in our lives and in the earth; it is about following Him diligently to those ends!**

¹ Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionary

² Webster 1828 Dictionary

³ Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionary

⁴ Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionary

7. So seeking the face of God has more to do with the priorities of the seeker. The seeker says, "I will dedicate myself to finding. I will apply effort to seeing, locating, uncovering, and searching out."
8. Like so much in Scripture, seeking the LORD then is about the state of our hearts! How much do we love Him? What are we willing to sacrifice to know and obey Him? How much do we desire His will above our own? How consumed are we with His thoughts, ways, and Word, and honor?
9. Often, seeking the LORD in the Bible is associated with repentance..or turning back as in our primary Text.
10. So to seek the face of God...
 - **Is to reshuffle priorities to uncover or rediscover the goodness and glory of God.**
 - **Is to desire Him, to get up and move after Him, to strive (effort) after Him, to beg Him (humility), to secure Him (gain His knowledge and blessing), and to do so with desperation and diligence (passion and consistency)!**
 - **To seek Him is to desire to continually discover the truth of His precepts (Ps 119:15, 40, 45) and to walk intimately with Him (Deut 28:9; Rom 8:1; 2 Cor 5:7).**
 - **To seek Him is to long to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings (Php 3:10).**
 - **To seek Him is to take up our crosses and follow after Him (Matt 16:24)!**
 - **A soul that seeks Him loves Him with the whole heart! (Mk 12:30)**

Eight Nuggets on those who Seek the LORD from Spurgeon

In a sermon dated Oct 23, 1887 (on Lamentations 3:25), Charles Spurgeon said that a "seeking soul:"⁵

1. *Has a sense of need.* It is "a need which he could hardly describe, but which, nevertheless, weighs very heavily upon him. He wants something very great, but he hardly knows what it is. He feels that he has a void, an emptiness within, that needs filling."
2. *Has of a faith.* "For he believes, deep down in his heart, that if he could once get to God, all would be well with him. He says within himself, "Oh, if I could but find this blessed Mediator, if I could but discover this glorious Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, it would be well with me."
3. *Sometimes seeks very unwisely.* "When a soul wants God, and wants salvation, it will begin to seek the Lord by its own doings, by its own feelings, by its own strange eccentricities, perhaps. It wants God, and it must have him. Christ is not far off, he is very near thee; and yet the seeker is unwisely seeking after God as though he were very far away, and for Christ as though he had to do some strange and wonderful thing in order to find him."
4. *Are often yet alone.* "When you begin to seek the Lord, my young friend, you will steal away by yourself. Father and mother will say, "We do not quite know what has come over him, he seems so different from what he used to be. I remember times when I was never so happy as when I could get alone. Seekers, true seekers, will find some quiet place; that is a difficult thing to find in this noisy London, yet a real seeker will make even a crowded street to be his place of retirement, or he will walk down some back alley, and be thinking, and crying, and seeking, and groaning."
5. *Brings out His Bible.* "And he begins to study his Bible as he never did before. It is a blessed sign when the young man or the young woman begins to take an interest in the Word of God, and searches the Scriptures, saying, "Lord, bless this Book to me. The Christ is here."

⁵ <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/how-good-to-those-who-seek/#flipbook/>

He feedeth among the lilies of thy revealed truth; oh, that I might meet him, and that I might call him mine!”

6. *Goes as much as he can to hear the gospel preached.* “And there is another sign of the true seeker that I always love to see; he likes to get into godly company. He does not care now for the friends he once so much admired, — his merry friends who laughed away the years, — if he can but get where he can hear a few poor people talking about Jesus; something like John Bunyan, you remember, who saw three or four godly women at Bedford talking about the things of God, and the tinker drew near, and listened to their gracious conversation, though their talk about the new birth was beyond his comprehension. That is good seeking when you turn eavesdropper to hear about Christ, when you like to listen to some poor neighbour who does not know much more than you yourself know, but who, in her simple language, talks about an experience of the things of God to which you have not as yet attained, but which you wish you had felt and known.”
7. *Prayeth.* “Possibly, he used to repeat a form of prayer; but he has given that up, and now he talks to God straight out of his heart, and asks for what he really wants; and he not only does that morning and evening, but he is praying during most of the day. If you watch him over from the other side of the counter, you may hear a sigh every now and then; or when he is at his work, driving the piano, or using the hammer, if you are close to him, you may see his lips moving, and you may catch such words as those, “Saviour, reveal thyself to me. Blood of Christ, cleanse me. Spirit of God, renew me.” That is one of the men who are seeking the Lord.”
8. *Quits all that is evil as much as possible, and he will seek after that which is good, and especially, he will seek after faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.* “He has heard it said that he that believeth in him hath everlasting life, and he says to himself, “Oh, that I could believe in him!” You will see him now trying to believe, very much like a little child tries to take his first steps in walking alone. His mother holds out an apple, and baby makes a daring venture to try with three or four steps to get across to where mother holds out the bribe. Oh, I love to see poor souls trying to trust Christ, trying to rest in Jesus! They often make sorry work of it; but still, the Lord accepts it, for with their hearts they are really trying to rest in Jesus. If, poor trembling seeker, your faith should bring you no comfort because it is so weak, yet keep on trusting to Christ!”

Applications

1. Given what the Son of God has done on our behalf, consider how worthy God is of our devotion...our passion...our intense seeking!
2. Be honest about your desire to know, serve, and obey God. What things (interests, distractions, sins) might be interfering with your growth in seeking Him? List them and repent as necessary.
3. Consider Spurgeon’s list above. What are you willing to do reorient your life around our King and His holy decrees? List a few and submit them to Christ.

CRC, let us Seek the Face of the LORD!

Amen!