

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO SEEK GOD (2)

2 Chronicles 12:14

14 And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.

We said to you that we must PREPARE OUR HEART before we can seek the Lord. We also said to you that one way we “prepare our hearts” is by removing the idols from our heart. However, we haven’t really talked about what it means to seek the Lord. We know that we must prepare our hearts to seek the Lord, but what does it actually mean to seek *the Lord*?

When we read through Scripture we discover that “seeking the Lord” is another way to describe what faith is!

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Therefore, believing God is the same as *coming to Him*. Moreover, we cannot truly *come to Him* (believe) unless we *prepare our hearts* (or repent). In fact, the better we are at repenting, the better we’ll be at believing! Anyone who’s not coming to God (believing), it’s either because they lack repentance or it’s because they lack knowledge.

Acts 19:2–5

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

These disciples weren’t coming (believing on) Jesus for the Holy Spirit because they had a *knowledge* problem. However, there are others who don’t believe or come to Jesus because they had a *repentance* problem.

Matthew 21:32

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Hosea 10:12

12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground: For it is time to seek the Lord, Till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Notice, we're no longer talking about seeking the Lord by "putting away our idols." Hosea is talking about seeking the Lord by "breaking up our fallow ground!" (Fallow ground is ground that has *not yet been plowed*.) By comparing seeking the Lord with *breaking up fallow ground*, Hosea is suggesting that seeking the Lord is a process that's similar to farming (sowing, reaping, plowing, etc)!

Luke 8:11–12, 15

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Notice, is suggesting the same thing as Hosea, namely that bringing forth fruit (seeking righteousness) is similar to *farming*. If this is true, then righteousness can be obtained through human effort. We must create the conditions that will allow righteousness to be produced! This also means that in order to create the right conditions that will produce righteousness, we must follow a specific process.

CULTIVATING RIGHTEOUSNESS 1) PREPARATION, 2) MATURATION and 3) PERFECTION

Each of these stages is important. In fact, you can't move on to the next stage until the previous stage is completed!

2 Corinthians 10:6

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

There are some things you cannot DO (or even RECEIVE) until you have fully matured!

1 Corinthians 3:1–3

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Similarly, there are some places you will not GO because your heart has not been fully prepared!

John 6:66–69

66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Luke 9:57–62

57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. 59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. 61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. 62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

The individuals in this parable represent people who did not prepared their heart to follow God! Let's go over each of them...

Luke 9:57–58

57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

We're not ready to follow the Lord until we're ready to be fully dependent on Him. If there's something we trust in more than God, then our heart has not been fully prepared!

Luke 9:59–60

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

We're not ready to follow God until we put God before our family. (Notice, I DID NOT say that we must put the Church or Church work before our family!)

If there's something or someone we honor more than God, then our heart has not been fully prepared!

Luke 9:61–62 KJV 1900

⁶¹ And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. ⁶² And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Lastly, we're not ready to follow the Lord if we're still looking back. If there are things or people we CARE about more than following God, our heart has not been fully prepared to follow God!