

Seek The Lord

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Date: 11 January 2026

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[0:00] As we come to God's Word this morning, we take our text from the middle of the psalm. I will remember the deeds of the Lord and I will remember your wonders, O Lord.

! I will ponder all your work and meditate upon your mighty deeds. And as we look at these verses, we're going to take as our title this morning, Seek the Lord.

And as we do indeed seek the Lord this morning, we pray that we would remember and be encouraged by what God has done, what God is doing, and the wonders that He seeks to do, not just having done in times past, but do even now.

And that we would think about them and understand what work that is that He is doing. He has done great wonders, but He continues to do work.

And as we look at this, I recognize the time, but we actually have four headings this morning. And maybe not always in the order that we would take them, but I want to look at how we seek God, when we seek God, where we seek God, and why we seek the Lord.

[1:25] So we take our first heading this morning. How? We see right at the beginning of the psalm that the psalmist tells us, I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and He will hear me.

It's a prayer. We come to God in prayer. Each and every one of us can come this morning and seek God in prayer.

The psalmist cried out to God, knowing that God would hear him, knowing that God was there. Prayer.

We can seek God, each and every one of us, in prayer. Spurgeon says in writing on this particular psalm, The psalm has much sadness in it, and we'll go through and we'll read that.

But may it be sure it will end well, for it begins with prayer, and prayer never is an ill issue. We come to God in prayer and seek God in prayer.

[2:31] God will answer us. He might say wait. He might say no. Or he might say yes. But God will answer us. And we need to be prepared for that answer.

As we come to Him in prayer. If we don't come to God in prayer, the hymn writer Joseph Scriven wrote, in that well-known hymn, What a Friend We Have in Jesus.

Oh, what peace we often forfeit. Oh, what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Are you seeking God in prayer this morning? How are you coming before God this morning, as you come in to worship this morning? Are you coming asking God for help, for strength, for guidance, to help you in your troubles that you have in your own life, in the life of your family?

Are you seeking God in prayer this morning? Because each and every one of us can do that. And Scriven, closing the hymn, says, in His arms, He'll take and shield ye.

[3:48] Thou will find a solace there. God promises that if we come to Him, and we come to Him in prayer, He will guide us. He will shield us.

He will protect us. We have an example given to us from our Lord Jesus Christ. We can read in Mark 1, 35, Matthew 14, about how Jesus went off to pray.

We see in the texts that are before us there, Jesus got up early in the morning and sought the Lord. And after the busyness of the day, after sending everybody away, even in the evening, He came before God.

The Apostle Paul takes it one step further and he tells us to pray without ceasing. Are we seeking God each and every day?

Are we seeking God's guidance and direction every step of the way? Pray without ceasing. We can trust in God if we come to Him and come to Him in prayer.

[5 : 03] Now you might be saying, how do I come in prayer? We spoke with the children about the Lord's Prayer. And we see the Lord's Prayer.

I should have given you this slide earlier on. We see the Lord's Prayer here. The Lord gave us this prayer for how we should come before God and how we should seek God in prayer.

And what does it mean to us as we say this prayer? Do we recognize that as we say this prayer, if you can put up the next slide please, that as we say these words, that we seek His holiness.

We seek His return, your kingdom come. We seek His will to be done. We seek His provision for us when we ask for our daily bread.

We seek His forgiveness as we ask for our debts and our sins to be forgiven. And we seek His protection as we ask Him to lead us not into temptation and to deliver us from evil.

[6 : 12] Let them not just be words that we rehearse with our children. Let them not just be words that we say. Let them be words that we actually recognize that when we come to God in prayer, what it is that we're seeking.

Seeking for Him, seeking from Him, and seeking in Him. That as we come, that we see the psalmist cried aloud, the next question we might have is when do we seek the Lord?

We see here in verse 2 that the psalmist cried out in the day of trouble. Now I'm not saying when you're in trouble, don't cry out to God.

But I wouldn't leave it until the day of trouble. My advice, and I think the advice that we get from Scripture is that we seek the Lord early.

We seek the Lord early. We sing in the metrical Psalm version of Psalm 63, Lord thee my God, I'll early seek. Seek the Lord early.

[7 : 30] Seek the Lord while He may be found. Don't leave it until the last minute. When you've tried everything else, seek the Lord early.

We can go on, and it tells us elsewhere in the Psalms, I rise before dawn and I cry for help. I hope in your words.

That tells us two things. It tells us about coming before God in prayer and crying out to Him, but it also tells us the importance of God's word. That my hope is in your words.

And as we read earlier on, Jesus gave us the example of rising early in the morning. When should we seek the Lord? We should seek the Lord early.

The last verse that's up there, there in the ESV, like many of you here, I learnt it, probably in the AV, and I think the AV version is actually better, because it says, remember now your creator.

[8 : 43] Remember also, almost like an afterthought, but remember now your creator in the days of your youth. Why?

Before the evil days come and you say that you have no pleasure in them. Remember your creator now. Come before God early. Why do I say come before the Lord early?

Well, we see here that the psalmist is unable to sleep. We've previously looked in past weeks at Psalm 127, unless the Lord build a house, those who labour labour in vain, those who build labour in vain.

And in that, we saw in verse 2 where it said, for he gives his beloved sleep. And here, we see the psalmist. He's unable to sleep.

He refuses to be comforted. How often, when we know exactly what it is we have to do, we turn away from doing it. we're so far away from God.

[9 : 57] We know what God's word tells us to do. We know when somebody says to us, why don't you get down on your knees and pray? It's the last thing that we want to do.

Why? Because we think about self. When I remember God, I moan. Now, I know I've been studying Hebrew and struggling with Hebrew, but one of the things I did learn when I was looking about this, we might say in Gaelic, hama, I'm good.

When you say hama in Hebrew, it actually means that you cry out, you moan. It even goes on as far to say that you're almost like a petulant teenager who just goes, and that's how the psalmist is here.

He's come to God in the day of trouble, and he maybe sought God early. He might not have been the situation that he was in here. He tries to think about God, but his head is so full of so much that is going on.

His spirit faints. He seeks sleep, but he can't get it. His eyelids are open, unable to sleep. I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

[11 : 24] How often do you feel that you just don't want to speak to anybody? Your heart is so troubled that you can't even pray, you can't even cry out.

The psalmist said at the beginning of the psalm, I cry out to God, and he hears me. We can think of a newborn baby.

Can't speak, doesn't have the words to be able to say anything, but when that baby cries out, the parent hears, and the parent knows how to meet that need.

The psalmist is here, he can't sleep, he can't speak, what does he need to do? He needs to cry out to God. The newborn baby, whether it's two o'clock in the afternoon or two o'clock in the morning, when it cries out, the parent responds.

Are we prepared to cry out early to the God that does not sleep, that does not slumber, that knows our every need, but is only waiting for us to ask?

[12 : 41] Come to God early, don't leave it till it is too late. Because once we're deprived of sleep, once our spirit is cast down, it can be a difficult ending spiral for us to be able to come back if we do not come back to God.

Where do we seek God this morning? the psalmist in verse 5 says to us, I consider the days of old, the years long ago.

what does the Bible teach us? The Bible teaches us what God has done, what God has done in the past, and what God is doing in the future.

Where can the psalmist go to consider the days of old? It can only go to the word of God. And what did we teach the children this morning?

The word of God which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament is the only rule to direct us on how we may glorify and enjoy him.

[14 : 02] Where are we seeking for God this morning? Are we seeking for him in all the wrong places? Thinking that we're going to get peace? Thinking that we're going to get fulfillment?

fulfillment in what the world has to offer us. There's only one place where we can really come and truly seek God and that is in his word.

The word that he has given to us and that we must enjoy in our reading. Last week when we were together we looked at Joshua and just remind you of the commission that was given to Joshua and the command that was given to Joshua of the importance of God's word.

Where Joshua was to go for finding guidance, where he was to go for finding direction, that the book that Moses had written, the law that Moses, God's servant, had given him, that he was to use it.

He wasn't to depart from it. He wasn't to turn from it each and every day. And then we see in the New Testament when Jesus was tempted by the devil, that he told us that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

[15:28] This doesn't mean that we need to have our quiver filled with Bible verses available to quote for every temptation that comes our way. It's helpful, but it means that we need to feed upon God's word, to be strengthened through it, and pray as we read, that we may indeed be kept from temptation, and that as we draw closer to God and seek to know him more, we will be able to resist that temptation.

Why God's word? It says in Psalms 77 at verse 6 there, I said, let me remember my song in the night, let me meditate in my heart.

If we were to stop and take a poll just now, and I was to ask each and every one of you, what's your song? What's your go-to song that when you're feeling down that you want to sing, to lift you up?

Where do you go? How many of you are prepared to put up your hand and say, my favourite song is Frank Sinatra's I Did It My Way? And how many of you are still singing it this morning?

Or how many of you, like the psalmist in Psalm 40, is able to say, he put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God, and many will see it and put their trust in the Lord.

[17:07] Is that your song this morning? That you have a new song put in your heart, a new song put in your mouth, a song of praise to our God.

My prayer would be that you know that new song, and you desire to sing that new song, that you're not found there saying, no, I'm going to do it my way.

I don't need God in my life, I don't need Jesus in my life. That you would see this morning that if you're trying to do it your way, that as the psalmist said earlier on in Psalm 40, that you end up in the mire, in the pit, and you need to cry out.

And if that is you this morning, that you would indeed cry out to God this morning, to be lifted from that pit, to stand on the solid rock that is Christ.

Why else should we come to the word of God? You see here the psalmist comes and he asks a whole series of rhetorical questions.

[18:24] We can go through each and every one of them. He says, has he in his anger shut up his compassion? Has God in his anger towards us shut up his compassion?

And we see in Micah 7 verse 18 and 19, who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us. He will tread our iniquities under his foot.

You will cast all our sin into the depths of the sea. The psalmist asks, has God lost his compassion for us? The prophet tells us that that's not the case.

The next question that he asks, no, I've lost a whole lot of slides here. Let's just go back one. He asks, will the God never be favorable again towards us?

[19 : 40] Well, we find out in God's word that God is favorable each and every day. Verse 8, has his steadfast love ceased?

ceased? The slide's there, sorry. Yeah. Has the steadfast love ceased? The answer that's given in Lamentations 3, 22, the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.

importance of why we need God's word. When these questions come up in our heart, that we go and we find the answer to them are his promises at the end for all time.

And the answer is given. For all the promises of God find their yes in him. This is why it is through him that we utter our amen to the glory, to God for his glory.

God's promises, each and every one of them, that are contained in scripture, we find our amen in them. Has God forgotten to be gracious?

[20 : 51] And the answer is given. In your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

The doubts that come up within us, we find our answer in scripture. And then finally the psalmist asks, has he in his anger shut up his compassion?

And again as we had read, sorry I jumped, I've obviously mixed up my slides here, that God will indeed cast out all our sin. He is a God of compassion, a God of steadfast love, a God that will never leave us, a God that will never forsake us.

We must come and seek God in his word. each and every one of us who are here this morning will have a Bible within our homes.

Are we reading it daily? Are we reading it faithfully? What are the troubles that we are facing? What are the doubts that we have? Are we coming to God's word?

[21 : 57] God? Because there is one who within his word said, come unto me, all ye that are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Read God's word. Trust in God's word. And finally, why? Why do we seek God? Psalm 77, again at verse 10 and 14.

Then I said I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the deeds of the Lord. Yes, I will remember your wonders of old.

I will ponder all your work and meditate upon your mighty deeds. Your way, O God, is holy. What God is great like you?

You are the God who works wonders, who has made known your might among the people. If we seek God in his word, we will know God.

[22 : 58] That is why we must seek him. And in seeking him and understanding what God has done and thinking upon his word, we don't always have God's word with us.

I don't think there's many of you here, maybe apart from Thomas and myself, that carry a Bible with us to our places of work, whether it be on our phone, and many of you probably will have your Bible on your phone, to be able to access it.

There are times when we have doubts, but if we know God's word and we meditate upon God's word and we remember what God has done for us, we will be directed to know that God is holy, that we will be able to answer the questions, what God is great like our God?

You're the God who works wonders. You have made known your might among the peoples. as we seek God and as we seek God through his word, we will indeed know the blessing of God's holiness and meditate upon his holiness.

But there's something else that we must be aware of as we read this psalm, as in why we should seek God. And in verses 15 to 20, we have recounted for us, the children of Israel being led through the Red Sea towards the promised land.

[24 : 27] Your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. When the water saw you, God, when the water saw you, they were afraid. Indeed, the deep trembled.

The clouds poured out water, the sky gave forth thunder, your arrows flashed on every side. The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind, your lightnings lightened up the world. The earth trembled and shook, your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters, your footprints were unseen.

You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and of Aaron. God's salvation plan. The psalmist remembers God's salvation plan, but what does it do for us?

It points us forward to a far greater salvation plan for each and every one of us. We read there in verse 19, your footprints are unseen.

The way that God does things is often unseen to us. It's only when we look back and we reflect that we see how God has placed somebody in our life at a particular time, a particular word that's been spoken to us.

[25 : 40] We don't recognize it at the time, but we look back and we might say, well, in the providence of God, so-and-so came along, so-and-so said this to me, or this happened and it stopped me.

God's footprints are often unseen in our lives, but what we must recognize is that it is God that is working. Just a reflection on verses 15 and verse 20 of the psalm.

You with your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. you led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses. We can't do anything with our hand without our arm.

There are certain movements that our fingers can maybe make and we think they're working independently, but our sinews, our veins, our blood vessels are all joined to our arm.

We might be able to grip something with our hand, but we can't lift it without our arm. And we see here how God's arm led the people by the hand of Moses and of Adam.

[26 : 59] Not seen by the people, but we can look back and we can recognize that without the strength of God, the people of Israel were not led through the Red Sea, were not led in the wilderness and protected in the wilderness without the arm of God.

Moses and Aaron might have been the ones that were there, speaking to the people, leading the people, might have been the priest, as we see in Aaron, that was performing the sacrifices, but all the time it was God that was leading them by his hand.

what does that point us to? It points us to the fact that while Moses was a prophet and Aaron was a priest, that the flock of Israel needed to be guided by a shepherd, that there is a great shepherd, there is a great prophet and there is a great priest that this all points towards in terms of God's salvation plan for each and every one of us.

And while the hand can do nothing without the arm, Jesus, as he spoke of himself, said in John 15, I am the vine, you are the branches, whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

God's salvation plan is that each and every one of us will be joined to Jesus. The children of Israel were taken through the Red Sea.

[28 : 46] But God's salvation plan for each and every one of us involved not the Red Sea, but it involved the shedding of blood, the shedding of blood on the cross at Calvary.

And Jesus, when he spoke to Nicodemus, laid out that plan in John 3, 16 and verse 8, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God did not send his son into the world to contend the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Are you prepared to come to Jesus this morning, to be washed in his blood, that you may indeed know and acknowledge God's salvation plan for you this morning, because that's not where it finishes.

Jesus warns us, whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the Son, the only Son of God.

Are you seeking the Lord this morning? We can read that psalm, we can maybe look and think, well, the psalmist was in a downward spiral, but he remembered God.

[30 : 16] He remembered God, and he remembered what God had done. As you're here this morning, you may indeed already have given your life to Christ.

Continue to pray, continue to seek God. You may be sitting here this morning thinking, I've heard all this before, what do I need to do?

Well, the answer is still the same, seek the Lord. Seek the Lord while he may be found. You may be saying, what is it I need to do?

Well, we saw that the psalmist called out to God in prayer. When do I do it? Do it right now. Don't put it off. Where do I seek the Lord?

Well, we already identified that you seek God through his word. But again, you can seek him right where you are in the seat that you're sitting in there. Why?

[31 : 21] Because your salvation depends on it. Seek the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near. We can look back and we can think about all the wonders that God has done.

But it means nothing if we do not recognize that God sent his son for you. And if you hear that message this morning, call out to him in prayer.

Don't put it off. Your salvation depends upon it. Let us pray. Thank you.