

May 17, 2026

Series: Think Ahead

Title: Do This to Get Closer to God

Scripture: Psalm 27, 63, 19, 122

Speaker: Pastor Ian Bonthron



Think \_\_\_\_\_ or pre- \_\_\_\_\_ that we get to see hope.

David \_\_\_\_\_ intimacy with God.

*"There is no such thing as intimacy without intentionality."* — Craig Groeschel

**Psalm 27:4a ESV**

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek

**Psalm 27:4 ESV**

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: 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 inquire in his temple.

**1. Before times of desperation, pre-decide to be in God's presence in**

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**Psalm 63:1-3 ESV**

O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. 2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. 3 Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.

\_\_\_\_\_ your hardest day hits, pre-decide to be intimate with God.

\_\_\_\_\_ your hardest day hits, pre-decide to be intimate with God now.

**ACTS:**

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Solemn Plea

## 2. Before times of desperation, pre-decide to be in God's presence through His \_\_\_\_\_

### Psalm 19:7-10 ESV

The law of the Lord is **perfect, reviving the soul**; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making **wise** the simple; 8 the precepts of the Lord are **right, rejoicing the heart**; the commandment of the Lord is pure, **enlightening the eyes**; 9 the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the **rules of the Lord are true**, and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than **gold**, even much fine gold; **sweeter also than honey** and drippings of the honeycomb.

## 3. Before times of desperation, pre-decide to be in God's presence with His \_\_\_\_\_

### Psalm 122:1-2 ESV

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" 2 Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!

### Psalm 92:13 ESV

They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.

Before your desperate times, pre-decide to be \_\_\_\_\_ for God's \_\_\_\_\_

## May 17, 2026 - Group Questions:

1. If you could ask God for something, what would it be?
2. If your life had a “pre-decide” button for the things you always regret in the moment, what would you pre-decide first — never hitting snooze, never eating the whole bag of chips, or never sending that text you shouldn’t?

## Into the Bible Questions:

### Read Psalm 27:4 ESV

*One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: 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 inquire in his temple.*

1. What is the “one thing” David asked for above everything else? Why do you think he chose that instead of asking for safety, victory over enemies, or an easier life?
2. “You never get close to God accidentally.” Do you agree? Why or why not? What does that mean for everyday life?

### Read Psalm 63:1-3 ESV

*O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. 2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. 3 Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.*

3. David wrote this while running for his life because of his own bad decisions (which led to his son Absalom’s rebellion). How does David’s response in this moment challenge or encourage you?
4. Why is it significant that David still described God’s love as “better than life” even after he had messed up so badly? What does that teach us about God?

### Read Psalm 19:7-10

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.*

5. List out all the positive things David says about God’s Word. Which one of these descriptions stands out to you the most, and why?

### Read Psalm 122:1-2

*I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord!” 2 Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!*

6. Why do you think God designed us to find His presence not only alone, but also with His people? How has the church made a positive impact on your life?

7. David pre-decided to pursue intimacy with God through three specific practices. What are they? Which one feels easiest for you right now, and which feels hardest?

8. How does the idea that David's pre-decisions about intimacy with God helped him even after his worst failures (adultery, murder, family chaos)?

9. The sermon ends by pointing to Jesus as the "greater David." How does Jesus' perfect pursuit of the Father make a difference for us when we fail in our own pursuit of God?

### **Application Questions:**

1. If you knew a "hardest day" was coming sometime in the next year, what would you start doing now to prepare your heart to run toward God instead of away from Him?

2. On a scale of 1–10, how intentional have you been lately about pursuing intimacy with God? What number would you like it to be by the end of this summer?

3. Think about a current area of struggle or potential "desperate time" in your life. How would having a deeper intimacy with God right now change how you respond?

4. The sermon says intimacy requires intentionality. What is one specific time of day or situation where you most often get distracted from time with God? What could "pre-deciding" look like in that exact moment?

5. This week, how could you pre-decide to spend time in prayer before you get tired or overwhelmed? (Be practical — when, where, how long?)

6. Pick one description of God's Word from Psalm 19:7-10. How could regularly reminding yourself of that truth change the way you approach the Bible this week?

7. What would it look like for you to "pre-decide" to be with God's people (church, small group, serving, etc.) even when you don't feel like it? What practical step could you take?

8. How does remembering what Jesus has already done for you (His perfect intimacy with the Father and His death for your sins) make it easier to pursue intimacy with God even when you've failed?

9. How can this group help you follow through on your pre-decisions? (Accountability partners, check-ins, prayer, etc.)

10. During Group Prayer time or at home Try the ACTS prayer model this week (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication).

### Extra Notes:

1. **If Could ask God for One thing and Only One thing, What Would you ask for?** Think about that, what would you ask for?
2. I asked some people I knew and these were some of the different things they asked for: win the Lottery, Lifetime Gift Card/Chick-Fil-A, healing for Sick loved one, God would Save friend for God, better Marriage, Healing from Addiction, removal of Anxiety, End human traffic.
3. **If you ask God for one thing, what would you ask God to do? This Question is important because it reveals what you value most.**
4. I've talked with several of you who have gone through tremendous heartache. It's always amazing to me to see how years of pre-deciding to be desperate for God in prayer, spending time with him, getting to know him, how in those dark moments, they have hope. When we get into hard times we try to do it on our own, we try to fix it on our own. While we might fix a few things, we tend to make a bigger mess. You might even realize what you are going through is because of some bad decisions you've made. This is something that David learned from his youth.

### Psalm 71:5,17 ESV

***For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth...O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.***

5. David **Prioritized, Pre-Decided** to be close to God - and when the difficulty came, he already thought ahead, he already knew God would protect him from his greatest enemies.