

"Yes We Need God"

People who think they can do it on their own often forget God. Do we need God? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're going to explore our great need for God. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Scriptures open up God's history for us, so that we can avoid spiritual pitfalls and live prosperous lives that please God. We find blessing when we seek God, because we realize how much we need Him. We find God today in Scripture. Thanks for spending this time with us; we want to be a part of your life each week.

Asa was a good king in Judah. Early in his reign King Asa saw God defeat the huge army of the Ethiopians and Libyans when he looked to God for help. He put away the sinful idols and humbled his heart. But late in life King Asa relied on the king of Syria rather than turn to God for help. Hanani, the seer or prophet, told King Asa in 2 Chronicles 16:9, "For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars." King Asa failed to seek God's help and found his later years filled with misery and frustration. Asa got angry at Hanani and put him in prison, because he didn't want to hear the truth.

Don't make Asa's mistake. The Lord is still looking for people who will seek after Him and His ways. Many today never call on God, seek His will, or feel a need for Him. They assume some other way is better than following God. Like Asa, they're only bringing misery upon themselves. God would love to draw close to you and bless you, but you must let Him. You must seek Him with all your heart. Will you?

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The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from 2 Chronicles 14:9 to 12, and we'll see how much we need God.

Our reading today comes from 2 Chronicles chapter 14 verses 9 to 12. And they talk about Asa's victory by the power of God over the Ethiopians.

Now Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and he came to Mareshah. So Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up in battle formation in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "LORD, there is no one besides You to help in the battle between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in You, and in Your name have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You." So the LORD routed the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.

We need God and we can trust Him. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful for these stories of old that show that You were with Your people. And Father we pray that You will be with us in our time of struggles. Even whenever the people are a multitude against us. Help us Heavenly Father in Jesus name, Amen.

Americans are famous for their belief in “rugged individualism,” not needing anything or anyone. They believe in pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps. Even Christians can fall into the trap of feeling self-sufficient, of not realizing how much they need God, His guidance, His morals, and His truth. On every American coin and dollar are the words, “In God we trust.” If we trust in God, why has our nation begun thinking that man’s wisdom is better, and man’s morals are kinder, or man’s favor is more important than God’s? The more we ignore and forget God, the more miserable our nation will become.

King Asa of Judah had been spiritually strong, and a faithful king for many years, and God gave the land rest and prosperity, but later in life he forgot God. He sought help from the idolatrous king of Syria rather than God. You’d think the great victory God gave him would have made a greater impression, but Asa thought he outgrew his need for God. When he did so, he only ruined himself. He got angry at hearing the truth, imprisoned Hanani, and oppressed some people. You see war never departed Judah as long as he lived. When people ignore God and follow their own path, they get angry at the truth. They hate the good and seek their own ways. They think they are better off, but they only ruin themselves.

The luke-warm church in Laodicea became so prosperous they didn’t need God. Revelation 3:17 to 18 says, ‘Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” (and then he says) and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, (then Jesus said) I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.’ No wonder Jesus was ready to spit them out of His mouth!

The church was spiritually wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. You know people often blind themselves to reality—not seeing how vulnerable and weak they are. Laodicea had banks and were rich, had clothing businesses with purple, and had an eye businesses with salve. But they were spiritually impoverished! You can have all the money, fame, and power of men and yet still be weak and powerless with God. It’s easy to feel satisfied with life, that all is okay. Then something happens which opens our eyes to the reality that we don’t have all the strings. Some strings belong only to God.

Exodus, chapter one, tells the story of Israel’s decline in Egypt from a wealthy and powerful position to one of slavery. It all happened when Egypt changed politically. Exodus 1:6 to 11 says, “Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them. Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, ‘Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we.’ (well)The new king of Egypt was jealous of the power of Israel. (he said) ‘Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land.’ So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor.”

Time has an amazing way of changing things in life. And no matter how secure you think you are, your whole life can be shattered in a day. At that point, you’ll know that your life will never be the same. You can’t turn back the clock and recover what you lost. It’s presumptuous to think that we’ll never need the help of God, never need Him as our friend.

James talked about assuming too much in life in chapter 4:13 to 15. He said, “Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in

business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You're just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." The fact is, none of us knows the future or what our lives will be like. We act in hope that things will go as we planned; but we don't know what will happen to us in coming days and weeks.

People who trust in their own wisdom and their own senses often become deceived by their wisdom and the assumptions of the world. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:20 to 25, "Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

Some people want a Savior, but they don't want a "Lord," to whom they are accountable and whose Word they must obey. What they may not realize is that everyone has a "lord." They are enslaved to someone or something. Unfortunately many people are enslaved to sin or to the devil. Jesus said in John 8:34, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." A person commits sin because he thinks it's pleasurable, but after a time the sin begins to control the person, and he is a slave. And instead of being "in control," he's "controlled."

Peter spoke of some false teachers of his day as people enslaved to sin in 2 Pet. 2:17 to 19: "These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved." Now sin is cruel to those who are enslaved to it. It brings nothing but harm and shame and regret. Sin is a terrible master.

Everyone has a Lord, wouldn't it be better to choose a master who will love you and bless you rather than one that curses and enslaves you. If you reject Jesus as Lord, you also reject His promises of blessing and the inheritance He has prepared for you. Some people think they don't need a Savior. They might say, "I am not really so bad as to deserve to be lost." You know it's the tendency of every person to kind of downplay his own sins. To many people "sin" is an outdated word and "hell" is kind of a myth designed to manipulate. But if sin and hell are true concepts, and they are, we need a Savior!

Paul said in Rom. 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." And those wages have never, never, never changed in all these years. In Psalm 14:2 to 3, David wrote, "The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one." Paul said in Rom. 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Sin is a universal problem! You have it, I have it, we all have it.

Someone says, "I can't be all that bad." But the apostle John said in 1 John 1:8 to 10, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us." We all need a Savior. We need Him to save us from sin, to give us hope and to lead us to heaven. Without the blood of Jesus, we'd all be lost and without any hope of forgiveness and no hope for heaven. Instead of getting proud, let's humble ourselves.

Peter said of Jesus, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2 verse 24). That matters to me. What Jesus did is personal, very personal. The sins that I committed, the sins that you committed meant that we were guilty and we deserved death. And so, God laid on Christ the penalty that you and I should have suffered. He suffered this penalty personally with his body and by shedding his blood. Jesus died for us so that we could be healed from the terrible stain and harm and shame of sin. We should all be grateful for the great sacrifice the Lord Jesus made.

Paul said in Romans 5:6 to 8, “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows (demonstrates) his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” It’s hard to imagine that kind of love. To die for people who were weak, ungodly, and sinners shows the surpassing love of Jesus. We can never forget or ignore that kind of love. You and I can be saved by Him, but at a tremendous cost. Your soul and my soul were not cheap. No.

Peter said in 1 Peter 1:18 to 19, “knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.” God took you and me seriously enough to sacrifice His Son. Jesus loved us enough to sacrifice His life. Let’s never walk away from the cross, acting as if nothing went on there that day. What really happened? He took your punishment because He loved you and wanted to spend an eternity with you. Do we need the Lord? Of course we do!

We need the Lord! We need Him every day! We need Him in every facet of our lives! We need saving from sin. We need forgiveness. We need his counsel and His wisdom. We need his guidance and leadership. We need to know Him and the power of his resurrection. We need the Father’s ear to hear our prayers. We need the Father’s care and protection every day of our lives. We need the Lord’s help to overcome sin. The God of heaven, the God of the Bible is a true and living God— and He’s the only God. If we don’t have Him in our lives, like Asa, we really have nothing at all.

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father we’re thankful that You are a good God to us, that You want to be a part of our lives. That You have loved us and given Jesus for our sins. Help us Heavenly Father to love You, to let You into our lives and to live in way that we walk worthy of our calling. Help us to love You and to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

The apostle Paul in Philippians 3:7 to 8 revealed how much he needed the Lord. He said he’d give up everything to have Jesus in his life. He said, “But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.” When we have Christ, we have everything; but when we fail to have Christ, we have nothing of lasting value. The Lord Jesus said in John 17:3, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” Jesus is the only way to eternity; come to Him and serve Him. “Take the world, but give me Jesus.”

We need Jesus in our personal lives, our homes, our cities, and our nation. We need His teaching and love to fill every corner. The story of the cross and the resurrection is not simply good news; it’s the best news and the only news that can save you from sin and lead you to heaven. Draw close to God; make Him a part of your life every day! Become a Christian by placing your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He will never lie to you and He wants to save you. He’ll do it out of love. And out of your love repent of your sins by forsaking them and by following the Lord. Confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ, united with Him. We’re crucified with

Christ in baptism that our body of sin might be done away with according to Romans 6:3 to 7. God washes away our sins in baptism according to Acts 22:16. Become a Christian today.

Well, we hope today's study has stirred you to consider your absolute 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. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. And if you live outside the United States you can see our program and download it on www.searchty.org and also you can see us on You Tube. We offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we won't ask you for money or put you on a list. Now we do ask that you attend a church of Christ

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