

Seek The Lord While He May Be Found

Pt. 1

This special message was given at North Christian Church in January, 2024. To watch the video, please visit nccdighton.org

Today is a special message, branching off from our recent messages in Hebrews.

One thing that's come up lately is God's **conditional** promises.

The Bible does give us unconditional promises for us to cling to, such as what the Lord promises believers: "I will never leave you nor forsake you". (**Heb 13:5**)

But the Bible also has many conditional promises.

A conditional promise means there's a promise from God attached to a certain condition placed upon us, such as faith and obedience in a certain area of our lives.

As our dear Pastor Collins has described for us:

God has placed conditional promises before us. To obey (e.g, to have faith) is to receive them.

And the title of our message comes from a verse that suggests such.

There's a lot in the Bible about seeking the Lord, and also about the consequences of NOT seeking Him.

Let's start in Isa 55 for an illustration of this:

(Isa 55:1) *“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*

(Isa 55:2) Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

(Isa 55:3) Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

(even the command of the Gospel is a conditional promise, based on faith... to be saved, God requires humble, repentant faith in His Son)

(Isa 55:4) Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

(Isa 55:5) Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

(Isa 55:6) “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

(Isa 55:7) let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

In vs. 6, we see people should seek the Lord WHILE He may be found, WHILE He is near...

... so the **condition** is seeking Him in vs.6, and the **result** is in vs.7, the Lord will have compassion and pardon him.

Let's read this one more time, in case you missed it. :)

(Isa 55:6) "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

(Isa 55:7) let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

This passage appears to be a call to salvation; a call to repentance...

... to turn to the Lord while there's still time; while it's still called "Today" even.

Is that not what's we've been seeing in the letter to the Hebrews??

If you've been on the fence in your soul, turn to the Lord while there's still time/opportunity!

Also, as believers, we have such conditional statements too, in certain passages.

Seeking is what we're called to do, if we really want to get to know the Lord and experience His peace...

... just as the Lord gives grace to the humble, but the arrogant not so much!

How about James' encouragement we've seen in the past??

Jas 4:8a *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.*

There's a condition there, right??

If we want a closer relationship with the Lord, if we want Him to draw near to us...

... He requires we draw near to Him.

Here's a basic promise passage from Jesus, that has conditions alluded to.... it's a promise to those **willing to seek Him**.

(Mat 7:7) *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*

(Mat 7:8) For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

The condition is asking, seeking, and knocking...

... and the result is being given to, finding, and opening up to you.

Let's read this one more time, in case you missed it. :)

(Mat 7:7) *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*

(Mat 7:8) For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

We're also encouraged in the Word of God to not only seek Him, but to seek Him DILIGENTLY...

... we just read that in Is 55:2, to "listen diligently" to the Lord.

Pr 8:17 *I love those who love me,
and those who seek me diligently find me.*

Do you see the condition to "finding" the Lord??

(Psa 119:1) *Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD!*

(Psa 119:2) *Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart,*

(Psa 119:3) *who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!*

(Psa 119:4) *You have commanded your precepts to be kept **diligently**.*

(Psa 119:5) *Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!*

(Psa 119:6) *Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.*

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We're also encouraged to seek the Lord as our **top** priority, not as a secondary option...

... and this condition results in certain blessings that are promised.

Mt 6:33 *But seek **first** the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

So, there are a lot of conditional promises related to **seeking** the Lord.

It must be done in a certain way, with a certain heart, if one wants to hear from the Lord and be blessed by Him. (i.e. - God doesn't accept lip service)

This is a **relational issue** for those who are born again and saved.

I think of **Rev 2 & 3**, written to the churches, most of whom the Lord has something against!

There's a repetitive call to repentance **TO THE CHURCHES**, even though most of them have things He complements them on, as well!

Consider the passage about losing our **FIRST** love...

... what's the consequence of not seeking Him first like we did in the beginning???

... what's the result of not loving Him like we did when we first realized He loved us and forgives us???

(Rev 2:1) *“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.*

(Rev 2:2) “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.

(Rev 2:3) I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary.

(Rev 2:4) *But I have this against you, that **you have abandoned the***

love you had at first.

(Rev 2:5) Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not (there's the condition), I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

And what's the lampstand?? - The local church itself! (see ch. 1)

He will take away this precious provision that we too often take for granted to be here.

Let's read this one more time, in case you missed it. :)

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(Rev 2:5) Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not (there's the condition), I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

How many churches have closed down in our country in the last 20 years???

Some rightfully so, for not teaching the Word.

But some **for lack of hearers** who aren't willing to listen to the words of the Lord!!

There's also the idea of the Word of God being removed from the land due to lack of willing hearers, as a similar thought to Rev 2:5...

(Amo 8:11) *“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I will send a famine on the land — not a famine of bread, nor a*

thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.

(Amo 8:12) They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the LORD, but they shall not find it.

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We're back to the title of our message; ***Seek The Lord While He May Be Found!***

The implication is there will be a time He cannot be found if we don't seek Him.

We are so blessed with this small church that humbly sticks to God's Truth the best we can!

And throughout this message, the Spirit had us read passages more than once "in case we missed it".

How many of us can say we're glad we reread it because we weren't concentrating the first time?? (I know, because I'm one of them!)

It's not just that we read His Word, but it's HOW we read His Word... with intention.

Do we read His word with a seeking attitude, like we crave to find out more about Him???

Or do we read it just to read it??

And if our reading isn't united **by faith** in what we read, what good is it?

And what should we expect to receive if we don't read it with faith, seeking Him from a humble heart??

NOTHING, acc. to James.

Let's close expounding on this truth...

Jas 1:5-8 *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

And this brings us back to our main passage in Hebrews 4.

We see a conditional promise.

The condition is **faith**. The promise based on obeying that condition is **rest**.

Heb 4:1 *Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.*

Heb 4:2 For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard **did not benefit them**, [Why?] because they were **not united by faith** with those who listened.

My friends, let us seek the Lord while He may be found!!

Let us repent while we still have time, returning to our first love!

Let us have faith in Him, while it's still called "today", so that our hearts may not be hardened, ala **Heb 3**...

... and let's hold onto our faith all the way until that day when we get to see Him face to face in all His glory. :)

Amen?!