

Seeking God is Not in Vain

Isa. 45:19 – “... I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain ...”

What does this mean? It might be interpreted as that God does not speak it in vain, but that would not be saying much, as God never speaks vain, empty, or meaningless words. Or perhaps, not to seek the Lord in emptiness and vain pursuits, as if that were possible. Rather it means that when God commands us to seek him, our seeking will not be in vain. He wants us to seek him because he wants us to find and know him. It is a command, mixed with a promise (seek – and you shall find).

Why should we seek God? (besides the very fact that he commands it)

- To know his will; to do his will
- To be able to hear him, so we can know him, and please him, and be like him

He does not choose to reveal himself lightly. To the unbelieving, he is so invisible that they question his existence, or at least his relevance. But to those who seek him, he will reveal himself, not just as the all-powerful Creator, but as the providential controller of our lives, and the true light, enabling us to understand him (in part), and to know what we are, and what he expects us to do in life.

We are to seek him with all our heart and soul:

Some claim that they sought God and didn't find him (like the Soviet cosmonaut), or maybe they are seeking God like the little boy whose mother told him to look for a can of mushroom soup. Yes, he looked (sort of) but he didn't really want to find it. We cannot expect to find God unless we are really determined to find him and to yield to his demands, whatever they are.

Dt. 4:29 – “But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” (v. 30 shows that this implies turning to God, and obeying him)

Jer. 29:12-14 – “Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Ps. 119:10 – “With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.”

We seek him in humility and repentance:

Many people will not seek God, because they are too proud to admit they need him, or they refuse to admit their sinful state and just condemnation.

2 Chr. 7:14 – “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

Those who seek will find:

This is really the point of the lesson – that God promises that seeking him with all the heart will not be in vain; we will not “come up empty”.

Prov. 8:17 – “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.” (spoken of Wisdom)

Jer. 29:12-14 – “Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity...”

Lk. 11:9-10, 13 – “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. ... If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

When should we seek God? Now.

Ps. 27:8 – “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.”

Isa. 55:6-7 – “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

Hos. 10:12 – “Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.”

How do we seek God?

- Pray – talk to him in private. Ask him to reveal himself to you.
- Read the Bible, study it, obey it. Don’t expect an audible voice when God has given 66 books of the Bible that reveal his existence, his nature, his commands, and his redemption.
- Meditate about God and his Word. THINK about it, long and hard, and deeply. Seek to understand it. Think about what God has revealed about himself, in creation, in human nature, in our conscience, as well as the Bible.
- Trust God. Prov. 3:5-6 – “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”
- Remember his works of old. Ps. 105:3-5 – “Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done ...”
- Respond in faith to Jesus Christ his Son, and receive him as Lord and Savior. You will never really find God if you are unwilling to believe and respond to his command to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Fellowship with other believers and be taught by God-ordained ministries

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