

"What God Wants for Me"

As parents sweet Jackie and I wanted to give our children the very best that we could, because we loved them. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders and this is a Bible study, "In Search of the Lord's Way." In the same way our Father in Heaven wants to meet our needs and give us the best life possible. And only in Christ can we find the abundant life, and that's what we'll explore today.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way, where we search the Scriptures to find the Lord's way to be saved and to live the Christian life. The Scriptures provide what we need to live the Christian life and to go to heaven. Thanks so very much for studying God's Word with us. We love hearing from you that you are watching or listening. And we want to be a part of your life each week.

When God, your Father, created you, He created you with love in His heart. God said to the nation of Israel in Jeremiah 29:11, "'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'" God has a plan for our lives too! He wants to bless our lives and to meet our needs. The Bible says in James 1:17 that, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow."

All the physical blessings we enjoy, however, won't make up for what our spirits need. We're spiritual beings with souls, and the physical things of this life will not provide for the things that we need inside our hearts. We need the love of God in our lives. He's the difference between wisdom and foolishness. He's the difference between existing and abundant living. He's the difference between chasing after wind and living with meaning and purpose. God knows what is best for us and He wants to provide the things we need most for our souls.

For forty-three years In Search of the Lord's Way has offered the information on this program free. If you'd like a printed copy of today's lesson, 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, call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org and on YouTube.

The Edmond Church will now worship in song a praise to God. We'll read from Romans 8:31 to 39. And talk about what God wants for me.

Our reading today comes from Romans chapter 8 verses 31 to 39.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, "or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written,"

"FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG;
WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What a wonderful passage. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that nothing can separate us from Your love. And we pray that we will always live in love for You and for others. This is our prayer in Jesus name, Amen

God is our Father, and like any good parent He wants what is best for us spiritually, because He loves us and knows spiritual well-being is vital to us. In this lesson I want us to explore seven things God wants for our lives. I am so thankful for the Bible, because it's the Bible that helps us understand the heart of God. The more we know God, the more we'll love Him and want to follow Jesus Christ. Here are some things God wants for our lives.

First, God wants you to be saved. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 2:3 to 4, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." There's nothing in this world worse than being lost in sin. God says in Ezekiel 18:4 that the soul that sins will die. He's not here speaking of physical death but spiritual death, which is far worse.

Sin ruins our lives and souls. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 10:28, "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Sin will separate you from God's love and His blessing. But God has a plan to save us from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ, when we believe in Him and obey His commandments.

Some people think God made up His mind long ago who would be saved and who would be lost, but this simply isn't true. God gave us the truth, which teaches us how to be saved; and He gave us free will, which allows us to choose to follow Him or reject Him. God, however, wants us to choose Jesus and to be saved. He doesn't want anyone to be lost.

The Bible says in Ezekiel 18:30 to 32, "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord GOD. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you. Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, repent and live."

Second, God wants you to come to know the truth and to be free. The Lord Jesus promised those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31 and 32). God gave us His Son Jesus so that we might come to know and understand His love for us. The Bible says in John 1:17 to 18, "For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." This is from the New American Standard Bible.

Some say they believe there is a God in heaven, but they don't know anything about Him. But we can and we do know something about Him. We can know God through looking at Jesus. The Lord Jesus once said to the apostles, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (that's John 14:7 to 9). Yes we know the Father by knowing the Son!

Third, God offers us the privilege of prayer. In fact, God wants to hear from us. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:7 to 11, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a

stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"

We don't have to beg God to let us pray to Him; the Lord invites us and wants us to bring our requests to Him. Just as a father loves his children, so our Father in heaven loves us. He wants to hear from us and to have a relationship with us. The Bible is how God speaks to us, and prayer is how we speak to God. God loves us enough to hear our words and our hearts. He will always answer with what is best for us, not always with what we want but always with what we need.

Fourth, God wants us to live sensibly, righteously, and godly in this present age. The Bible says in Titus 2:11 to 14, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, (and) 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 wants only what is best for us. Living sensibly, righteously, and godly blesses our lives and blesses those who surround us. God's grace and forgiveness opens an opportunity for us to leave a sinful and destructive lifestyle for one that is godly and productive. The gospel of Christ transforms lives from selfish to loving, from hurtful to helpful, from dishonest to devoted, and from troubled to trustworthy. God's grace works through the Word to teach us that to hate what is wrong and to love what is right.

Fifth, God wants you to have an abundant life. The Lord Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly." Now everybody wants to be happy, but "the abundant life" is far greater than merely being happy. It has real, inner joy, real life. It's a complete life; it's life "to the full." Christianity is a way of life that does not lack any worthy thing that we need.

Sinful pleasures may satisfy for a moment, but they cannot give you the lasting joy of the Christian life. Sinful pleasures are deceptive; they promise much but destroy those who pursue them. Sinful pleasures are addictive, enslaving, and destructive. God wants something better for His children than slavery to sin. And so He offers the spiritual, which is so much better than the fleshly. God's word says in Ephesians 1 verse 3 that the Father "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."

In Christ we have God's amazing grace to sustain us, God's abundant love to comfort us, God's hope of heaven to give us endurance, and God's Word of wisdom to guide us. In Christ we have become God's holy and beloved children. And being God's child is the greatest privilege of all. Nothing else compares.

As part of the abundant life, God gives us the church as our family. As part of the local church we have brothers and sisters who know us and love us, who encourage us and watch for our souls. As part of a local church, we have a place to worship and to grow as children of God. God gave us the church to bless our lives and to help us keep strong in our faith and love for Him. Living as part of God's family, the church, and serving Christ gives us a great sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Sixth, God wants you to find peace. The Bible says in Philippians 4:6 to 7, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds

in Christ Jesus.” God knows that we often come upon tough times. And just like any Father who loves His children, He puts His arm around us and says, “Let me handle it.”

When we put ourselves into God’s hands, He sets a guard around our hearts and minds and protects us from doubts and fears. He replaces all our worries and uncertainties with His perfect peace. Isaiah 26:3 to 4 says, “The steadfast of mind You (that is God) will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts (that is that the person trusts in God) in You. Trust in the LORD forever, For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.”

In Philippians 4:8 to 9 God’s Word says, “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things (that) you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.” When people think good thoughts and live righteous lives, they can go to sleep at night with a clear conscience, knowing that they’re right with the living God. The peace that passes understanding is truly a blessing.

Seventh, God wants you to come home to live with Him forever. The Lord Jesus said in John 14 verses 1 to 3, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

The Lord has prepared and reserved a place with your name on it. God intends to bless us in ways beyond our understanding. In Ephesians 2:4 to 7, the Bible says, “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” God wants to give you a marvelous, amazing home forever in His house as part of His family.

Well, these are only seven things that God wants for you. There are many. To enjoy them God wants your heart and your life. You can’t please God and remain on the fence or apathetic. You have to come to that point where you make a commitment to God from this day forward and forever. The Bible says in 2 Peter 3 and verse 9 that, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all (every one of us) to come to repentance.” God wants you to find His love by changing your life. You must leave the old way of sinful pleasures and follow Him to an abundant life. Today is the best day to get started on a new and better life! Won’t you start with Him, won’t you pray every day and let your heart be known to Him. Won’t you read His word and find out the blessing that He has in store for you and the commandment that keep you safe and keep you going in the right direction. And keep you from the pitfalls of life. Won’t you be the kind of person that says I know that I need God in my life and put Him first in everything, to love Him with all your heart. Oh I’m praying that you’ll make a difference in your life today. And give yourself to Him.

Let’s pray together. Heavenly Father we’re so very grateful for Your love. For all of the blessing that You give to us, for the abundant life, for Your word and for prayer. And we pray that You’ll bless us and help us to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

The most important thing we can do to respond to God is to love Him with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength. One who loves God will act upon the love by believing in Christ (John 8:24),

repenting of every sin (Acts 2:38), confessing Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Matthew 10:32 to 33), and by being baptized (that is immersed) in water for the forgiveness of sins. When a penitent, believing person is baptized, the Lord washes away his sins (Acts 22:16), and adds him to His church (Acts 2:47), counts him as His child (Galatians 3:26), and saves him (1 Peter 3 verse 21).

Now God wants you to live with Him forever. The way to live in His house forever is to come into His family in this life. The church is God's family (1 Tim. 3 and verse 15). And as His child, you will want to be with other members of God's family, by attending church regularly and worshipping. God has designed the church to meet your spiritual needs and to provide the loving family that you desire.

God's arms are open wide longing for you to come home to Him and to be apart of the family that He has on the earth. Now no one will ever love or bless you the way God loves you and blesses you as one of His people. No one else can provide a home in heaven. No one else can give you a godly, loving family like Christ does. Won't you come to Him, serve Him and live with Him? Now if you're looking for a close, loving, personal relationship with God, why not visit one of the churches of Christ near you? They are loving group of brothers and sisters who want to help you go to heaven. You'll never regret doing what is right, but you'll forever regret passing up the gifts of God.

We hope you've been blessed by today's study. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, "What God Wants for Me," 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 the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. You can watch SEARCH on YouTube any time! 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. And 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 help a lot of people and we want you to have a church family too. Well, we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. Let them know you watch and encourage them to watch too. As always God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.