

A Seeking Heart



By Dave Butts

What are you looking for in life? Be careful what you look for. The Bible tells us that those who seek will find. But you might be seeking wrong things. If you are looking to be rich, you may well end up rich, but also tremendously unhappy and burdened down by the things of this world. You may be looking for fame, for recognition of your accomplishments. In the process of finding that recognition on earth, you may well lose the praise of heaven.

Many have just quit seeking. Living lives of “quiet desperation,” they simply hope to avoid disaster or pain. Sometimes even Christians can find themselves in the rut of everyday life, with the only thing they are looking for being heaven some day. The pressures of life have stifled desire of any significance, and life is just something to be endured.

Did you know that God never intended for us to live this way? God is actually looking for the discontented. He is looking for seekers, those whose desires are always going beyond the confines of daily life. In 2 Chronicles 16:9 the Word says,

“For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.” The same concept is expressed in Psalm 14:2, “The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.” I don’t know about you, but I want to be found by the God who is looking for seekers.

What does it mean to be a seeker after God? Does it have any real meaning for us? After all, if we are Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells in us. The Lord has promised to be with us always, even until the end of the age. So, is it necessary for a Christian to be a seeker after God?

I believe that King David gives us a wonderful understanding of what it means for a man of God, experiencing the presence of God, to still be a seeker after God. In Psalm 27:4 we read this passionate prayer of a man after God’s own heart: “One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.” If we try to analyze this verse in spatial, literal terms, we find ourselves confused. If David were in God’s temple, gazing upon His face, why would he still be seeking Him?

That’s because seeking God is much more than having one experience and calling it “finding God.” It is much more than believing a certain set of doctrines. It is even much more than having a good prayer life. God is too big to be confined to any one person’s experience or belief system. Seeking God is an attitude, a way of life, a journey that is never complete in this life.

The vastness of God makes the task of seeking Him the journey of a lifetime. Let me give a totally inadequate illustration, but one that may be helpful nonetheless. I always enjoy visiting the Smithsonian Institute when I go to Washington D.C. As you might know, the Smithsonian is made up of dozens of buildings, each housing a particular aspect of man’s

knowledge or achievement. So you could go to the Air and Space Museum or the American History Museum or the Portrait Gallery and still say of each, "I went to the Smithsonian." What would be totally inaccurate would be to go to one of those museums and return home saying: "I have experienced the Smithsonian in its entirety."

God, of course, dwarfs the Smithsonian, but we sometimes feel like or say, "I know God. I have experienced God. Others need to seek Him, but I have found Him." That's like going to one building of the Smithsonian and thinking you have experienced all that the Smithsonian is.

David didn't fall into that trap. His desire was to spend all of his days in the presence of God, gazing upon His beauty. Yet he also realized with humility, that he would still need to have that seeking heart for the rest of his life.

I believe that to live this life, we must start with prayer. Ask God to give you a seeking heart. Repent of any spiritual lukewarmness or self-satisfaction. All that we have comes from God, even a heart that seeks God. But we must ask Him. We do not just become seekers because we are naturally good and spiritual. We are not! We must ask and receive that gift from God.

Seeking also requires effort. When we have asked and received of the Lord a seeking heart, there will be required of us an earnestness and effort that emerges from the longing for intimacy with God, that God Himself has placed within our hearts.

The path to God is always Jesus. He is the way! There is no other path to God. Seeking God successfully only happens along the pathway that is Jesus. It is in intimacy with the Lord and walking daily in His ways that we find ourselves with a seeking heart that pleases God and draws His eyes and favor upon us.

Here is the good news! Jesus said that all who seek will find. God is not hiding. He longs to be found and known. But His very character and vastness demand a life of seeking. No matter how long we have known Him and walked with Him on this planet, we will still find ourselves learning and experiencing new aspects of who He is. “Blessed are those whose strength is in You, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage” (Psalms 84:5).

Dave Butts was the chairman of [America's National Prayer Committee](#) and the co-founder and president of [Harvest Prayer Ministries](#) until his death in 2022.

His popular prayer guide, [Asleep in the Land of Nod](#) has been used by hundreds of churches to help their congregations pray for revival.