

1 September, 2019

The Pursuit of GOD Series

#1, THOSE WHO SEEK THE LORD WILL LACK NO GOOD THING

by Rev. G Grant Verdoold

Psalm 34

1 I will extol the Lord at all times;

his praise will always be on my lips.

2 I will glory in the Lord;

let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

3 Glorify the Lord with me;

let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me;

he delivered me from all my fears.

5 Those who look to him are radiant;

their faces are never covered with shame.

6 This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;

he saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,

and he delivers them.

8 Taste and see that the Lord is good;

blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

9 Fear the Lord, you his holy people,

for those who fear him lack nothing.

10 The lions may grow weak and hungry,

but **those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.**

Notes:

1. "Lack" is the Hebrew word, "Ruwash", which means to be needy, destitute.
2. "Thing" is the Hebrew word, "Dabar", which means a word, a matter or a thing. The dictionary defines "thing" as a noun denoting something felt, seen, or perceived.

A power, promise, provision or purpose (you don't often think of a purpose as a thing.) A report, reason, request, advice, answer, commandment or communication.

A material object, some entity or object, an object of thought, any matter or affair, curious things, a fact or circumstance, an action, deed or performance.

Note it does not necessarily mean something physical.

Friends, today we begin an exciting series entitled, "The Pursuit of God Series". Prayerfully and hopefully this series will take us through to October when we will be having our Revival Meetings with Evangelist, Jim Cash.

Seeking the Lord is always richly rewarded in scripture. Jesus said, "Seek and you shall find." Matthew 7: 7

HE also said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and HIS righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6: 33

There's that word, things" again. In this text we are told to place the pursuit of the Kingdom of God first, and then material needs will follow without need for worry or anxiety.

This text uses the present imperative verb, to seek", which makes it very clear that pursuing the Kingdom is NOT a passive act! It must be an intentional act, pursued with your heart and full rigour!!!

So, let me ask you, what are you seeking? What are you seeking personally? What are you seeking as part of the church? What are you seeking as the body representing Christ?

Everyone is seeking something.

We, and I emphasize, WE, the people of God, must pursue The LORD!! We MUST seek HIM earnestly and with burning desire!!!! **"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God."** Psalm 42:1

If we do not pursue God with mighty determination, we Christians stand the prospect of losing HIM amid the wonders and attractions of this present world. It is not just my opinion.

"The modern scientist has lost GOD amid the wonders of this world, and we Christians are in real danger of losing GOD amid the wonders of this world.", said A. W. Tozer in "The Pursuit of God".

Tozer also said, "To have found God and still to pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love."

To continue pursuing GOD is an act of love!!!!

If we are to come near the holy men and women of the past, you would soon feel the heat of their desire after GOD!! They mourned for HIM, not in the sense of grief, but in what causes HIM to mourn! They wrestled with HIM! They struggled forward with believing faith, never doubting HIS grace or promises!!!

Today we are in the midst of a "Great Chill", a "Spiritual Ice Age". Everyone around us is worried about Global Warming, but far worse is the scale of Spiritual Cooling in our society!!! The loss of GOD as the anchor and answer for our daily lives and struggles is far more deadly!!! The failure to use holy judgment is far more damaging to our future than are the effects of climate change! We are snared in the coils of false assumptions and perceptions!!!!

The whole testimony of the worshipping, seeking, singing church is being set aside for more "progressive aims" such as watering down the Gospel of Truth resulting in complacency.

Complacency is a deadly foe to spiritual growth, not just some, but ALL spiritual growth, and apathy kills whatever may be left.

So many Christians today are afflicted with this loss, stealing their vitality of faith and witness!

Shallowness and hollowness have done their destructive work to the point where many consider GOD and HIS work as a passing option.

The world and its influence pound it's drumbeat into our ears, so much so that we've lost our cry for GOD!! This is why many are embarrassed to come to church or be seen in a Christian gathering.

The purpose of having a church building used to be recognized by the community as a place to find help and guidance. People would come to be counselled by the pastor or receive other aid in times of difficulty! We have lost that sense of purpose!!

Yet I find in this text a truth, and here it is: David's life was a torrent of spiritual desire.

Many today would be unacquainted with this desire to seek after GOD!

Is your life a torrent of spiritual desire? Does busyness take you away from GOD?

A.W. Tozer said, "GOD waits to be wanted!". GOD waits to be desired. Do we want HIM? Do you seek after HIM? I ask you, how's your seeking?

Let today be the grand new beginning on the road of discovery and life with GOD. Put your life under a microscope and examine how well you are seeking GOD! Seek HIM with all your heart!!

"My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away," God calls to us.

Give us the grace to follow HIM with all our heart!!!

There are 2 points this morning,

1. Seek The LORD
2. The promise given.

The Book 1:

Seek The LORD

So, let's look again at our text: "The lions may grow weak and hungry, but **those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.**" Psalm 34:10

Notice also verse 4 where it says, "I sought The LORD and HE heard me.", and Verse 6 says, "This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;", and Verse 7 says, "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,". What a blessing these words are! Verse 8 continues to bless us by saying, "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him."

My friends, David knew the blessings of these truths!

Here in our text we are told that the young lions are strong and in the prime of their youth, and yet their strength does not always suffice to keep them fed. Young lions are crafty, they have a great instinct to leap upon unsuspecting game, and yet, with all their craftiness, they sometimes howl with hunger. Young lions are bold, fierce and furious, not easily moved from their deliberate intent to bring down their prey, yet for all that, they sometimes lack, and suffer hunger.

So it is with many people in our world today, strong people, cunning people thoroughly up with the times, smart people, and sharp as a tack. You would think that if anyone could be well supplied, it should be them, yet how many of them end up in bankruptcy and ruin? Even with all their cunning and unscrupulousness they manage to come to an ill end. They do lack and suffer hunger! They consider seeking GOD as being out of fashion

So, here is something for us, the people of GOD, who are regarded as ignorant and naive, because they are seeking The LORD instead of the worldly wisdom of "seek yourself". We have given up what is called the first law of human nature which is: self-seeking, self-pleasing, self-serving, and every form of self-gratification.

As the people of GOD, we ought to be seeking to magnify The LORD above all things!! Seeking the LORD is the description of the life of a Christian. When he/she lives as she/he ought to live, the whole life is centred around seeking the LORD. The Christian's efforts are spent on praying with heart and soul, seeking the LORD. The Christian is always conscious of sin, seeking pardon from the LORD. The Christian is always aware of spiritual dangers, seeking the protection and salvation of the LORD. The Christian is always listening for GOD's call, "And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."" Acts 2: 40 and be ever looking for strength from the LORD. The Christian must, with deep conviction, cries and tears, repenting and humbling, casting his/herself upon The LORD of All.

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2: 11

"yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*." 1 Corinthians 8: 6

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2: 9-11

"These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful."" Revelation 17: 14

And, after finding the LORD, or rather, after being found by HIM, the Christian presses onward to apprehend HIM, seeking forward, always seeking to know The LORD's mind.

We cry out continually, "Show me, LORD. Give me wisdom. Show me what You want me to do."

Seeking the LORD must be done daily with constant prayer, seeking to be upheld, guided, constrained in the paths of righteousness for HIS name's sake! ("He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake." Psalm 23: 3), AND, be restrained from the ways of sin!

In this day and age there is a lot of talk about freedom, but I don't want it. I want to be constrained by the love of GOD. "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

The Christian becomes a seeker of The LORD in another sense. He/she seeks to enjoy The LORD's love, HIS gracious fellowship and wonderful communion. The Christian seeks to get near to The LORD in reverent friendship.

This is truly awesome, beautiful!

Longing and desire develop to the point that the Christian longs to grow in the likeness of Christ.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," Philippians 2: 5

"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." 1 John 2: 6

"so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Corinthians 1: 7

"And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit," 1 Thessalonians 1: 6

"For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5: 21

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3: 18

This should be in the bowels of every Christian, a strong desire to have a deeper intimacy with The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to grow closer, more continuously in the sweet communion with GOD. My friends, the genuine Christian lives for GOD, making HIM the first and best object of his/her life. The true Christian does whatever needs to be done for the glory of GOD, longing for the extension of The Redeemer's kingdom, and longing to bless The LORD at all times. (Psalm 34: 1) He/she is always boasting in the LORD. Friends, do you boast about The LORD?

David did!! (Psalm 34:2)

Here's a thought. To seek The LORD so much that the world will see what kind of Christian I am as I recommend my LORD and my GOD to others so that HE is made FAMOUS!!! I want to live my life boasting about my GOD, and by word of mouth, to be the greatest and best celebrity!!! I want to live for The LORD tasting and seeing that HE is good, the best!! (Psalm 34: 8)

Here is a final word. We must seek The LORD heartily and honestly, and we must seek HIM most obediently!

A man cannot say, "I am seeking The LORD when he knows he is disobeying GOD's command in what he is doing. How can I say that I am desiring to seek The LORD by following a pursuit which is sinful, contrary to GOD's will and giving rein to my passions, indulging in my own desires, being proud and domineering over fellow believers.

Friends, we must watch ourselves and take care to watch over our souls as we were told last week. (Psalm 34: 10)

The Book 2: The Promise Given

Psalm 34: 10 says, "those who seek The Lord shall not lack any good thing". That is, they shall not lack any, not even one!

They who first stepped into Bethesda's pool when the water was stirring were healed, but all others missed the healing. (see Post Notes: John 5: 1 - 15) But here in Psalm 34 verse 10 it tells us that EVERYONE who steps into this pool is healed. That is to say, everyone who seeks The LORD has this promise, to not lack ANY good thing!!!! Catch it now! The promise is to everyone, rich or poor, smart or feeble-minded, educated or uneducated, the famous and the unknown, short or tall, fat or thin, from any ethnic origin, male or female, young or old, tender children or seasoned veterans, teachers or students, skilled in trades or sciences, or having no particular skills. GOD has made this promise to EVERY believer from those of little faith and much afraid, to those of much faith with great hearts. All those in The Lord's great army shall NOT LACK ANY GOOD THING!!

"He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.'" Matthew 17

Now, by taking GOD's Word and walking by faith with it, what a great light is shed upon your history and mine!!!

There are many things in life for which I wish, and which I sincerely think are good. Yet if I have not got them, they cannot be good for me because if they were good for me, and I am seeking GOD, I shall walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5: 7.

Please note that our text does not say that everyone shall have every good thing, but it does say that everyone who SEEKS THE LORD shall NOT LACK ANY good thing.

Consider the following: GOD, our Father, deals with us in perfect wisdom and with perfect love, in season and out of season.

"The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of knowledge, *But* fools despise wisdom and instruction." Proverbs 1: 7,

"Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you. Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *Therefore*, get wisdom." Proverbs 4: 6 & 7, "For God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who *is* good in His sight; but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that he may give to *him who is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and grasping for the wind."

GOD has put you in the best place for you.

GOD has given you not just some things that are good for you, but ALL things that are good for you.

GOD's guidance is always right, and that's a good thing!! HIS promises are always right!!

Don't forget the race was ruined through doubting HIS promise.

The good things GOD gives are always entirely good things!!

Even suffering can be a good thing. Talk with a saint who suffered and died. They now stand brightest before the eternal throne, and there they will say, "If you robbed me of my suffering, you would have stripped my crown of its gems!!!"

GOD is too good to be unkind, and too wise to be mistaken.

Trust HIM today, and seek HIM every day, and you shall lack no good thing!!! "Every good gift and every perfect gift are from above, and come down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." James 1: 17

"For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; No good *thing* will He withhold From those who walk uprightly." Psalm 84:11

The Took

In Conclusion

So, again I come back to these questions, "Are you seeking The LORD? Are you seeking HIS glory in all things? Are you actively seeking HIM every day?"

If we want to know GOD more intimately, we must seek HIM!

Our whole future will be conditioned by the choices we make. So, choose wisely! "And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15

Choose today to seek the LORD, and follow HIM!!

Is your heart and soul restless? Among the famous sayings of the church fathers, St. Augustine's is by far the best. "THOU hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless 'til they find rest in THEE."

GOD loves each of us just as if there were only one of us!! GOD has made us for Himself! HE made us to bless Himself!!!

The whole work of GOD in redemption is found in the tragic effects of "the Foul Revolt" (Paradise Lost by John Milton). All the melancholy of the world would be cured, if only all hearts would turn to Jesus!!

"He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the Lord require of you But, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8 So let this begin the best step in your life, to seek GOD and walk humbly with HIM!!!

"The world is perishing. Then you shall have the best life that could ever be lived, the best mercies that could ever be granted, and the very best of all good things, not only here but in the hereafter!!!!

My friends, seek HIM now, follow HIM now, praise HIM now!!!!!!

Post Notes:

1. John 5:1-15 New King James Version (NKJV)

5 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **2** Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. **3** In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. **4** For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. **5** Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. **6** When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been *in that condition* a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." **9** And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. **10** The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed."

11 He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk'"

12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" **13** But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in *that* place. **14** Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.