

"Where Could I Go?"

In a world filled with temptation, struggles, and social problems, we have no place better to go than to the Lord. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." The Lord has the answers and the help that we need. So stay tuned.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's will. The Bible has the answers to the problems of life. We can go to it for help, for instruction, for correction, and for comfort. It nourishes our souls and restores our hope. Many search for answers in science, only to find that the Bible was right all along. Many search for answers in education, only to find that the highest education is in God's Word, so we go to the Bible. We're delighted that you've joined us. We want to be a part of your life each week.

Do you recall this old hymn? "Living below in this old sinful world, Hardly a comfort can afford, Striving alone to face temptations sore, Where could I go but to the Lord? Where could I go, oh, where could I go, Seeking a refuge for my soul, Needing a friend to save me in the end, Where could I go but to the Lord?"

We live in a messed up world. Sin fills our televisions, the internet and movies. Our culture undermines the sanctity of life and the sanctity of marriage. We've chosen alternatives to truth and godliness and have forsaken the way of the Lord. Many have quit serving God and worshipping at church and imagined they could live without God.

But the more that we push God out, the more wretched we become. The more we forsake Him, His church, and what's right, the more trouble we find. God gave us His Son to save us, His Word to guide us, and His church as a family. If we cease to attend worship at church, to pray, and to obey the Lord, God slowly becomes absent from our lives. And rather than push God away, we need to come back to Him. We need to come home to the Lord. And nothing is more valuable than your soul.

Now if you'd like a free printed copy of our study and 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 our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website www.searchtv.org and on You Tube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Jeremiah 2:11 to 13, and think about turning our hearts back to God.

Our reading today is brief, comes from the prophet Jeremiah chapter 2 verses 11 to 13. And talks about how that society in Jerusalem, back long time ago, began to desecrate. He says:

Has a nation changed gods
When they were not gods?
But My people have changed their glory
For that which does not profit.
"Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
And shudder, be very desolate," declares the LORD.
"For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That can hold no water.

Many people today have done just the same thing. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we are thankful that You through Your word and through Your love and grace have given us life and have given us the way to live. So that we may live forever with You. Father help us to never leave You or forsake You but to hold fast to You because You are the living water. And we love You. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

God is the fountain of living waters, and you know what, He longs to bless us. Some search through libraries, some through the internet, and some settle for what they hear from friends or teachers. But the Lord offers the most important truth and blessing in life. We can't afford to go elsewhere.

We must go to the Lord for peace. Now true peace comes from a right relationship with the Lord Jesus. When your sins are forgiven, you can sleep at night, knowing that God is with you. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 11:28 to 30, "Come unto Me, all who labor and are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Jesus gives us sweet rest. Christianity is not an impossible religion; you can live the Christian life and live with the Lord.

The Lord gives peace by listening. The Bible says in 1 Peter 5 verse 7, "casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you." Oh, the Lord knows your every heartache and fear. And He'll stand beside you and help you. 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." The Lord's peace is real peace, even in the midst of struggles and troubles.

First, we must go to the Lord to learn right and wrong. Jesus has the ultimate standard of morality. When people follow His example and teaching, their lives are filled and are better in every way; but when they follow their fleshly desires, they fill their lives with misery. The morality of the Lord Jesus reaches into the heart. And the Lord said in Matthew 5:27 to 29 that, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell." When people's hearts have evil desires, they sin against God and they cause great heartache.

Galatians 6:7 to 8 says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." The Bible clearly reveals how the works of the flesh corrupt our lives and keep us out of heaven.

Galatians 5:19 to 21 says, "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, (and he says) of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Second, we must go to the Lord Jesus for the truth. The Lord always speaks the truth. John 1 verse 14 says, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." Now just as Jesus is full of grace, He is also full of truth. He will never mislead or deceive. The Lord Jesus said in John 8:31 to 32 that, "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.” Oh, Jesus identifies with the truth, in fact He could tell Thomas in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

When Jesus appeared before Pontius Pilate, He revealed one of the purposes for His coming to this earth. In John 18:37 Pilate said to Him, or He said rather to Pilate, “For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. And everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” Pilate said to Him well, “What is truth?” And many people like Pilate are stumbling around searching for the truth, when it’s right in front of them. The Lord gives us the truth about life, death, and the hereafter. And we need the courage and the faith to listen.

Third, we must go to the Lord for forgiveness. Now each of us has to deal with guilt. There is but one real answer to the problem of guilt. We need the Lord. The Bible says in Colossians 1:13 to 14, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Now forgiveness means that I can start over fresh. Forgiveness doesn’t change the past, but it does mean that God no longer holds my sins against me. The blood Jesus sacrificed on the cross atoned for my sins, so that God blots them out. Oh, He keeps His promise found in Hebrews 8 and verse 12, “For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.” The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:21 that God made Jesus “who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Now God gives us hope for a better life.

The Bible says in 1 Peter 2 and verse 24 that, “and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” I ask you, who else will die for you to atone for your sins? And who could? No one but Jesus.

Fourth, we must go to the Lord for life. God is our creator and the source of our lives. And without Him, we really don’t have a life. Many people think that they’re living because they’ve found some pleasure or achieved some goal, but eternal life is much greater than a temporary pleasure. And the Bible says in 1 Timothy 5 and verse 6, “But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives.” You know if the only thing you can find in life is sinful, you’re spiritually dead.

Some of the Lord’s disciples didn’t like what He said once and decided to leave. John 6:66 to 69 you remember the bible says: As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.” Peter knew what we needed to know. And only Jesus has the words of eternal life. And only Jesus can give us life.

The Lord Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” Some think that there are many roads to heaven, but there’s only one. And that’s Jesus Christ. And the life He came to give is far richer and greater than anything men have to offer. Jesus said in John 10 and verse 10 that, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; (Jesus said) I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly.” When people take their Christianity seriously, they find it is truly an abundant life, the best life we can live.

Beyond this, Jesus gives us eternal life. When Martha’s brother Lazarus died, Jesus went to her home. Jesus told her that, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:23 to 26) My friend, do you believe this? Does your life show that you believe?

Fifth, we must go to Jesus and His church. The Lord built His church; He purchased it with His own blood. He's the head of the church, which is His body. The Lord regards His church like a groom would think of his bride. And the Lord regards His church as His family. When you abandon the church, you say to the Lord, "well I don't want to be part of Your family." God takes note of your choice.

These days many who used to go to church have simply stopped. People give several reasons why. Oh some charge the church is full of hypocrites; and others say they don't feel comfortable there. Quitting church usually comes on the heels of some conflict or hurt feelings. Someone offends them, and they decide never to attend again. But when they abandon the church, they're also abandoning the Lord Himself. When a person stops attending church, he gives his influence to the devil. Parents who abandon church teach their children that God's will and church aren't important. They're saying that they don't need God or His church. They begin living their lives without prayer, without Bible study, and without worship.

Someone says well, "Phil, you don't know how those folks hurt me." No, I don't. But I do know church people may become selfish, hypocritical and mean. They're human and they don't show the love of Christ. I know that. But I'm not asking you to devote your life to follow those things; I'm asking you to take up your cross and follow Jesus Christ, whether anybody else does. To follow Jesus even if others have hurt you. Because Jesus still holds to the church. And He cares for each of us.

Now think about Jesus Christ. No matter how people treated Him, you know what, He never gave up on building, saving, and loving the church. He suffered the cross. Why, He could have called twelve legions of angels to protect Him. How do you think He felt when one of His closest disciples Judas betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver? How do you think He felt when Peter denied Him, that he denied knowing Him and he did it three different times, and once in His presence?

But Jesus didn't give up on building His church, even when His disciples didn't believe. And whenever the women came and said He had risen from the dead, they laughed. But He didn't give up on them and He didn't give up on Thomas, when Thomas said he wouldn't believe until he could see the imprint of the nails and put his finger into the Lord's hand and side. Jesus didn't give up and you know what, He hasn't given up on you either. He wants you to obey Him and follow Him. And He's patient.

He forgave all your sins when you obeyed the gospel and were baptized and became a Christian. Galatians 1 and verse 4 says Jesus "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age." After atoning for your sins with His blood, He became your advocate with the Father when you sinned as a Christian (1 John 2:1 to 2). Hebrews 7:25 says that "He always lives to make intercession" for those who draw near Him. Oh, He doesn't want to give up on you.

But if you give up on Him and walk away from Him and His church, if you harden your heart against Him, He will grieve your loss. You'll hurt Him, but you'll also hurt yourself and others around you. You're settling for a broken cistern that can hold no water. Rather than go to the living waters. The Lord Jesus still wants your heart and life. He'll wait for you, hoping and praying that you'll come home. The door will be open when you decide to come back, but you're like a prodigal son if you remain in the world. Oh come home, come home.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we hope that each one who hears this message will look deep into their lives and come to want to love You and to need and to serve You all of their days. Father for those who have wandered away help them to come back home. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

The Lord Jesus said to a group of luke warm Christians who didn't need anything, in Revelation 3 and verse 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me." He didn't say this people who are in the world and had never become Christians or those who were luke warm church member didn't matter at Laodicea but He was ready to do something about even though before He was ready to spit out of His mouth. He wanted them.

The Laodicean church members had shut Christ out of their lives. They were attending church but didn't need Jesus. And He knocked, hoping that they once again would have fellowship with Him. The fellowship of the Lord comes with the church. And if you quit the church, you lose the Lord. Why not turn your life around and come back to God and to His church?

Nothing is more important to you than your soul. And if you need to work out a conflict or you need to repent, don't waste another day. Nothing is worth more than your soul.

If you've never gotten right with the Lord or been part of a church family, do it today. Believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Turn your heart from sin and follow the teaching of Jesus—that's repentance. Faith and repentance must become your way of life. And out of love, confess the Lord Jesus as the Christ and be baptized in water. And the Lord forgives you and washes you clean from sin when you're baptized according to Acts 2:38 and 22:16. Now at baptism you become a child of God, and the Lord adds you to His church, His family. Oh, you need the Lord today more than ever! Why not come to Him today!

We hope you'll think seriously about your soul. We offer a free printed copy of this message. And if you live in the United States, and you'd like a copy, 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.

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Please worship with a church of Christ in your area. Everybody needs a church home. And if you're looking for a Biblical and a good church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. And they'll be glad you attended. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us tell a friend about us. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.