

Amos 5:4-9

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[0 : 00] Last Wednesday, noticing this is Amos with his lamentation over the house of Israel! Amos preached and then he lamented when he knew and understood what they were going to receive.

! God had given him vision. And it's such a... It's such a... Something you cannot relate to except to just by faith believe what the Word of God says.

For Amos, he saw what was going to come down the pike for these people. They didn't see it and they didn't feel it and they weren't experiencing it. But the Word of God said back in Deuteronomy, he said, You step away and it was in Leviticus, you step away from me.

This is what I'm going to bring upon you. And they did their part of stepping away. So Amos saw in a vision what was coming. So he lamented over them and what was going to take place.

Now let's pick it up tonight in verse number 4. And to start off, we're going to read 6 verses, 4 to 9. And then we'll come back through some of this and comment. Verse number 4.

[1 : 04] For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live. But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba.

For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to naught. Seek the Lord, and ye shall live, lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.

Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth, seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night, that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth.

The Lord is his name, that strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress. Now you may have noticed three times he calls for them to seek him. Seek ye me, in verse 4. Seek the Lord, in verse 6. Seek him, in verse 8, that maketh the seven stars and Orion. God calls for his people to seek him, because that's the only solution to the problems that are coming for them.

[2 : 19] If they went to seek to these other places where they have altars, he mentions it in verse 5, Gilgal, and Beersheba, and Bethel, and some of these locations we've already talked about, back in chapter 4 and verse 4, Bethel and Gilgal for two.

Places where they have altars set up, where they are already worshiping. He says, don't seek to these places of your religion, and where your priests are, because literally that's a dead end for you, if you go to these places, because I'll be the one, he said, that breaks out like a fire in the house of Joseph, devour it, and there'll be none to quench it in Bethel.

So if you go there and keep it up, then the judgment's coming pretty hot. And again, in this passage, like the one before in chapter 4, he refers to his ability and to his power, and declaring creation as evidence in verse 8, that maketh the seven stars in Orion, declaring his power with some more wording of the day dark with night, and the waters of the sea, and how he can water the earth.

All of these evidences that speak on the behalf of the Creator, and of the true God, and something that ought to make these people listen, because he's the one that made them, and fashioned them, and made the world, and controls it all.

And so, God does the same thing with a different format, declaring who he is, his power, and says, the Lord is his name. Now, there's some unique things in this passage and chapter that I'll point out, and just help us to understand as we read through it.

[3 : 49] Look at verse 7. It says, Ye who turn judgment to wormwood. I know that's an awkward sounding phrase, and just, what is it saying? What does it mean? Leave off righteousness in the

earth.

Well, wormwood in the Bible, it doesn't show up an awful lot, but when you read through, you'll see that term come up quite a bit. I said it's not, and it is. You'll see it a few times.

You'll see it, and it should stand out to you a couple times. It's always associated with bitterness. It's associated with gall, as a bitter drink.

You may remember they gave Jesus Christ gall and vinegar to drink, and he would not have it. It's a plant. Wormwood is not wood, if that confuses you, like a tree or something, but it's a plant that is most commonly known for its use as a bitter spice.

It's often used in bitter drinks, specifically alcoholic drinks. But for God to say that you turn judgment to wormwood, it means that they're making God's law and His holy truth unpalatable and undesirable.

[5 : 00] And hold your place, but take a look back at Psalm 19. I want to give you a verse that will kind of make this a little stronger and evident to why this is a statement.

Look at Psalm 19. He's calling for this house of Israel to seek Him, but He's accusing them, saying, Ye turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth.

That's what you as a people do. Now, Psalm 19, let's read this passage, verse 7 through 10, speaking of the law of the Lord, and notice all of the adjectives and descriptions of God's law, His statutes and precepts.

Verse 7, The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. I'm going to pause. While we're reading this, consider this is what they've left off in the earth.

They've set this aside and chosen to do something else instead. So, verse 8, The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

[6 : 15] The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Now, pay close attention to verse 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter, sweeter, sweeter, sweeter, also than honey and the honeycomb.

That's the law of the Lord. That's the judgments that are true and righteous, that is clean and perfect. It is sweet. It is sweet to receive and to believe and to live by.

But God says to this people, Ye turn judgment into wormwood. The judgments of God are sweeter than honey.

This chapter says, The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. And altogether, it's sweeter than honey. So, this people in Amos are perverting the law and their judgment leaves a bitter and an unwelcome taste because they're not righteous.

The judgments of the law are designed to make things right. When there are two people at odds or when someone mistreats another, the law of God, the judgments of God, are there to level it back out and to bring it right.

[7 : 44] The injustices are going to be made right again. The wrongdoings are going to be satisfied and made right. That's the sweetness of the law of God. And yet, they're perverting the judgments of God.

They're despising the rule of God and they're casting it aside and doing much wrong with it. We'll show that to you later on as we go. So, Amos chapter 5, that's what verse 7 is saying.

Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, something that is right and sweet and godly, they're turning it into something bitter and hard to receive and hard to follow because of their perversion of the judgment.

We've already covered some of this earlier in chapter 2 and it'll come up again in this chapter, so I'm not going to keep on with it. But let's move on. Another thing I want to cover in verse number 8. He says, Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion.

Now, there's a couple places in the Bible that mention what we call constellations and Orion being one of them. I'm sure that's one that you can, at certain times of the year, you can spot Orion's belt, three stars that go across and there's a whole pile of things that are pictographs or whatever you call them in the stars.

[9 : 01] The Bible mentions this. If you want to just totally neglect it and be like, oh, that's all devilish and satanic, well, God says, I'm the one that made those things. Right there.

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion. You're going to see Orion mentioned two times in Job in chapter 9 and in chapter 38.

And, well, let's do it. We're not far away. Go to Job chapter 9 and I'll just point these out to you to show you that God claims to be the author of this. Now, granted, man and the heathen cultures can pervert it and can seek to it and pray to it and seek to get some divinity and some guidance from the stars.

That was not what they were meant to do. I'll show you that too as we get to it. But God did create these things, these pictures in the sky. Job chapter 9 and verse number, I'll start in verse 5. Which removeth the mountains, and they know not, which overturneth them in his anger, which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble, which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars, which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea, which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south, which doeth great things, past finding out, yea, wonders without number.

[10:36] And so the Lord maketh these things. And these are, constellations are kind of, they cross cultural bounds. It's not like the Hebrews had this or invented this.

It's, go to societies all over the globe and you're going to find ancient evidence that they looked to the heavens and saw the same figures and things in the stars.

So, back in Amos though, he says, oh, let's catch the other one, chapter 38 of Job. Job 38, just to button this up. Job 38, notice verse 31, canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou bring forth Maseroth in his season or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? It's commonly believed that that term Maseroth is a reference to the 12 signs of the Zodiac.

That's the terminology we use today. Arcturus is often said to be Ursa Major, I believe it is, the bear. And so, God's referencing by name these.

[11:46] Now, I'm pointing out something here as well. Pleiades comes up twice in Job chapter 9 and here again in chapter 38, right in line in connection to Orion. And in Amos chapter 5, what he says is, seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion.

Now, if you want to know what does that mean, what are the seven stars? If you do a Bible study on it, you might find yourself in Revelation chapter 1 where the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.

But I feel like that's just going to be a dead end and not really yield anything in the study of what he's talking about here. I can't prove this, but it's more likely and possible Pleiades is called the seven sisters.

It's called the seven stars and is the terminology that everybody uses. It seems more likely that when he says the seven stars and Orion, he's referring to that as a constellation or it's really a cluster of stars and there's a legend about what these are and what they're doing with, I won't even get into that, but I don't think God's referring to anything to do with the legend in any way, but he does say, seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, obviously drawing their attention to seek him rather than to seek to the stars, seek the one that made those stars and set them in their order. Now, come back to Genesis chapter 1 and we're going to wrap this up here a little bit, but Genesis 1, from the very beginning, God designed for man to be looking up, to be using the heavens to guide or as a guide for what certain things he did on earth.

[13:34] Genesis chapter 1 and day number 4 of creation begins in verse 14, and God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and for years and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth and it was so.

So what he made up there has some significance and reasoning and now verse 16 is the creative act. God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also and set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth to rule, etc. The purpose is given first before he makes them. The purpose is, as he speaks, verse 14, that they're going to divide the day from the night, let them be for signs, one, for seasons, for days, and years.

And so from the very beginning, there's no calendar, there's no layout that we are aware of in any way that maps out the year and the entirety of it.

But what there is is stars that he put up there. Man is supposed to be able to look over his head and be able to count days and he can do that pretty easily with the sun.

[14:53] He's also supposed to be able to identify seasons and that's done by the stars. As they come through in the winter sky, certain constellations are there, recognizable.

All the civilizations recognize these and they're to recognize seasons. I think the Pleiades one falls in exact time or depending where you're at, it shows the equinox or it has to do with the fall season and harvest or you can find some in the spring and all this stuff with planting. You don't depend on the wind. You don't depend on the temperature. They depended on the stars because they were constant because they came back around at the same time of year every time. And so the stars were, they were for signs, for seasons, for days and you can count the years just as well. Maybe you don't know how many days are in a year. You don't count the revolutions of the sun coming and going but you count when the star gets back to that exact spot in the sky or when it hits the such and such horizon and they note that as that's a full year, a full cycle of that star, that sign.

And it says, let them be for signs. If the signs alone just means for them to identify these things, that's one thing. It could be very much more than that. I won't get into all of that but the heavens declare the glory of God and Romans 1 shows us that the things that God, the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the things that are made even as eternal power and Godhead and it's an interesting study, the stars and the constellations, the signs in the heavens.

[16:30] Now we don't go to them for wisdom. Look at Deuteronomy chapter 4. There's the last verse on this. Deuteronomy chapter 4. God forbade His people and warned His people against looking upward and starting to worship what they see because they absolutely would do that and they do that.

Deuteronomy chapter 4 and in this case the Lord's telling them when I spoke to you, you did not see me. You heard my voice. You heard the trembling and all of that but you saw no manner of similitude because if you did see some figure and some likeness then you would carve it out of a tree and grave it from a stone and then you'd start worshiping that and say that that is God or a likeness to God.

So God said, I did not let you see anything when I spoke to you in Sinai. Verse 16, Lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on earth, likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters between the earth.

Now verse 19, Unless thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the hosts of heaven shouldst be driven to worship them and serve them which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations.

Notice that, unto all nations. That's why they all see it the same. Under the whole heaven. And he continues on from that. That's forbidden. God's against that. But you know what he says? Don't seek to them and don't you dare go worshiping them but seek him that made the seven stars and Orion that set the whole thing in its course and its order.

[18:15] Don't worship what's over your head. Worship the one that created what's over your head. So come back to Amos chapter 5. The Lord again using his creative acts as evidence to declare his name and who he is and his authority and why they should be following and worshiping him.

In verse number 8, Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion and turneth the shadow of death into the morning and maketh the day dark with night.

So we got two sides of this. You turn the shadow of death into morning and then make the day dark with night. It's both sides.

This statement can stand alone saying God can do both. He can turn the dark to light or turn the light to dark. But there's one event in the Bible, one very, very crucial and popular event that does both.

And I know it seems like, well, how can it do both? But I'll show you why it says it this way. It depends on which side of God you're on. Look at Malachi chapter 4. Just to your right to the last book of this Old Testament, Malachi, find chapter 4.

[19:27] The last chapter of our Old Testament. Depending on where you're at with the Lord, the second coming of Jesus Christ is going to be either A, a day of darkness, a day of horror and terror and judgment, or it's going to be a day of light and deliverance and salvation.

It just depends on who you are, which side you're on. Look at chapter 4. Malachi 4, verse 1. For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble.

And the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts. It shall not leave them neither root nor branch. If we went to the prophets, this is the day of darkness. We've touched on that briefly the last couple weeks.

So that's one element of that day, a day of darkness. Depends on which side you're on. Verse 2, But unto you that fear my name. On the one hand, it's the proud and they that do wickedly.

But unto you that fear my name shall the sun, S-U-N with a capital S, reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

[20 : 43] And ye shall go forth and it's all good from there forward. Come back to Amos and just look a few pages to the left to Joel chapter 2. Another minor prophet, Joel.

And he's preaching not too far away, very close to when Amos preached, just a few years earlier perhaps. Joel chapter 2. And look at the end of the second chapter.

It says in verse 30, I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillar of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.

And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance as the Lord hath said and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

So one event, depending on which side you're on, it's a day of darkness and terrible or it's a day of deliverance and a day of salvation likened to the sun rising from a dark night and it just depends on who you are.

[21 : 54] So there in Amos chapter 5, God given both sides of that, that's the God He is that maketh the day dark with night. In the middle of that verse then toward the end that calleth for the waters of the sea, Amos chapter 5 and verse 8, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the Lord is His name.

Verse 9, that strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress. So another thing the Lord says He does is strengtheneth.

Now when He says spoiled, you're not talking about some bratty entitled children that won't obey. We're not dealing with that. Spoiled means they've been defeated by another nation.

They've been looted. They're spoils. They're of war. You know, the gold, the silver, all that's been taken and stolen from them as they've been defeated in battle.

So God says, so you've been spoiled. You've been defeated by an enemy. They've come and taken everything you have. You have nothing left. God strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong so that the spoiled, the losers, shall come against the fortress.

[23 : 09] He's declaring that God can take any weak and defeated people and raise them up to power and cause them to overthrow some strong enemies of theirs.

And so God says, I can do that. But you have to imagine that it doesn't feel quite that way if you're the weak person, if you're the one that's spoiled or defeated, if life has you feeling helpless and completely overcome and don't know which way is up.

And God says, oh, I can take you and strengthen you and I can cause you to defeat what would appear to be strong. It doesn't feel that way.

But God calls his people to seek him, claiming that he can make a way, claiming, don't go to your go-to, don't rely upon your go-to that you have in the past, but rather, come and seek me.

Don't go to your altars. Don't look to the stars above. Seek the Lord. He said it three times. Seek ye me.

[24 : 16] Seek the Lord. Seek him. It's not a tough thing to extract from this text that God wants his people, his people that have not returned unto him after all he's done, that he's saying, prepare to meet me.

It's pretty obvious that the hand of God, the mercy of God is still extended to his people, saying, just seek me. Just come on back and I'll receive you.

I'll strengthen you. I'll lift you up. Whenever, if I ever talk to somebody or somebody wants to talk about a situation in their life and they don't know how to handle it or don't know what to do or how to get out of a mess, the best, the absolute greatest advice, maybe the only advice I could ever give is seek the Lord.

Is you need to seek the Lord about this. You need to have a personal relationship with your God and go to him. Not saying, don't get counsel and don't enlist other Christians to pray with you and

pray for you and to help you and to nurture you.

That's all part of our duty as believers, to bear one another's burdens. But when it comes down to the bottom line, you need to seek the Lord. You need to learn how to go to God and get on your face.

[25 : 34] Don't come to the counselor. Go to the God that can answer your prayers. I don't have any wisdom for you. I don't have any experience for you that is going to answer the question all the way.

The one you should be calling on is the one that does have the answers, the one that knows the end from the beginning and declares unto man what is his thought, if you want to know it.

Seek the Lord. Christians in all of these years, Christians go through a mess. They get into trouble. They get into divorces. They lose a loved one and they're broken and hurt. They get behind on their bills.

They lose their job. They fall into substance abuse. They get just, their life a wreck. Their family's a mess. It happens. You name it.

What's the answer? Seek the Lord. Seek Him. Get on your face and get with God. Get in the book and seek Him. Quit eating lunch on your lunch break and go to the Bible and spend time in prayer.

[26 : 37] Show God you want an answer. Show God you want Him to meet with you and talk to you and guide you and direct you and lift you up. Seek the Lord.

That's the best thing you could ever do. You know what God's been doing since Genesis chapter 3? He's been dealing with mess-ups of mankind. He's been maneuvering the big messes we make in our lives and He's been finding a way to just move that out of the way and to lift you back up.

To bring you back into a place you could stand. He can make a way if you'll seek Him with all your heart. You know why? You have His Word on it. I want to show you this. Look at Deuteronomy chapter 4.

I'm going to give you three verses, three passages on this. Deuteronomy 4 is the first one. The Bible says in James to draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you.

You want God to help you and to mend your wounds and to care for you and to give you wisdom and to enlighten the path you should take?

[27 : 53] You've got to learn how to seek Him on your own. Deuteronomy 4, look at verse 27 through 29. God's telling them that if you turn from me, I'm going to come after you and I'm going to mess you up.

Verse 27, Notice this, Thou shalt find Him if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. That's a promise. You seek Him, you'll find Him. God is not going to hide from you. Find Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 29.

The second passage I want to give you on this. Jeremiah 29, verses 10 through 14. This is when they're in the captivity. This is Jeremiah prophesying of this 70 years of captivity that he's going to put his people through.

So this is like a little over 100 years or so down, maybe closer to two down the road from when Amos is prophesying. Jeremiah comes and says these things.

[29 : 13] Jeremiah 29, starting in verse 10, For thus saith the Lord, that after 70 years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you in causing you to return to this place.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord. Thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me and ye shall go and pray unto me and I will hearken unto you.

Now verse 13, And ye shall seek me and find me when ye search for me with all your heart and I will be found of you, saith the Lord.

He will. He is not going to hide. He wants to hear your voice. He wants you to lead him and to come to him. I want to give you one more. 1st Chronicles 28.

Back to your left, 1st Chronicles and chapter 28 where David is turning the kingdom over to Solomon, getting prepared for this and charging his son of how to live his life.

[30 : 17] It's the end of David's life, 1st Chronicles 28 and I look at verse number 9. Verse 9, And thou, Solomon my son, know thou, this is personal relationship, know thou the God of thy father and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.

For the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee.

But if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. Take heed now. There's the promise. I know all three times, if you seek him, he will be found.

It's not a game of hide and seek with God. It's a game of, you messed up and ran away from him.

But if you turn and call on him and draw nigh to him, he'll draw nigh to you. You remember Luke chapter 15, the prodigal son that took off and he spent all the substances, all that.

And when he realized he came to himself, he said, I'm going to go back to my father's house. Did he have to go looking for dad when he got home? Where's dad?

[31 : 39] Where is he? I just want to talk to him. I want to offer my services to be a servant, just like a hired servant. It's all I want. The Bible says, while he was a great way off, the father saw him and ran to meet him and kissed him and it was all good.

What happened? The son turned and made his way back to the father. The father saw him coming and the father ran to meet him. You want to seek God? He will be found.

I'm not promising you that he's going to just make everything understandable and perfectly clear.

I'm not promising you that all the answer will show up in the mail or the answer will show up in some vision or something.

I'm not promising you how he's going to deal with you, but I promise you that he will be found. And you might not get the answer that you want. And so you better seek him with all the heart and not have something else in that heart that's going to say, no, it's only going to work if I have it this way.

Because then there's other scriptures that show that he'll deceive you if you set up an idol in your heart. He'll give you what you want and you'll be far worse off. Seek him with all your heart.

[32 : 48] The answer to every situation in your life that's a problem, seek the Lord. Lord, you're looking for a spouse, seek the Lord. Choosing a career, seek the Lord. You got an opportunity in front of you, seek the Lord.

You got to give an answer, seek the Lord. Remember that brother on Sunday telling his story, telling how he wasn't sure if God was dealing with him, if this is really what he wants, to let that go and to go to the mission field.

And he started laying out some things. He was seeking the Lord to answer him. And God did it. He gave him answers on all five things. He did that because God was calling that man and his family to leave.

That's a pretty big deal. And maybe your deal is not quite in that same umbrella of falling under the ministry. And if it is, if God's leading you that way, He will answer you in the way to get you to understand what His will is.

You ever make any mistakes in life? You feel like you're making, you're paying for the mistakes you've made? Then seek the Lord. Get out of your face and just lay it out in front of the throne. Say, God, this is what I did.

[33 : 54] This is where I'm at. What should I do? Give me some direction. You think God's going to spit on you and say, you're on your own, buddy. You made this mess.

That's not the God of the Bible. He's a God of mercy. He's a God that says to draw nigh to Him.

He's a God that says, casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you.

If God spit on us every time we made a mess, we might as well just chalk it up. We'd all be burning in hell tonight, not enjoying some freedom in the Bible. And He's not that God.

He's a God that will be found. Peter said, humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time.

And so to get exalted in God's timing, you have to get under His hand. You have to seek Him, come to Him, and draw nigh to Him, and get under His hand wherever that leads you, whatever position that puts you in.

[35 : 01] God, I don't care. I just want to be right with you. That's all my heart's desire is because I trust you. I trust your will. I know your mind for me is right, and I just want to be under your hand.

And then I'll wait patiently, and He'll incline unto me and bring me up out of this horrible, miry clay in this pit.

You're going to have to be patient. After you seek the Lord, then you've got to learn to wait on the Lord. And if you get ahead of the Lord, and man, there's some examples that are flooding my mind of people over the years that got in a mess, came to church, got out of the mess, gone.

And it's just the cycle, the Christian cycle, is God is, you know, there to fix my problems, and then I'm out to make another one. And that'll happen.

That'll happen. But you know what happens when I does seek the Lord? And He's always going to hear you. We're going to have to stop here. We would get into something in verse 10, so I guess we'll wait for next week to get into that.

[36 : 08] I hope that closing is a help to you and a reminder to how important it is to have a personal relationship with God, not church with God, from the Bible, from prayer.

He's a personal God. He will hear your prayer. He knows you by name. He knows your thoughts. He knows your heart. He knows your future. He knows how it's going to end up. He knows where you'll be in two days and in 20 years.

He knows right now everything there is to know about you. So I want to go to Him and get Him to direct my path because I'll make a mess.

Let's not do that. Let's seek the Lord. Father, thank You for the challenge tonight from Your Word. Thank You for this call to have a personal relationship with You where we depend upon You, where we lay all of our burdens at Your feet, where Your Son picks them up and carries them with us. Lord, thank You for the Christian life, for the relief that You give from the trials of this life and from the tribulations that we do face and endure.

[37 : 18] The sorrows are real, but they're not as bad as they could be. And I'm reminded that we sorrow not as others that have no hope. And in any case, in any way in life, having You is so much better than not.

And Lord, train us and teach us to walk with You and to rely upon You. And God, drive us to that relationship. May we not get too proud and may we not neglect the relationship and the direction that You offer.

And Lord, I pray that this tonight is an answer to somebody here that's needing an answer or that it's a calling to seek You and to re-engage in that personal walk if it's grown cold or if it's been dismissed.

Thank You for being personal and available, for caring. And Lord, we love You. You're nothing but good to us. Whether we see that or not, You are nothing but good.

and Your ways are righteous. So thank You for this Bible. It is sweeter than honey. Help us to love it and to fall in love with it more. Bless as we go and bless us as, Lord, with safety we ask and bring us back this weekend and prepare our hearts to be obedient to Your Word.

[38 : 36] We pray in Jesus Christ's name. Amen. Amen. You're dismissed. Amen. Thank you.