

Seek the Lord (Quality: Good)

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- [0 : 0 0] You will find the text this morning in the prophecy of Zephaniah. Zephaniah, the second chapter.
- And in the third verse. Zephaniah, the second chapter. And in the third verse.
- Zephaniah, the second chapter.
- The ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger. Zephaniah prophesied in the early years of King Josiah.
- It would seem to be that he was a descendant of the godly King Hezekiah. But he prophesied concerning the judgment that would fall upon Judah.
- [1 : 2 8] Surely as it had fallen upon the northern kingdom. And that judgment was nigh at hand. It was imminent judgment. And it was only delayed by the godliness of young King Josiah.
- And of Josiah we are told in the second book of Kings chapter 23 verses 25 and 26. And like unto him was there no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might.
- According to all the law of Moses. Neither after him arose there any like him. Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath.
- Wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah. Because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him with all. Manasseh had been one that had greatly provoked God in the things that he did.
- And in the days of Manasseh's early reign. He was worse even than Ahab. And Ahab the wicked king of the north had become a proverbial name for wickedness.
- [3 : 0 1] But Manasseh exceeded anything that wicked Ahab had done. And yet as you know Manasseh was gloriously saved by grace. And came back and was a reforming king.
- But he couldn't undo the things that had been done. The things that he himself had put his hand to. And there are some of us that are having to live with things that we did in past days.
- That we cannot undo. Would to God that we could. But we cannot undo them. And there is a forgiveness. But we live with some of these things. As Manasseh did. Couldn't bring things back to what now he longed that they should be.
- And for the very provocations that he had headed up. That had made the people even worse than they had been when he came to the throne.
- Judgment had to be meted out. And now was imminent. And but for the godliness of this man Josiah. That turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might.
- [4 : 0 5] That judgment would no doubt have come already upon Judah. But it was near. It was nigh at hand. You read of it in the first chapter of the prophet Zephaniah.
- Look at verses 14 to 18 in the first chapter of Zephaniah. The great day of the Lord is near. It is near. And hasteth greatly. Even the voice of the day of the Lord.

The mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath. A day of trouble and distress. A day of wasteness and desolation. A day of darkness and gloominess.

A day of clouds and thick darkness. A day of the trumpet. And alarm against the fenced cities. And against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men.

That they shall walk like blind men. Because they have sinned against the Lord. And their blood shall be poured out as dust. And their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them.

[5 : 05] In the day of the Lord's wrath. But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy. For he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Looking to the judgment that came at the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar. Who was the instrument raised up to bring the people into the captivity in Babylon.

Well there were those dark days ahead for the nation. They were dark enough even when Josiah came to the throne. And not even his godliness could work such reformation amongst the people.

As would turn them away from their sin. And bring the judgment of God to be suspended. We are going to think then with the Lord's help about the prophets.

Word not now concerning the judgment that should come. Nor using that as prophetic of the judgment at the end. But I believe there is a day of judgment. I believe that this world is crying out for a manifestation of the righteous judgment of God.

[6 : 18] And it will be given. It will take place. The whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy. For he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

There are those that think they are so secure. They think that they will be able to stand even in the day of judgment. That they laugh at the very notion of judgment. They ridicule those of us who believe that there is a judgment day coming.

And there will in that day be a speedy riddance made of these people. They will not stand when the Lord comes against them. Who shall stand in that day when the Lord brings his judgment upon all flesh?

They shall be as the chaff before the wind. The wicked shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous. We could say much on the eminence of judgment.

And the rightness of our land and the nations of the earth for that judgment. But I want to speak to you with the Lord's help about the prophet's word to the godly. In a day of declension.

[7 : 26] In a day of darkness. In a day when there was little to look forward to. There was a word to the godly. And this is the word to the godly. Seek ye the Lord all ye meek of the earth.

Seek ye the Lord all ye meek of the earth which have wrought his judgment. Seek righteousness. Seek meekness. It may be ye shall be hit. In the day of the Lord's anger.

They are part of the nation. They are in a sense involved in the judgmental dealings with the nation. They are surrounded by sin which is seeming to increase all the while.

They are confronted by the apostasy in the religion of the nation. And yet they are as a godly remnant. A godly remnant.

In the midst of all this upon which God's face is lifted up in wrath and anger. The godly remnant in the third chapter of Zephaniah.

[8 : 29] Described in verses 12 and 13. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people. And they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity. Nor speak lies. Neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. For they shall feed and lie down.

And none shall make them afraid. And the godly remnant has been preserved through every generation. In all those things that have brought God's displeasure upon nations.

And upon the professing churches. There has been ever the preservation of the godly remnant. The Lord leaving the remnant. The god preserving those in the midst.

The afflicted and the poor people. Or as they are described in this text of ours this morning. As the meek of the earth.

[9 : 30] Now I want to make an application to then this morning. To those who are of that godly remnant. Those who are as the poor and afflicted in the midst of the nation.

Those who are the meek of the earth which have brought his judgment. We might consider this direction that he's made to the Lord's people. And I broaden it out in this respect.

That I'm not just thinking of the judgment to come. But I'm thinking of all the oppositions. All the trials. All the afflictions that we are going through individually. And in family life.

And in national life. And there is scarcely one present. I don't know. One in our midst that is not up against many trials.

And many difficulties. And oft times these trials and difficulties. Are made more apparent and real to us. Because of the things that we believe.

[10 : 32] We're in the midst of a wicked nation. We are afflicted. We are those that are seeing the truth of God languishing. Almost fallen in the streets.

We are seeing the enemy come up against us like a flood. And we are under all of those concerns.

That often times bring us to wonder. What is God doing in such a day as this? I speak then to every one of the meek of the earth. Who have brought judgment.

Who are feeling the trial of faith. The exercise. The conflict. Of those that would live godly. For they that would live godly. Shall suffer persecution.

An application to every tried. And tested saint. In a day which brings many pressures. Upon them. They are the meek of the earth.

[11 : 31] And we know the beatitude. Matthew 5. Verse 5. Blessed are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth. These are the marks in the beatitudes.

Of Christian character. That is God wrought. God has worked these marks. In those who are his people. They are afflicted. And poor in spirit. They are the meek.

In the earth. Blessed are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth. And they receive the word of God. The majority of people. That come up against the word of God.

Do not receive it. They refuse to recognize. That it is the word of God. You don't find the ungodly. With respect for the Bible today. There was a time.

I believe. When even the ungodly. Had a certain respect. For the Bible. Because they at least. Had been brought up. And in their attendance. Upon worship.

[12 : 26] Even in the most formal fashion. They met. With the word of God. Believed as such. That it was held to be different. But now even those.

That purport to be Christian. Leaders in high places. Of ridiculed scripture. Have spoken about it. Being a mass of contradiction. They have sought in every way. To invalidate the testimony of scripture.

Man does not have a high regard. For the word of God. There are those in the professing churches. That have no respect. For the word of God. There are those. That speak most evil things.

Concerning the word of God. When they do hear. Biblical preaching. They don't want it. If they wanted biblical preaching. They wouldn't sit under. The sort of ministry. That they sit under. They don't want the word of God.

Not only is it in the marketplace. But it's also in. The professing churches. There is that rebellion. Against the word. But the meek of the earth. Ever receive it. They receive the word of God.

[13 : 25] It's a mark of. The Lord's people. That they have a respect. For the Bible. And that they have a love. For the word. Even if that word pricks them. Even if that word convicts them.

I'd rather be pricked. And convicted. By God through the word. Than to be left in. Ignorance. In warful delusion. Concerning. How I am living. And how God views it.

And the meek of the earth. They have a respect. For the scripture. James 3.17. The wisdom that is from above. This is how the. The Lord's people. Regard the Bible.

The wisdom that is from above. Is first pure. Then peaceable. Gentle. And easy to be entreated. Full of mercy. And good fruits. Without partiality.

And without hypocrisy. That which God addresses to us. That which comes. To us in the Christian gospel. It is the most blessed word. And the Lord's people receive it.

[14 : 24] They seek to be those. That both hear it and do it. And in consequence. Then there are these three directions. To the meek of the earth. To seek the Lord.

To seek righteousness. And to seek meekness. In a day of no religion. In a day of abundant false religion.

The meek of the earth. The meek of the earth. Are to seek the Lord. In this day. They are to give themselves. With all their energy. To seek after God.

And his ways. That they might walk in these ways. And that they might bear a testimony. Concerning him. It is not surprising.

That the ungodly. Should behave the way they do. But the surprising. And the lamentable thing. Is that those that profess to be godly. Should be so often.

[15 : 21] The very opposite. From what they should be. They are not manifestly seeking the Lord. But they are seeking everything else. But the Lord and his righteousness. And that is the second thing.

Seek the Lord. And seek his righteousness. It says. Seek righteousness. In this day. They are to seek. That they might live. As different. From the unrighteous.

Multitude. About them. We are living in the most. Unrighteous day. And ungodly day. And it is for us. To seek righteousness.

In this day. It is not for us. To be conformed. To this world. It is for us. To seek righteousness. In this day. We want to be different. In this day. We want to be like Noah.

In the day that he saw. Which was a day of wickedness. So wicked. That God brought an end. To mankind. As it then was.

[16 : 18] And only spared the eight. That were in the ark. And we are told. Concerning Noah. In that day. By faith. Noah being warned. Of God. Of things.

Not seen as yet. Moved with fear. Prepared an ark. To the saving of his house. By the which he condemned the world. And became heir of righteousness. Which is by faith.

He was a man. That by faith. He sought righteousness. And he condemned the world. Of his day. And we want to be surely.

Such a people that. Have. Shown that we. Are different from others. Because of the grace. That's been bestowed. Upon us.

Do notice the description. In the text. Seek ye the Lord. All ye. Make of the earth. Which have wrought. His judgment. Seek righteousness. There has been.

[17 : 11] Already that working. Of the. Will of God. There has been. An attention given. In the past of our lives. To the. Ways of God. We have wrought judgment.

Judgment. Standing. As it so often. Does. For the. Word. And the will. And the commandment. Of God. The statutes of God. Of the judgments of God. We have wrought. These judgments.

By grace already. But we are not to stop. Seeking righteousness. Now. If we live like this. Hitherto. Then it is for us. To seek. Righteousness. In these days.

And whatever lies ahead. That we might be. A righteous people. Seek. Righteousness. For we are made. As I said.

On. Thursday evening. Hebrews 3. 14. For we are made. Partakers. Of. Christ. If we hold. The beginning.

[18 : 04] Of our confidence. Stand fast. Unto the end. And if we have known. A beginning of grace. We want to be. Continuing in grace. To the very end.

Holding. Stand fast. Holding on. In this unrighteous. Ungodly. Day. And it is as we hold on. Our way. As we. Show that.

God. Has granted grace. To persevere. To us. As we endure. To the end. So. We shall be. Saved. Maybe. Ye shall be hid. In the day.

Of the Lord's. Anger. And this is for all. The Lord's people. Do you. Notice. Seek ye the Lord. All ye meek. Of the earth. Which have wrought.

His judgment. Seek. Righteousness. It's not just for some. It's for every. One. Of the meek. Of the earth. They are to seek. Righteousness.

[18 : 59] And they are to seek. Meekness. Well these. Are the. Matters. That we give ourselves. To look at this morning. And also. This evening. God helping us. There's too much.

In that verse. To. Complete. In. The time available. This morning. And with the Lord's help. I will look. This morning. At the seeking.

Of the Lord. And in the evening. The seeking of righteousness. And the seeking. Of. Meekness. Seek. Ye. The Lord. When the ungodly.

Abound. And when the wicked. Wicked ways. Are. The more apparent. In the earth. It is for the.

Godly. To seek. The Lord. That's what. Zephaniah. Is. Telling us. Now why. Should the. Godly. Seek. The Lord. In such.

[19 : 54] A day. When. We're up against. Opposition. When we're under distress. When we're in. Such a day. Of. Turmoil. As we're in. When there seems to be. Such.

Spiritual confusion. All around about us. Why. Are the. Godly. To seek. The Lord. Well. For this reason. First. That all.

The Lord's. The Lord's. Dealings. With us. Whether they be in. Trials. Or. Afflictions. Or. Whatever it is. Whether they be from without. Or whether they be from the things.

That. Seem to be happening within us. All the Lord's. Trials. Of us. All the Lord's. Dealings. With us. Are. In order to make us. Seeking. Now you can't.

Controvert that. You can't say to me. To say that. I don't believe. That the trials and afflictions. That I'm experiencing. Are. Such. That in them. I am not to seek the Lord.

[20 : 50] You know. That these very trials. The Lord has brought them to pass. He might not have brought them to pass. And to affect you as they do. He has brought them to pass. In order that they might affect you.

In such a way. That through them. You seek him. The design. Of God. In these trials. Whatever they be. The design is that you should seek.

The Lord. In the. You should seek the Lord. That you might do. Righteousness. And that you might. Seek meekness. In the air.

Seek. The Lord. The Lord's dealings with us. Are to make us seek him. The more. Now you see this with God's. Word. As he might. Under. Extremities.

Of rainfall. We might. Well. Wonder. What's the good of all this. We don't. Think that that of course. Our short. Memories.

[21 : 47] Don't forget that. Forget. What it was like when. We were in drought conditions. When we were longing for. For rain to fall. But when. We're getting a lot of rain.

We can't really see the purpose. In the rain at all. And yet. The rain comes down. For a purpose. Isaiah chapter. 55. Verses 10 and 11. For as the rain cometh down.

And the snow from heaven. And returneth not thither. But watereth the earth. And maketh it. Bring forth and bud. That it may give seed to the sower.

And bread to the eater. So shall my word be. God says. So shall my word be. That goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void. But it shall accomplish that which I please.

And it shall prosper in the thing. Whereto I send it. We may. When the rain is. Constantly falling. Be resentful of it. But it's there for a purpose.

[22 : 44] It watereth the earth. And bringeth it to bud. But. And there are these good results from it. Well when the. When the rain of afflictions fall upon us. When the hail seems to beat.

Upon us of trial. We're not to resent it. We're to seek the Lord. Why is the Lord bringing it to pass? What's his word. In it to us. There is a word. In providence.

Providence has a tongue. The old Puritan said. When something happens to us. When there is some crisis. That. That overtakes us. We should be seeking the Lord.

What is he saying to us in this? And if we went home today. I used to say this. Nearly twenty years ago. When I came to Salem at first. I'll say it again. I don't think I've said it.

For many a day. But if we go home. And find our house burned to the ground. And nothing left there. What will be the first reaction. Please God. That the first reaction might be.

[23 : 42] To seek the Lord in this thing. Why has it come about? There is a word to us. It has a tongue to us. The disaster.

The trial. The affliction. The circumstance. It has a tongue. God is addressing us in it. And it may be that. Through the very providential thing. He's bringing. His word to bear.

Not only is the thing a voice to us. But with. The affliction. There is so much in the scripture. That comes to us. That is meaningful to us.

That is precious to us. Things we might never have listened to. But God brings us to know. Receive. Because we're the meek of the earth. And circumstances. Demand that we listen to his voice.

So you see. God is bringing trial upon us. In order that we might seek him. That we might seek the Lord. If God then. Is designing.

[24 : 39] That we should seek him. Or that we might be ready. And instant to seek the Lord. Now the second reason. Why we are to seek the Lord. Is this. That all the Lord's dealings with us.

Are that we should bear a testimony. To this world. All the Lord's dealings with us. Are that we might bear a testimony. To him.

Before the eyes of men. First Peter chapter 2 verse 12. Having your conversation honest.

Peter says so live. You're knowing what it is to suffer. You're beginning to experience persecution. But see that you live. See that you live in such a way.

That your conversation. Among the Gentiles. Is such that. Whereas they speak against you. As evil doers. They may by your good works.

[25 : 34] Glorify God in the day of visitation. That can be taken in either of two ways. So live. That even when you're being opposed. And mocked. And ridiculed. And spoken against as evil doers.

Because you're so different from others. That they are forced to glorify God. And they will have to. All in the day of judgment. That there was a consistent testimony.

From you in that day. Or else it is. If the day of visitation. Is the day of God's mercy to the soul. They will glorify God. That despite. All that they thought of you.

That they still saw such a testimony. In your life before them. That your good works glorified God. And made them to seek after him. However you view it.

You see. We are to live in a day of affliction. A day of difficulty. In such a way. That our good works glorify God. We are to seek the Lord. By the way we live. The testimony we bear.

[26 : 28] Is to be such. That man take knowledge of us. That we have been with Jesus. Even if they speak against us. As evil doers in the consequence. I fear so often. That we are as.

Nobody's. And non-entities. Because we are so little different. From our society. But they never knew. That. We were those that were the Lord.

They never saw such works in us. That made them. Want to recognize. That we did them. In the Lord's name. We want to be our say. Like Noah then.

In that verse. In the fear of God. And by faith. Noah. Preparing a knock. To the saving of his house.

By which he condemned the world. And became heir of the righteousness. Which is by faith. Oh that we might stand out. As did that godly man.

[27 : 23] Noah. You say it's hard. To live as a Christian. In this present day. If you knew what it was like. In my family. If you knew what it was like. In where I worked. To be a Christian. Well think.

Spare a thought for Noah. Spare a thought for that man. And a hundred and twenty years. Of imminent judgment. And he's building this great vessel.

And mocked and ridiculed. For his effort. Because he says. That there's going to be a flood. In a day. And there hasn't been rain. In up to that point. The earth was not watered.

In these days. By rain at all. That came after the. Change. Through the catastrophe. Of the flood. It was a dew.

That watered the earth. Hither to the people. Had never seen rain. They were mocking at this man. But moved. By fear. Constrained. By the living faith.

[28 : 15] That was God. Wrote within him. Because. We're told of this man. Noah. That he was a just. Man. In his generations. Before the flood. And after it. He was a. A justified man.

A just man. He condemned. The world. He stood out. From the world. Are you standing out. From the world. Am I standing out. From the world. Seeking the Lord.

Everyone's seeking. Them. Their own interest. We are seeking the Lord. In a day. An evil day. Day of opposition. Seeking the Lord. We are under submission.

To the word of God. Remember. A few weeks ago. We looked at the. Word in Daniel. Chapter. Three. Shadrach. Meshach. And Abednego.

Remember. Brought to a place. Where they were told. Unless they bowed. Down to the idol. That had been set up. They would be cast. Bound into a fiery. Furnace. Remember their words.

[29 : 12] The wonderful words. If it be so. Our God. Whom we serve. Is able to deliver. Us from the burning. Fiery furnace. And he will deliver us.

Out of thine hand. O king. But if not. Be it known unto thee. O king. That we will not. Serve thy gods. Now worship the golden image. Which thou hast set up. If he spare us.

We won't. Do it. But if he doesn't. Spare us. We still will go down. Into that burning. Fiery furnace. And we are not going to. Bow or bend. Or budge. In the things. That are precious to us.

We are seeking the Lord. For us. Or to be. Like this. To be. As those. In Malachi. Three. And there.

In the. Thirteenth verse. Your words have been stout. Against me. Said the Lord. And yet. When there were many words. That were stout. In their. Enmity.

[30 : 07] Against the Lord God. We read in the sixteenth. Verse of Malachi. Three. Then they. That feared the Lord. Then they. That feared the Lord. Spake often.

One to another. And the Lord hearkened. And heard. Thank God. For those that bear a testimony. Seeking the Lord. They bear a testimony. As individuals.

They bear a testimony. To the world. Where God has. Put them. And the third thing. Why we should seek the Lord. Is this. That if we are not.

Seeking the Lord. And not seeking. Righteousness and me. We are not seeking the Lord. We are no different. From the world. And we deserve. The condemnation. Of the world.

If you are not seeking the Lord. You deserve. To be cast on. You deserve. To be brought to judgment. If you are not seeking God.

[31 : 00] How can you ever expect. Anything to prosper. Now it may be. That there are still. Great. Mercies shown. And that God. Has not dealt with you. As your sin demands.

But. You've got no. Ground. Of confidence. If you are not. Seeking the Lord. God. And you're one of the meek. Of the earth. You cannot. As it were. Say well. I believe it will be all right.

With me. Because God will make a difference. If you are not. Living differently. If you are not. Seeking righteousness. And meekness. In the earth. Then how do you know.

That there is a work of grace. At all. Wrought in your heart. And if there's no work of grace. Wrought in your heart. Then you're going to perish. With the ungodly around you. It's this whole.

Area of perseverance. That we've been looking at. Repeatedly. In Hebrews chapter 2. And in Hebrews chapter 3. The very fact. That we are possessed of grace.

[31 : 56] Means that we will. Seek the Lord. Therefore. If we are not seeking the Lord. The question must be raised. And it must at least. Give us an anxious thought. Not just others.

But it ought to come to us. And trouble us. Is there a work within me. In the way that I am living. I am so little concerned. To seek the Lord. From day to day.

If we are not seeking the Lord. And living righteously. And seeking meekness. Then we may. Be no different from the world. And we will be under its condemnation.

Well. The question that follows. On now is this. How do we evidence. That we are seeking the Lord. How do we. Show thought.

To ourselves. Let alone to others. That we are seeking the Lord. By. In the first place. By a conscious. Identification. With God. Despite all that's against us.

[32 : 53] Despite all that's casting us down. Whether it be from within. Or from without. By. A conscious. Identification. With the Lord. And the Lord's cause.

That's. How we show. That we are seeking. The Lord. There was Jonah. Brought. Inside the.

Great fish. And the Lord had prepared. To swallow Jonah. There he is. Inside the. Belly of the great fish. When my soul. Fainted within me.

And certainly. If any man's soul. Would faint within him. It would be a man. Brought into such. An exigency as that. He says. When my soul. Fainted within me. I remembered the Lord.

And my prayer. Came. In. Unto thee. Into thy holy temple. It moved into prayer. He sought the Lord.

[33 : 49] And. The Lord. The Lord. Caused the fish. To vomit up. Jonah. Onto the dry land. But here is a man. Conscious. And.

Brought into this. Amazing. Predicament. The soul. Fainting within him. And I say that. None of us here. Has ever been in. Such. A place as that.

And we've never known. Our soul. Fainting within us. As this man. Must have known it. He must have thought. Whatever. Has happened. When. My soul. Fainted within me.

I remember the Lord. And my prayer. Came in unto thee. Into thy holy temple. For David. In the. Sixty first. Psalm. Hear my cry.

O God. Attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth. Will I cry. Unto thee. When my heart. Is overwhelmed. Lead me. To the rock. That is higher than I.

[34 : 45] For thou hast been. A shelter to me. And a strong tower. From the enemy. If. The Lord has. Wrought within us. And we have become. The meek. Of the earth.

And we have sought to. Live according to his word. And to depend upon his promise. Having wrought. Judgment before him. Then we seek. The Lord.

When we make. A conscious identification. Still with him. Though he slay me. Job says. Yet. Will I trust him. And you know.

Even if there are some. Who have got so little assurance. That they are a child of God. But they've got a little hope. They should venture on it. And they must venture on it.

Or they don't manifest. That they've got any hope at all. They should say. That I venture on the word. The faithful word. Of mercy. Which is in the gospel. To the needy sinner.

[35 : 40] That the soul that comes. I will in no wise cast out. And if. The Lord should damn me. In consequence of my coming. Then I'm still coming. And trusting in him.

As a gracious sage. We identify with the Lord's cause. There are some here. That have never identified. With the Lord's cause. I couldn't say.

Whose cause you are identified with. Attendance of this chapel. Doesn't guarantee anything. Got to identify. With the Lord's cause. You've got to seek the Lord. Seek the Lord.

While he may be found. Calling upon him. While he is near. We show that we are seeking the Lord. By a conscious. Identification. With the Lord.

And with the Lord's cause. Despite all that we are. Up against. And the second way. That we show. That we are seeking the Lord. Is by a complete trust. In the Lord.

[36 : 34] We are living by faith. We are living by faith. Some of us come to a place. It seems to me. We have stopped living by faith. And we are looking for signs.

And evidence. We have no right to look to these things. When the scripture says. We live by faith. The just shall live by faith. And faith is a substance of things.

Hope for us. It isn't that which we've already got. But we are. We are those that are believing. That we've got it in Christ. That's what faith is. But we haven't. We haven't got it by the fleshly evidences.

Of sight. And material touch. We've got it by faith. We are living by faith. And we live not by the things which are seen.

Which are temporal. But by the things which are unseen. Which are eternal. How do you show you're seeking the Lord? When you're living by trust.

[37 : 31] When you've got that complete trust in the Lord. Living by faith. Resting on the promise. Resting on the promises of God. Taking God at his word.

Casting all your care upon him. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. That he might exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon him.

For he careth for you. What lovely words in the 26th of Isaiah. We read in Isaiah 26. 3 and 4. Thou will keep him in perfect peace.

Whose mind is stayed on thee. Because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever. For in the Lord Jehovah. Is everlasting strength.

In the 112th Psalm verse 7. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is fixed. Trusting in the Lord God. He's true to his word. Trust him then.

[38 : 30] Whatever your feelings. Whatever your feelings. Whatever your fancies. Trust the word of God. Trust him. Trust that one that speaks the promises to you.

The faithful God. The word of truth. We show that we are seeking the Lord when we trust him. When we live by faith.

We don't see but we trust. He has said therefore we will venture on that. David. David. For the oppression of the poor.

He says in that 12th Psalm. For the sign of the needing. Now will I arise. Sayeth the Lord. I will set him in safety. From him that puffeth at him.

The words of the Lord are pure words. The silver. Tried in a furnace of air. Purified seven times. It's as though David is saying. Oh it's sometimes hard. When you're in the low place.

[39 : 28] When you're in the depths. When you're in the pit of depression. It's so hard to believe that the Lord will appear. But the Lord says for the oppression of the needy.

Now will I arise. Sayeth the Lord. I will set him in safety. From him that puffeth at him. And it's as though David then makes a comment. Ah. And the words of the Lord. He says are pure words.

The silver. Tried in a furnace of air. Purified seven times. This is the word that can be rest. This is the word of God. Thou shalt keep them all Lord.

Thou shalt preserve them from this generation. Forever. Rest on the word of God by faith. Trust him who speaks it. And then a third.

Evidence that we are seeking the Lord. Is when there is a watchfulness. Not to offend him. When we are diligent and careful. That we do not offend him.

[40 : 21] Keep thy heart with all diligence. For out of it are the issues of life. When we are seeking to walk circumspectly. When we know that God is a holy God.

When we know that his judgments are abroad. And when we are seeking that we might fear him. That we might walk before him in his fear. The fear of God. Not fearful at the judgments.

Not fearful at the depressions. Not fearful at the tribulations and trials. That are real or imagined. But in the fear of the Lord. When we show forth that we are in the fear of the Lord.

Then do not we trust him. Says Isaiah chapter 8. 11 to 14. For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand. And instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people.

Saying. Say ye not a confederacy. To all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy. Neither fear ye their fear. Nor be afraid.

[41 : 26] Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself. Let him be your fear. And let him be your fear. There were dire conditions. People were saying we need an alliance. In order to be preserved. And God's word through Isaiah to the remnant is.

Neither fear ye their fear. Nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself. Let him be your fear. Let him be your dread. And he shall be for a century.

And as a stone of stumbling. And as a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. For a jinn and for a snare. To the inhabitants of Jerusalem. But fear him. He'll be a sanctuary.

Whatever be the portion of the ungodly. And then finally. We seek the Lord. We show that we are seeking the Lord. When we keep our communion with him.

We use that expression. Seeking the Lord often of prayer. We seek the Lord in prayer. Let us seek him in prayer. And when we are those that are holding communion with God.

[42 : 27] And perhaps the principle way by which we hold communion with God. Is by seeking him in prayer. Or we would probably say equally. By seeking him in the word.

As we hear his word. His voice to us. As we raise our voices in prayer to him. We maintain communion with him. We are seeking the Lord. It's an evil circumcision you're in.

It's a trial of faith. It's all that you cannot understand. What are you doing? You're trusting God. You're trusting his word. You're showing that you mean business with him. And you're holding communion with him.

Communion with him. Prayer. Prayer. Prayer. In the reading of his word. We read in the 91st Psalm. The Covenant Psalm.

Verses 14 to 16. To those that keep communion with him. And the very reason why they keep communion with him. This is the reason. Because he hath set his love upon me.

[43 : 25] Therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high. Because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me. And I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble.

I will deliver him and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him. And show him my salvation. And that's what it says. That because he hath set his love upon me.

Therefore will I deliver him. Here is God's word to those that hold communion with him. Because they seek him with all their heart. I will set him on high. Because he hath known my name.

He shall call upon me. Not a peradventure. He shall call upon me. And I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honour him.

And again in the 26th of Isaiah. And in verses 8 and 9. Yea. In the way of thy judgments. O Lord.

[44 : 25] How we waited for thee. It's nothing to wait upon God. When things are smooth with you. When you haven't got problems. And you haven't got difficulties. And it's fair weather.

And it's a downhill slope. It's nothing to live godly like that. It doesn't matter when it's uphill. And you've got many problems. And you've got many oppositions. And the way is thorny.

And it's difficult. Every step you take. That's a different matter. That calls forth faith. In judgments. Yea. In the way of thy judgments.

O Lord. Have we waited for thee. The desire of our soul is to thy name. And to the remembrance of thee with my soul. Have I desired thee in the night. Yea.

With my spirit within me. Will I seek thee early. For when thy judgments are in the earth. The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. The judgments of the Lord are in the earth my friends.

[45 : 21] We're knowing something of them in our own experiences. For us then to call upon him. To seek him. And we show that we're seeking him. When we maintain communion with him.

So the word of Zephaniah. The first part of it that we've looked at this morning. And I leave it there. And God helping me will resume. This evening to consider the other parts of it.

Seek ye the Lord. We're thinking simply of this. Seek ye the Lord. Here is the word to God. Whatever our circumstance.

Whatever our condition. Seek ye the Lord. And in the word with which I close from Jeremiah 29. Here are the encouragements to us when we seek the Lord.

For thus saith the Lord. That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon. I will visit you. And perform my good word towards you. In causing you to return to this place.

[46 : 21] For I know the thoughts that I think towards 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. And ye shall seek me and find me. When ye shall search for me.

With all your heart. My dear friends. Are you searching for God this day with all your heart? Are you seeking the Lord this day? And ye shall seek me and find me.

When ye shall search for me. With all your heart. God bless his word to us. Amen. Amen. Amen.

I'll go.