

"We Need God"

One of the best days of your life is the day that you truly realize there is a God and you need Him. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're examining how much we need God.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. Because we know there is a God in heaven who made us, and because we know that we need Him, we turn to His words found in Scripture. His wisdom guides us, His grace saves us, His love warms our hearts, and His promises give us hope. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

The church in Laodicea forgot how important God was; they took God for granted. The Lord Jesus rebuked them in Revelation 3:15 to 17. He said, 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.' They couldn't see themselves as God saw them. They didn't realize how much they were blessed and dependent upon God. Oh everyone needs God, whether they realize it or not.

Many people today are just as deceived. They reject God because they see flaws in Christians. And many who criticize Christianity know only bits and pieces about it. Some consider Christians as hypocrites and mean, until they get to know them. Please don't paint all churches with a broad brush, as if all Christians were the same. I've seen the ugly and hurtful in some. But I've also seen the beauty and godliness in others. Whatever faults I find in people, I can't find in God or in my Lord Jesus. In Jesus I see love, grace, hope, peace, and forgiveness. I need what He provides, and so do you. You need God.

We offer this study free about our need for God! And if you'd like a printed copy 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 have programs and free materials on our website, at www.searchtv.org. And you can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, we're going to read from Acts 17:24 to 28, and examine how very important God is to our lives, our hearts, and our souls.

Our reading today comes from the book of Acts chapter 17 verses 24 to 28. And they talk about God and His work in our lives. And how He made us.

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; 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, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Oh that's a reading from God word. That we can know that we were made by God. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You have seen fit to make us and You've provided a world for us to live in. father we're thankful for all Your blessings and help us to serve you and to be close to You and to find You. In Jesus name, amen.

The 24 elders sang to God in heaven in Revelation 4:11, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." If it were not for God, you wouldn't exist. You, my friend, are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139 verse 14) and you're far more complex than you can imagine. Only an all-wise and all-powerful God could have created you. You're no accident or and you're no coincidence. God made you for a purpose. And this world, that often follows the evil one, seeks to bury or contradict God and His teaching. The truth, however, will not go away. Proverbs 21 verse 30 says, "There is no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel against the LORD." Oh many people choose to follow ways that hurt them.

But the Lord Jesus described two ways of men go and the paths they take, in Matthew 7:13 to 14. And He said, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." Many people have this backward way of thinking that God is pleased with most everyone regardless of how they live or what they do. They think the broad way, where most people are, won't lead them to destruction. And this simply isn't true. Many will enter the eternal life that God has on that narrow path. We need to really pay attention to God and to His teaching. We need to enter that narrow gate where Christ is, if we wish to have eternal life.

And here are some reasons why we need God. First, we need God when we need direction. You see, God gives us the wisdom, in His word, to know how to live, how to treat others, how to treat our families, and how to deal with our failures and sins. Jeremiah confessed in Jeremiah 10:23, "I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps." People can be easily be deceived and they think they know what is best for themselves. Proverbs 14:12 states, "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." We as humans, even the elite, aren't always as knowledgeable as we think. We need God's teaching.

2 Timothy 3:16 to 17 explains that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." God's word can give us what we need to leave the old life of sin and to become men and women of God who are trained and equipped for every good work. We must remain awake and alert. Colossians 2:18 to 19 says, "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. Yes.

Second, we need God's help when we're tempted. Oh, the devil will lie to us, make false promises, and trick us into doing things for which we're later ashamed. Psalm 119 verse 9 asked, "How can a young man keep his way pure?" And the verse answers, "By keeping it according to Your word." The Scripture gives us the answers to the challenges of temptation.

Ephesians 6:14 to 18 tells us how to fight the devil. It says, "Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication." Oh, we need truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the sword of the Spirit, and prayer in our daily lives to face those sudden temptations.

We can draw near Christ in times of temptation. Hebrews 4:15 to 16 says, "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." You see, the Lord understands us and will help us in that time of need. James 4:7 to 8 urges us, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

We also have the promise of God to provide a way of escape from temptation. 1 Corinthians 10:13 promises that, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."

Third, we need God when we're in mourning. I've spent much of my life at hospitals, funerals, and cemeteries. I've been with people who were passing away. When death comes to those that we love, it matters whether you believe in God and whether you're right with God. When Lazarus died, Jesus spoke with his sister Martha. John 11:25 and 26 reports what Jesus said to her. He said, "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?" When our hearts break, we need God.

Jesus later saw Mary, the other sister of Lazarus. John 11:33 says, "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled." What happens in our lives as Christians doesn't go unnoticed by our Lord. When we grieve, He sorrows with us. John 11:35 to 36 simply says, "Jesus wept. So the Jews were saying, 'See how He loved him!'" The Lord Jesus loves and cares for every child of God who is hurting. And our hope in God matters greatly.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 18 gives us assurance. Paul wrote, "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds (yes) to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

Fourth, we need God when we're struggling. Oh we're not alone in our struggles. It's easy to forget that we have a friend in Jesus when it comes to the struggles of this world. We're not alone. Let's recall Psalm 23:4 to 6. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me. And Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; Thou anoint my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever." To have God with us when times are tough comforts our hearts and gives us courage to continue on.

People sometimes think believers are weak and depend on a crutch. Some believe and teach relying only on ourselves. Those who rely only on themselves are cheating themselves out of the blessing of God. God cares for us and doesn't always take away our struggles, no; but even when we are struggling, God is with us helping us.

In 2 Corinthians 12 verse 7 to 10 Paul relates his experience of God's goodness. "Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, (Paul says) there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong." God even uses the afflictions of life to strengthen us and remind us of our need for Him. God knows what we need most, and maturing in faithfulness is vitally important.

Philippians 4:6 to 7 advises us, "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." Oh, God is ready to hear from us the difficulties we face. And thankfully we can turn them over to Him and request what we need. God will hear, when we put Him first.

Fifth, we need God when we're lost in sin. Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." 1 John 1 and verse 8 says that, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us." Oh every person who is mature enough to reason stands accountable to God. Romans 6 and verse 23 states that, "The wages of sin is death." Now this death is a separation from the favor of God. Ephesians 2:1 to 2 speaks clearly. To the people he says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."

When people get old enough to know what sin is and then sin against God, they are lost and need to be forgiven through the blood of Jesus. We learn about salvation through the gospel of Christ. We learn of His death for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection from the dead. All of this is described in Scripture, especially the New Testament. In the first gospel sermon, inspired by the Spirit, the guilty people at Pentecost in Acts 2 asked what they needed to do to be forgiven of the sin of crucifying Jesus. Peter responded in Acts 2:38, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." He urged them to "Be saved from this perverse generation" (verse 40); and 3000 people were baptized and added to them. Repenting and being baptized is still how people become Christians today.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You provide what we need as we need it and that You've loved us and watched over us and helped us every day of our lives. Give us strength and courage and faith and love. In Jesus name, Amen.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 6:31 to 33, "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." God knows what you need even before you ask. Don't imagine that He's forgotten or ignored you, if indeed you're His child. And if you seek His kingdom and His righteousness first, He will not forsake you.

Sadly, many have allowed God to slip out of their hearts and minds. They've put their focus on the things of this world and ignored God. They haven't let God reign in their lives. They have ignored His commandments and morals. And their way into the kingdom of God today is through the church, but

they haven't been in church for a long time. Then they wonder where God is! God hasn't left them; they left God. And I pray that you haven't left God out of your life.

God loves you, but God expects you to love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Christianity is a covenant relationship between God and man. And you have responsibilities too! To be right with God you must believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He died for your sins, and rose again from the dead on the third day. You must repent, turning from your sins to live in righteousness toward God. You must confess Him, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Now being baptized is when God acts upon you, forgiving and making you His child, adding you to His church, and uniting you with Jesus Christ. Oh come to God today and let Him bless you.

Now we hope our study that, We Need God, has caused you to open your heart to the Lord. If you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy, send 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. There's a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. SEARCH is 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. Oh 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. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.