

Know God, Serve God, Seek God

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[0 : 0 0] Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord our God, as we come with songs of praise and thanksgiving into your presence, and as we gather under the sound of your word, what we seek above all is that our worship would be acceptable to the God in whose presence we have met, and upon whose name we call.

We seek your face and your favour, acknowledging at the very outset that we do not deserve the least of your mercies. And yet every day we are met with mercies without number.

And your faithfulness is acknowledged by your servant and even those who live in this world and take time to consider the privileges that we enjoy from day to day.

We would ask that whatever they may be, that they would open the eyes of our understanding so as to consider the God of heaven as the God who is God over all.

We remember before you those who are in need this day. And as we consider our needs, there are none greater than the spiritual need that marks us out as fallen creatures who are on the scene of time for a limited moment.

[1 : 5 0] The passage of time is something that is forcibly brought home to us as we look behind us, as we look behind the wake of a ship on the ocean.

We see the mark left upon the surface of the water telling us that that is where we have been. And we do not know and have not the capacity to see beyond us until the bow of the ship breaks the water before us.

But we give thanks that when we look back, there are many things for which we are grateful. But we ought to be thankful. And we would ask that through these things that we would see God in your goodness.

We pray for your blessing today to be imparted to those who not only have spiritual needs, as we all have, but also who have temporal needs that accompany us in this world.

There are those who are suffering because of the weakness of the body or the weakness of the mind. We see from time to time how illness overtakes us.

[3 : 1 4] And we know that there are some who we know are confined to their homes, perhaps to bed and hospital beds at that.

We pray for those who, through the frailty of old age, are confined to hospital. And we bring them before you and ask that you would bless them.

Minister to each and every one, not just physically or mentally, but also spiritually, in the dealings that you have with them, that they recognise that there is a great physician.

We pray for those who cannot be with us today and who would desire to be in our midst. We give thanks for those who are here and for the longing that there is in the heart of any other, that you would even sanctify that longing for its genuineness, and that not one person who, by dint of providence, is prohibited from coming, that they would be deprived for even the longings of soul that we have that are genuine.

And the circumstances that prevent us from gathering as we would wish to, that you are able to bless that to any and all. Remembering all the gatherings of your people throughout our communities, within our island and beyond.

[4 : 42] All the gatherings, big or small, we pray for, and that the word of the living God would be blessed, that the truth that bears your name would have free course, and that it would take a place in the heart of all who are here, and that it would produce the fruit that is to the glory of your great name.

Bless the name of Christ, wherever he is preached today. We pray for this world in which we live, thankful for the great evangelism, that was entrusted to your servants to go into all the world, and to proclaim the truth concerning Christ.

We pray for the nations of the earth, especially those that are in the grip of trouble at the present. There are nations that are at war, some war within, and some at war with nations surrounding it.

There are places in the world where there are calamities to deal with, and we have ready access to news of these things in our homes.

And we pray, Lord, as we are made aware of these things, that we would not just be distant from them, as we are physically, but that we would be prompted and led to pray as we are able.

[6 : 13] To seek your help for those in need. Remember our nation, as we continue suffering from COVID, perhaps in greater, in lesser measure than there was in the first instance.

We give thanks for the inroads that are being made in the care of those who suffer, and for the endeavours that result in preventative measures being successful.

But we do pray for wisdom to be given to those in authority, and those who live in this world of ours, to be mindful not just of themselves, but others, and that we would be dutiful in exercising due diligence and care and concern in the way that we deport ourselves in the world.

So remember, Lord, all in need. We pray for the brokenhearted. We pray for the grieving and sorrowful. We pray for all the difficult trials that engage us from time to time.

We pray, Lord, that you would sanctify these things. Make us think long and hard about the journey that we are on, which is long or short, but which will take us to appear before our God to give answer to how we have lived our life here in this world.

[7 : 39] Lord, continue with us the short time that we are together as we read your word, as we reflect upon what it has to say to us. May the eyes of our understanding be open, and may you give light to us, even the light of your countenance.

Cleanse from sin, in Jesus' name. We ask all things. Amen. We're going to read from the Old Testament Scriptures, and from the first book of Chronicles, and chapter 28.

The Old Testament Scriptures, the first book of Chronicles, chapter 28. You can read the whole chapter.

And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and the captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men of Jerusalem.

Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people. As for me, I had in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building.

[9 : 23] But God hath said unto me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood. Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father, to be king over Israel forever.

For he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler, and of the house of Judah, the house of my father, and among the sons of my father, he liked me to make me king over all Israel.

And of all my sons, for the Lord hath given me many sons, he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.

Moreover, I will establish his kingdom forever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments as at this day. Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God, that ye may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you forever.

[10 : 46] And thou, Solomon my son, 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, for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary.

Be strong and do it. Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things.

Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the Lord.

He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service, silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service, even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, for the lamps of gold by weight, for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof.

[12 : 17] For the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick. And by weight he gave gold for the tables of showbread, for every table, and likewise silver for the tables of silver.

Also pure gold for the flesh hooks, and the bowls, and the cups, for the golden basins, he gave gold by weight for every basin, and likewise silver by weight for every basin of silver.

For the altar of incense, refined gold by weight, and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the Jeruboes, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

All this said David, the Lord made me understand, in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it.

Fear not, not be dismayed, for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee. He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work, for the service of the house of the Lord.

[13 : 24] And behold, the cautions of the priests, and the Levites, even they shall be with thee, for all the service of the house of God, and there shall be with thee, for all manner of workmanship, every willing, skilful man, and for any manner of service, also the princes, and all the people, will be holy, at thy commandment.

And so on, may God, at his blessing, to the reading of his word, and to his name, be the praise. Now before we sing the next sound, just a word to the children, there aren't many here, but there are children, hopefully listening at home.

As we go into the school holidays, and we remember, with great affection, the joy that we experienced, when we entered into the holidays, and we didn't particularly like school.

But it reminds me of a story, that I read once, of a little boy, who went to school for the first time, and he didn't want to go to school.

Certainly after being there a week, because unlike the way things are today, there was much work to be done. And as you would expect, his teacher, who had the name Mr. Toil, lived up to his name, and the little boy decided, he wasn't going to stay in school, for much longer.

[15 : 06] So he took to the hills, thinking, I'm not going to be there, because it's too much, like hard work. So off he went, and he thought, he would find, somewhere to, to take his ease, or find work, that would appeal to him.

So the first place he came, upon was a farm. And the farmer, was out in the fields, and he thought, this would suit me. And, he was smelling the flowers, and hearing the birds, and everything went with it.

And, that was fine, until, he, looked in the face, of the farmer, and the farmer, looked incredibly, incredibly, like, his teacher, Mr. Toil.

He was so like him, he thought, he must have been a brother. So he said, well this isn't for me. So off he went, and he went, into the town, and in the town, he came to a blacksmith's, and, he thought, this was a good job.

He watched the sparks, fly from the animal, as it was, hammered by, the hammer, beating the metal, into whatever shape. And he thought, this is a good job.

[16 : 23] But again, the same thing happened, when the blacksmith, turned his face to him, did he not look like, the twin brother, of Mr. Toil? Exactly, like him.

So he took fright, and off he went, and went along the street, and he came to the baker's, and there he saw, the baker, and the baker, was making lovely bread, and the smell, was making his, tummy rumble, and, so on.

But then, when the baker, lifted her head, and she was a lady, did she not resemble, Mr. Toil? She could have been, his twin sister.

And, so on, and so forth. And, what that story tells us, is that, wherever you live, in this world, even, thinking about, school holidays, you can never get away, from the fact, that, the Bible's, message to us all, is that, is that, we, are destined, to live our life here, toiling, under the sun.

For, God said, when, when sin entered, into the world, one, outcome of that, would be this, by the sweat, of your brow, you shall eat your bread. and, wherever we go, even, to school, or, out of school, we will be, confronted, by toil, and hard labour.

[17 : 53] And, there's only, one, true, rest, for any one of us, and that is the rest, we receive, through Christ Jesus, the Lord. Well, we're going to, come before God, in the praise, of his name, singing, from Psalm 139.

And, this psalm, reminds us of, the God of heaven, as a God, who knows, everything about us, even the knowledge, that, he has, of our labours, in the world.

O Lord, thou hast me, searched, and known, thou knowest, my sitting down, and rising up, yea, all my thoughts, afar to thee, are known, my footsteps, and my lying down, thou compasses, all ways, thou also, most entirely, are acquitted, with all my ways.

For in my tongue, before I speak, not any word, can be, but all together, O Lord, it is, well known, to thee. And so on, to verse 10.

O Lord, thou hast me, searched, and known. O Lord, thou hast me, searched, and known, thou knowest, my sitting down, and rising up, yea, all my thoughts, a heart, to thee, are known.

[19 : 38] My first step, and my lying down, the hopelessness, or wish, that was, and the holy earth, or the holiness, and the holy God, That all together, O Lord, our day-tourers were known to thee.

Be high before thou hast been set, and live beneath thy hand.

Such all in Jesus' ways for me, till I to understand.

From thy spirit shall I go. Thou are proud, not in essence, fly.

As in the heaven, O thou art there. Then in heaven, I lie.

[21 : 48] Take I the morning waves and well. Then God must not so see.

If there, O thou art thy hand, believe. Thy right and all shall be.

Now we're going to turn for a short while to the passage that we read. First Book of Chronicles, chapter 28.

And we can read at verse 9. First Chronicles, chapter 28, at verse 9. And thou, Solomon, my son, 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 seeketh all the things that you will find. If thou seeketh, he will be found of thee.

[23 : 10] But if thou forsakeeth, he will cast thee off for ever. Now as you will understand from our reading of this passage, the words of our text are the words of King David, spoken in the main to his son Solomon.

Now I'm not very sure how long they were spoken before David died. But one thing is sure, David knew that death was not far away for him.

He had lived a long life, and he understood that he was not long for this world. Now when a person comes to this place where you're thinking about death, where you're thinking about dying, sometimes your thoughts go to what is before you.

What is beyond death? Well at least some people anyway, not everybody by any manner of means. Some people believe that when death comes, that's the end.

But that's not what the Bible teaches. And those who read the Bible will know that what happens at death is that the body and the soul are separated.

[24 : 46] And the body, we are told, returns to dust. But the soul goes to God, who gave it. Now any person who has read the Bible understands that, will possibly think about what that will mean for them.

And David would have that in his mind, no doubt. But another thing that a person does when they're thinking about death is that they're thinking about those that they're going to leave behind.

And in this case, David had thoughts about what would happen after he died. It was very much on his mind to build a temple for the Lord.

And it was his intention that he would be the person who would do this. But God, as we read here, made known to him that, no, he wasn't going to be the one who would build a temple for the Lord.

And he gives, David doesn't hide it, that God said to him, God made known to him, You shall not build a house for my name because you have been a man of war and you have shed blood.

[25 : 59] And David couldn't argue with that. He was a man of war, no doubt, and many people lost their life directly as a consequence of David's actions or the soldiers of his power.

So David knew that God had given him instructions where not only would he not be permitted, but the son named Solomon would be the person who would do that.

So he wants Solomon to understand that the temple plans were initiated by God. He wants Solomon to build the temple as God had given him instruction.

And part of what we have in this chapter is to do with that. But I want us to think of the words of our text in particular.

Verse 9. And there are five things there that we can consider. The first thing that David says to Solomon is, he wants him to know God.

[27 : 14] He wants him to know God. The second thing he wants him to do, he wants him to serve God. And then he tells him how he is to serve God.

And then why he is to serve God. And then we have two promises that come at the end of the verse. So we can break up the verse.

So we can break up the verse to these five thoughts. Know God. Serve God. How. Why. And the promises that we have.

Now, this requirement, to know God, God. I suppose there are several layers to that.

And that's the way I was thinking of it. If someone was to ask any one of us who are here today to know God, perhaps our instinct would be, our response would be, well, we already do know God.

[28 : 32] That's what's leaving us here. We're here in God's house. We're here to worship God. So for somebody to say to us, no God, it seems a redundant request.

There are certainly ways in which we can think of what we know about God or how we know God. For example, we are here in a Christian building, in worshiping God as Christians, not as Jews or Muslims.

For example, just for example, we as Christians worship the triune God, God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

He is not a monotheistic God that we worship. He is not a pantheon of gods. He is one God, God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

So we know enough about God to think of him in those terms, and perhaps we share that knowledge with others who are here with us. We know the God Jehovah to be the only living one through God.

[29 : 52] But there is more to it than that. There is a very specific statement made by him. He wants him not just to know God, but to know the God of his Father.

And there is a sense in which it is impossible to do what David is asking. Because although he wants him to worship the God of his Father, or to know the God of his Father, we know that God is unknowable, in a sense.

Because even though we can think that we can know God, there are things about this God that we can never know.

Just as an example, a quotation from a theologian. This is what he says, The Lord makes himself known through the world that he created.

He makes himself known through the word that he spoke. What he does in the creature he created in his own image, for his own glory.

[31 : 11] He makes himself known by that way. But at the same time, the theologian said, we can never know all there is to be known about God.

All we can ever know about God is what he chooses to make known to us. Pre-eminently, he makes that knowledge available to us through the word that bears his name.

The illustration that comes to mind, and I'm sure you'll see it's a rubbish illustration. But if I go out of this building to the back there, I can go to a part of the ocean, and take a thimble with me, and I can fill the thimble with the ocean.

But I haven't put the whole ocean into the thimble, and yet the thimble is full. You can take a cup, you can take a glass, you can take a bucket, and you can fill any size of vessel with the ocean.

But you haven't put the ocean in the bucket. There's more, and more of it. And every one of us has got a limited capacity ability to know God.

[32 : 39] We have limitations, the limitations of intellect. We can read the scripture, and take so much of the scripture in, that speaks of God, and will retain that.

But there's always somebody who's got a bigger intellect, who's brainier than we are, and they'll perhaps glean more about God.

But there will never be the individual who will be fully aware, or fully able to grasp what can be known about God.

So David wants us to know God, but we've got to understand that while we can know some things about God, we can't know everything. Listen to what one of the greatest theologians who ever lived said about God.

This was a person who was a stranger to the God that you know, and I know, for a time in his life. But then he came to know God as his saviour through Christ Jesus.

[33 : 47] And this is what he said, and you'll find what he said written in the Scriptures, Paul's epistle to the Romans, chapter 11. Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor, or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again.

For of whom and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory for ever. Amen. This was the Apostle Paul's consideration of God.

What he is saying is, well, look, God is great, and while I know much about him, I believe there is much more to be known. So when David is saying to Solomon, know God, he is saying to him, not know him as he is to be known in his entirety and his completeness.

He wants him to understand, when you know this God, you will know that there is an almighty, omnipotent, omniscient God that is greater than any being that you know because he is created and not created.

[35 : 16] But Solomon, you are to know the God of your father. You are to know my God. You are to know the God that I serve, that I love, that is my saviour.

You are to know the God who is so much part of my life that I cannot think of leaving this world without directing you to him so that you can trust in him and believe in him to save your soul.

I think the words that came to me when I was looking at this are the words of Isaiah. And even to your old age I am he and even to hoar hares will I carry you.

I have made and I will bear and I will carry and I will deliver you. David knew this God. Remember, David was the shepherd of Israel.

The shepherd, the Sam, sweet Samist of Israel. David was someone who was empowered by God to bear the lion in his den.

[36 : 31] He was empowered by God to defeat the giant Philistine, Goliath. He was the one who put him at the head of the armed forces of Israel who led them in triumph into many sabachtal.

He was the God preeminently in David's thinking and much of his writing who was the God of mercy because he came to know him in a way that he hadn't known him before when he sinned, a great sin.

And when he went astray he discovered this God was willing to receive him to himself and he was able to say like many another composer, God's measures I will ever say, because he had been a recipient of them, he had been a beneficiary of them.

Know this God for yourself, Solomon. There are many people who went through their life hanging on the coattails of believing parents, thinking that it was enough for them to base their hope for salvation or for eternity on the basis of what mother or father had done or because they believed.

But that's not what David is saying to Solomon. Know this God for yourself. it's not enough for you to know that your parents went to heaven.

[38 : 01] It's not enough for you to know that your parents lived godly lives. This is the God that you must know for yourself. Remember what you saw, remember what you heard, remember what they did.

And if it was to the glory of God, do it. So he follows this with the injunction, serve God, he says. What does he mean to serve God?

Well, probably the closest thing we can come to it is to obey God. I want you to get this right. Because some people are wrongly believing that they become Christians Christians by doing what God wants them to do.

Now, don't you get me wrong. Certainly, God wants you to do whatever it is that is to his glory and for your spiritual benefit.

God will do it. But he doesn't expect you to become a Christian by way of that. That is not the order, that is not the way Christianity works, that is not the way salvation works.

[39 : 30] Some people believe that they become Christians by doing, but that is not what you have. The answer is not do something, but believe.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, he says, and you shall be saved. Remember, somebody came to the Lord Jesus, what must I do, he said, to be saved? And Jesus didn't say, go there and do this.

Read your Bible and you'll be a good person. Go to church and you'll be a good person. Go on your knees and be a good person. No doubt all of these things have their place and they have an important place, but they are not the place that should have the preeminence.

God's word to us is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, all of these things naturally follow in their course.

believers believe in a Christ who has done all there is to be done and they follow him because he has done all that they cannot do.

[40 : 50] Let's ask the question, how, in order to understand better how we serve God? Well, he says to us something and immediately it challenges us, it threatens us, does it not?

He says to us, serve God, read it, serve God with a perfect heart and a willing mind.

Why? You've got a problem. You've got a problem. You've got a problem. You're told to serve God but you can only serve God with a perfect heart you're seeing.

And you're intensely aware of your imperfections. You're wanted, you're required, you're needed to do something and you can't do it because you know that your heart is not the way it should be.

And how many people have the devil put a, has the devil put a barrier to them, before them and coming to be saved because they've been besotted with this idea that they have to do something and they have to do it with a perfect heart and their heart is imperfect and they're in a fix.

[42 : 14] But again, you remind yourself of this. There is but one perfect. perfect. Somebody said to the Lord that he was good and Christ said to him, there is but one good and that is God.

It was drawing from the answer to a question that is in the heart of many. Where can we find through goodness? You can only find it in God, not in us and because it is not in us we must look elsewhere.

Where do we look? We look to the one who is good. The one that God has sent into the world who is eternally good. And we trust in what he does because what he does, he does because he is good.

And it is because you are not good. And it is because you don't have a perfect heart that you must come to this one that is perfect.

And he takes the imperfections away. He blots out your sin. He removes the stain that you couldn't remove supposing you went at it with the best cleaning agents that are available to society today.

[43 : 41] He covers them, he hides them from sight. heart. And what then is God saying then? What is God saying to us too?

He's said one dear who tells David to come with a perfect heart. Well he's telling him to make sure that when he comes, that he comes for the right reasons.

Son, daughter, give me your heart, God saves. And when he wants your heart, he wants it all. He doesn't want a part of it. He doesn't want a fragmented heart.

He doesn't want a divided heart. He doesn't want a heart that is giving part of itself to something more than they are given to God.

A willing mind, he says, accompanies this. the preacher of the gospel is not meant to make disciples by coercion.

[44 : 54] You know, we spend a lot of time today thinking about the need to disciple. There is a need for discipleship, but what is to be understood by discipleship is the teaching of God's word being applied across every area of our living, every area of our life here in this world, and that we follow God, we follow Christ in the way that he leads us, in the way that we are to live to the glory of God.

But you do not do that as a preacher or as a Christian teacher, as anyone who is intending to lead people to God, you do not question, you do not force yourself upon them in the sense that you make them believe what they don't want to believe.

God is saying here through the servant David to Solomon, serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, not an unwilling mind, but a mind that is fully acquainted with who God is and what God is all about, so that when you do what you do, you do it with desire and with longing and with affection and with an understanding that the one that you are called to come to is willing to receive the kind of person that you are.

Matthew Henry, one of the commentators, says, a principle of love is in control so that when we do think about who God is and what God means to us, we do it with delight, we do it with pleasure.

He is not, you know, as you see, maybe it's not a politically correct image. It's very much to the fore nowadays, going back to the slave trade, and you had the slave master standing over these poor slaves with the whip, making them, compelling them to sell, compelling them to do what they didn't want to do.

[47 : 22] And some people have that image of the church, of the Christian, that they are in some way making people to be something they don't want to be. And the person who doesn't want to be a Christian, who doesn't want to be a believer, will never be a believer or a Christian purely by the coercion of others.

The Lord, we are told, we are seeing in these words from Psalm 139, he searches the heart and he understands the imaginations of our thoughts.

You remember that God knows all it is. And it is, you know, there's two sides to this. For many, there's an oppression there. There are many things you don't want anybody to know.

And you would blush with embarrassment thinking that God knows about them. But he does. He is omnipotent, he is omniscient, he is a God who is everywhere.

One of the theologians puts it like this, God actively permeates the entire universe. Every nook and cranny of it, he is not statically confined to any one place at a time, but is dynamically everywhere.

[48 : 54] so, you know, what does that say to you? Well, it says to me this, I always think of this in a positive way.

I never think of it now anyway, as if God is standing over me in an oppressive sense. I am so glad God knows what my heart is like.

I am so glad God knows what's going on in my life. I am so glad God understands why I do the things I do. Maybe I don't understand it myself, but he does.

I know others don't, but so what? God's knowledge of me is perfect. Nothing, but nothing escapes his notice.

And that makes it easy for you to go to this God, to pray to this God, to go on your knees before and say, Lord, well, I don't know what to say to you, but do I need to?

[50 : 01] Because you know it all already. I read a story recently, and I know this to be quite a truth, a truth that repeats itself.

And it's a story about a farmer, believer, and he married a woman, and the woman was a believer, although he was somebody who, he wasn't a bad person, he did everything that a person should do, he conducted family worship in the home, he attended church, he did everything that was commendable.

But all of a sudden, out of the blue, he would come to church, and the minister would start speaking about her. And, you know, the minister was talking about what he was doing during the week, and he was saying, well, somebody's been telling the minister, somebody's been speaking to the minister, and he thought about it, and I said, well, the things that he knows, this minister knows about me, there's only one person that could have told him, and that's my wife.

So he was very annoyed with his wife, speaking to the minister about him, and he was very much on the brink of telling her where to go, because he couldn't live with that person who was betraying his secrets like that.

But then all of a sudden, the minister began speaking about things that his wife didn't know about, what he was thinking about, what he was feeling, when he was angry and didn't let on.

[51 : 51] All of these things the minister was speaking about him from the pulpit, and he was just flabbergasted. But gradually he discovered the more intense the scrutiny of God's word came to bear on his heart and mind, that it wasn't the minister.

It wasn't the minister who knew about him. There was somebody who was greater than the minister, greater than any living person in this world.

And he was probing and delving into the deepest recess of his heart, and he couldn't, he could hardly lift his head up. And until God was finished with him, he was barely able to keep his head above water.

But God led him on a path where he showed him who he was and what knowledge he had of him. And what that knowledge gave to him was a perfect understanding of the need that this person had of salvation, and where he could find it.

That's the God of Solomon. That's the God of David. A God who understands and who knows all things.

[53 : 14] And sometimes you come face to face with something like that, and you're scratching your head, and how could that be? But he's a God who knows. and David encourages Solomon to go to such a God because he understands.

The time is going for two things that we have here. The promises, which are promises given of success. If you seek him, he says, he will be found off thee.

I wonder have you ever questioned that to be a promise that he keeps. I've met many people, and they contend to be seekers after God.

They say, I'm a seeker, but I've never found God. He can't be telling the truth. He can't be honest.

He can't be earnest. He can't be what he says he is. Well, I would support the word of God before I supported your conclusions.

[54 : 36] Are you sure if you are a seeker after God that you've sought him with your whole heart? that you've sought him to the exclusion of all other things?

You know, if I told you today, I'm not saying, I don't know, maybe you'll think the minister thinks a little of you, but if I said to you, there's a gold bullion bar at the bottom of your garden.

It's huge if you find it. there's that bar of gold, it's all yours, and I'm telling you, it's at the bottom of the garden.

Maybe you'd leave it until Monday, but you would seek it out, if you believed me, of course, if you believed me.

but if you believed me, that that gold bar was there, I think it would take long and hard until you found it. And this is what you have to do, you have to understand, or try and understand, how much am I really seeking after God?

[55 : 53] Because God says, if you do, then you will find God, he will be found of thee. Sadly, there are many people in this world, they argue the opposite.

If God wanted to be found, I would have found it by now. But I think you have to analyse the searching and the seeking after God that you've done.

If you were really earnest, you wouldn't leave a stone unturned. you would see God in his word, you would see God in the company of his people, you would see God in the services of his house, every opportunity where God is to be found, just in case he revealed himself to you, you would be there.

Because he is worth finding, he is worth coming to. And the word of warning at the end, what does it need to explain you?

If you forsake God, he will cast you off forever. Same stretch as God never turns anyone away who have not turned away from him.

[57 : 20] Believe that. God never turns anyone away who have not turned him away. That's the truth. That's what we need to believe.

There is never going to be a single individual when we appear in the presence of God in the day of judgment who will say, you never wanted me.

You never wanted me. Nobody but nobody can ever say that. Because God gives us every encouragement as David gives to his son here to come and to know God, God of his father, to serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind, knowing that when we come to him, we come not to somebody who's a stranger.

We might be a stranger to him in the sense that we don't know him as we ought, but it doesn't work the other way around. There is nothing about us that he doesn't know.

He knows where we're coming from. He knows what we're all about and he deals with us accordingly. May we know that for ourselves and be blessed through our seeking after him.

[58 : 50] Let us pray. Most merciful God, hear our prayers and petitions, accompany your word with might and power. Draw us to yourself and enable us to put our trust in Jesus' name.

Amen. We're going to conclude singing from Psalm 85. Psalm 85 and verse 6.

Hear, Lord, my prayer, unto the voice of my request attend. In trouplless times I call on thee, for thou wilt answer send. Lord, there is none among the gods that may with thee compare, unlike the works which thou hast done, but any works is there.

All nations whom thou made shall come and worship reverently, before thy face, and they, O Lord, thy name shall glorify. Because thou art exceeding great, works by thee are done, which are to be admired, and thou art God thyself alone.

Psalm 86, 85. Did I read the wrong psalm here? Well, maybe that one's just as good. yes, it's Psalm 85.

[60 : 13] But we'll sing these verses for that. I think they're better than the ones that are intended. From verse 6 to verse 10.

Hear, Lord, I pray it unto the voice of my request. Attend. Hear, Lord, my prayer unto the voice of my request.

Attend. In sorrowless and all of thee for that will answer send.

Lord, there is thou among the dogs that may with thee compare.

And like the word twins thou hast done not any word is there.

[61 : 26] All nations whom thou may shall come and worship with a tree before thy face that they o'er not thy name shall glorify.

life because thou are there in which are done works by thee are done which are to thee am are done thou are for thyself alone.

Lord may place and peace from God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all and always Amen.