

"We Need God Again"

When America's founding fathers sought for freedom from Great Britain, they realized their desperate need for God's blessing. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. This is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's way." Without a doubt, we need God's blessing again. Stay tuned for an exciting study from God's word.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way. The God who created us, the God who sets times and boundaries, is the One and only God in control of the destiny of America or any country. We need to know the will of God and stand in His favor and grace if we expect to prosper in His sight. For this reason, we're looking into God's Word to see how He sees the nations of this world. We're delighted to be with you and want to hear from you. And we want to be a part of your life each week.

In the 1770s, the thirteen colonies that later formed the United States were a loosely organized group of independent governments seeking freedom from the unfair taxation imposed by Great Britain. At that time Great Britain had the most powerful military in the world, and the colonies only had undisciplined and ill-prepared militias. Because of the political strife, the colonies faced numerous financial struggles and lacked the industrial advantages found in Europe. They knew if they were ever to become their own nation and govern themselves, they must have the favor and the support of Almighty God.

Did you know the very first act on the first day of the first Continental Congress on September 7, 1774, was to read Psalm 35 and pray? Did you know they were kneeling, bowed with reverence, and praying in the name of Jesus Christ? This was not a church service—this was in their hearts. Who was kneeling? Patriots like George Washington, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay. Did you know they began every day with prayer at 9 o'clock? They knew they needed God. And we need God today! Some today are running away from God and following their own desires, and they're filling the land with violence, moral confusion, and sin.

Now we offer the information on this program free. If you'd like a printed copy, and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call us, it's toll free. That number is 1-800-321-8633. Now if you contact us, we won't put you on a mailing list or hassle you for money. We stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org and on YouTube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Romans 13:1 to 4, and explore just how badly we need God!

Our reading today is Paul epistle to the Romans chapter 13 verses 1 to 4 and in this he talks about our responsibility to God and to the government under which we live.

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

That's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that in Your kindness and Your grace You have allowed us to live in a country that remembers You. Father we pray

that You will help each one to be devoted to You and to do Your will. To love You and to love one another. This is our pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

The Continental Congress on May 16, 1776, appointed a day of fasting and prayer for the colonies. They said, "The Congress.... Desirous... to have people of all ranks and degrees duly impressed with a solemn sense of God's superintending providence, and of their duty, devoutly to rely... on his aid and direction... Do earnestly recommend Friday, the 17th day of May be observed by the colonies as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that we may, with united hearts, confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, and, by sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease God's righteous displeasure, and, though the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, (through Him) obtain pardon and forgiveness." Now the Continental Congress knew their blessing came from God and their forgiveness came through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Nations don't stand or fall based on their wealth or might. No! Other nations have been very wealthy and powerful, yet they fell. We must understand. America stands or falls based on its willingness to live by the principles found in God's Holy Word. God is the true King of our country and every country. He is more powerful than all our weapons. The early Americans knew God was the source of their liberties. They also knew that if they abandoned the will of God found in the Bible, they would lose the favor of God and their liberties.

Now according to the Bible, God gives all nations their right to exist. The Bible says in Acts 17:26, "and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation." The Father in heaven is far more involved in the establishing of nations than we might suppose! The Lord is involved in the bringing down of nations as well.

Our great God said in Jeremiah 18:7 to 10. "If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will relent of the good that I had intended to do to it."

Romans 13 and verse 1 reminds us, "For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." Whether emperor, king or president, every person in authority is subject to the God of heaven. God's holiness, justice and mercy do not change, but God does adapt how He deals with mankind as people and as nations change. America is not the nation it once was. Our citizens don't know the Word of God as they once did and doesn't allow the voice of God to speak as it once did.

Have you heard of the Aitken Bible? The war with Britain cut off the supply of Bibles to the United States with the result that on Sept. 11, 1777, Congress instructed its Committee of Commerce to import 20,000 Bibles from "Scotland, Holland or elsewhere." On January 21, 1781, Philadelphia printer Robert Aitken asked Congress to officially sanction a publication of the Old and New Testament which he was preparing at his own expense. Congress "highly approved the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken, as subservient to the interest of religion . . . in this country, and . . . they recommend this edition of the bible to the inhabitants of the United States."

Benjamin Franklin said in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, "God governs in the affairs of man. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured in the Sacred Writings (he says) that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it [Psalm 127 verse 1]. (And then he said)I firmly believe this. I

also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.”

During his inauguration as the first president of the United States on April 30, 1789, George Washington took the oath as prescribed by the Constitution but added several faith-based components to that official ceremony. Before taking his oath of office, he summoned a Bible on which to take the oath, added the words “So help me God!” to the end of the oath, then leaned over and kissed the Bible.

When Solomon became king over Israel he prayed for God’s blessing on the nation. God answered Solomon’s prayer with these words found in 2 Chronicles 7:13 to 14, “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” But what if a country stops listening to God, stops seeking His face, and will not humble themselves before Him? Can they expect His blessing?

Solomon knew being right with God matters for any nation. By inspiration he wrote in Proverbs 14:34 that, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” Solomon also wrote in Psalm 127 verse 1 that, “Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain.”

Arnold Toynbee who wrote the acclaimed 12- volume *A Study of History*, once declared, “Of the 22 civilizations that have appeared in history, 19 of them collapsed when they reached the moral state America is in today.” Toynbee died in 1975 before seeing our current moral decline. One must wonder how long God will tolerate the sins of America before He punishes us.

America has begun rejecting God and allowing godless ideology to become its master. America no longer fears God. It’s filled with lust, materialism, violence, and selfishness. It’s lost sight of the sanctity of life, the sanctity of marriage, and the value of holiness.

According to the National Center for Family & Marriage Research at Bowling Green State University, in 2022 more than 20 million couples were living together without marriage. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 40 percent of all childbirths were to unmarried women. According to the Pew Research Center, about 30 percent of U.S. adults are now religiously unaffiliated, describing themselves as atheists, agnostics, or “nothing in particular.” The Pew Research Center also found in 2020 that 57 percent of American Christians say that sex between unmarried adults in a committed relationship is sometimes or always acceptable.

The concept of sin is vanishing in the eyes of many people. According to a 2015 Pew Research poll 22 percent of Americans reject the concept of sin or that some actions are offensive to God. Many are now saying many things the Bible regards as sin are no longer a moral issue. A 2023 Gallup poll said that 83 percent of Americans believe the overall state of our morals are getting worse. A 2018 Gallup poll found that 43 percent believed pornography was morally acceptable. People may deny what God says, but that doesn’t mean God won’t hold them accountable for their sins.

Almost no one thinks he’ll be lost in hell, and many are denying hell exists. The Pew Research Center in 2021 found that 26 percent of U.S. adults do not believe in heaven or hell. The Cultural Research Center of Arizona Christian University found in 2020 that only two percent of Americans believe they will go to hell.

Now this loss of respect for God has affected the church as well. Lifeway Research found that while two-thirds of American adults believe the biblical accounts of the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is

accurate, a 2022 Barna poll found that only 33 percent of teenagers believe Jesus rose again. According to 2022 Gallup poll, only 20 percent of Americans now say the Bible is the literal word of God, while 29 percent say the Bible is a collection of “fables. Legends, history and moral precepts recorded by man.”

According to The American Worldview Inventory of 2020, 44 percent of Americans say that Jesus Christ committed sins. This loss of faith in God, His Word, and His church has caused people to reject religion or to reinvent the church. Some think the church should be like the world. Of course, the churches that become like the world lose their purpose and they cannot please God.

I ask again how long will God tolerate the sins of America? I wonder how long before He punishes this country. God is not evil; He takes no pleasure in punishing people. The Bible says in Ezekiel 33:11, “Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?’” We might as easily say to ourselves in this country, “turn back, turn back from your evil ways!”

We need to repent and turn to God. Galatians 5:19 to 21 says, “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” The apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 2:11 to 12 he said, “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.” If our Christianity doesn’t lead to righteous living, then we are a disgrace to God. We must glorify Him by our words, our attitudes, and our behavior.

God saved us so that we might bless those around us. The Bible says in Titus 2:11 to 14, “ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” God did not give us His grace so that we might continue in sin!

We must provide examples for our children. Ephesians 6 and verse 4 says, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” We must teach and show them how pleasing God is the best life we can live. We must teach our children to be holy and pure. We must teach them how God created them and gave them life. We must teach them to revere God and His Word. We must teach them to love the Lord, love the Truth, and love others. We must teach them to be honest, full of integrity and honor. We must never let a day pass without God, without the Bible, and without prayer.

The Scriptures are the only sure source of truth and morality. Some trust their instincts, their feelings, or their experiences; but none of these things meet the standard of holiness found in the words of Jesus Christ. And since Jesus is Lord and Judge, let’s listen to Him.

Let’s pray together. Heavenly Father help us to turn back, to turn back, to turn back from our evil ways. And to live for You. May Your will be done and our love for You grow. In Jesus name, Amen.

When Ezra returned to Israel after the period of exile in Babylon, he sought to strengthen the people’s faith. He knew the people of Israel needed God. Ezra 7:10 says that, “Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.” When Ezra learned the children of Israel had sinned by intermarrying with the pagan nations, Ezra mourned. Ezra 9:3 says,

“When I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled.”

Ezra said, “O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown even to the heavens.” Ezra 10 verse 1 says that, “While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children, gathered to him out of Israel, for the people wept bitterly.” He spent the night, neither eating bread nor drinking water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles.

Because of Ezra’s teaching, the people repented. Instead of saying there is no sin, they gave up their sins. We too must place our faith in God and in Christ Jesus. We must humble ourselves, mourn our sins, and turn from them. We must commit ourselves to the Lord by being baptized into Jesus Christ. In baptism the blood of Christ will cleanse us from sin and give us newness of life (Romans 6 verses 3 to 7). Today is a good day to leave sin and to start a new life in Christ. And God wants to save you and give you hope.

We hope you’ve been blessed by today’s study about our Need for God. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord’s Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Now don’t worry; we won’t add you to a mailing list or hassle you for money.

You can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There’s a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. And you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry” and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don’t worry, we’re not asking for money. We’re here to help you draw close to God.

Show God your love by worshiping at church. You need a church family. If you can attend, don’t neglect worshiping at church. There’s probably a church of Christ near you. And if you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one. We want you to be connected. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God’s Word with us and tell a friend about this program and encourage them to watch. An as always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.