

Oh God, I Need You!

January 17, 2021

There is a little word in English that communicates so much: “Oh”.

This little word is often put in front of a phrase that amplifies what comes next. It’s an exclamation of surprise, or delight, or shock, or in some cases, desperation. It is a word, better stated a cry, that comes from our lips when we find ourselves in such a deep place of need.

I have titled this sermon, “Oh God, I Need You!”

It is a strong spiritual principle in the OT and NT alike, that God fills those who are desperate for Him. That He is found by those who seek *hard* after Him. That He satisfies those who hunger and thirst for Him, and Him alone. Who are not willing to be pacified by the things of this world. Who are not too easily satisfied by entertainment. Who will not be distracted by the myriad of temptations, or simply lesser activities, around them. Who have locked eyes on the Almighty and will not turn their gaze *until...* He answers their heart cry.

Oh God, I need You.

A.W. Tozer wrote a powerful book that I would recommend highly, called the Pursuit of God. I want to read some excerpts from his first chapter:

The continuous and unembarrassed interchange of love and thought between God and the soul of the redeemed man is the throbbing heart of New Testament religion...for now begins the glorious pursuit, the heart’s happy exploration of the infinite riches of the Godhead... to have found God and still to pursue Him is the soul’s paradox of love, scorned indeed by the too easily satisfied religionist, but justified in happy experience by the children of the burning heart...I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate. The stiff and wooden quality of our religious lives is the result of our lack of holy desire. Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us He waits so long, so very long, in vain.

A.W. Tozer, excerpts from The Pursuit of God, Chapter 1

Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth.

I want to give us opportunity to repent of our complacency today. To repent of our spiritual laziness. To repent of our distractedness. To repent of our lack of spiritual hunger or thirst for Him. To repent of our weak love for the One who died for us. To repent that we continue to live first and foremost for ourselves at times. And we are only convicted of all the above in some vague manner.

The prophet Jeremiah put it this way:

¹³ *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.* ¹⁴ *I will be found by you,” declares the LORD...*

The LORD, speaking to His people Israel who are in captivity, says “I will be found by you”. But right before that He states, “When you seek for Me with all your heart”. See, we tend to seek God half-heartedly.

Tozer then goes on to say: *Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people.*

Acute means sharp, even painful. What does Tozer mean by this? Is God unwilling to fill us? Is He unwilling to reveal Himself? Is He playing hard to catch? Is He messing with us?

NO. A thousand times no. The reason the hunger and thirst for Him must be acute, or sharp, even painful at times, is because of us, not Him. He is not desirous for us to be in agony of the soul before He will reveal Himself to us. The problem is that for most of us, we must be in great agony of the soul, before we will turn to the Great Physician of our soul.

The usual pattern for us as creatures, even those of us who have been redeemed, is that we move too quickly toward the things of this world to satisfy only what God Himself can fill. And so, by experience, AFTER running consciously or unconsciously toward the things of this world to satisfy our deepest desires, we finally realize how empty a pursuit that really is.

And so God in His kindness to us, allows these things to NOT satisfy our souls, and suddenly in some Holy-Spirit quickened kind of a way, we realize... O GOD I NEED YOU.

And it is in that moment, that we are truly seeking Him and Him alone. No longer clinging to our idols. And when we have released our childish, even rebellious hold, on these idols, seeking Him and Him alone, that He will be found by us. For our God is a jealous God. And He will not allow Himself to be simply one of your gods.

O God, I need YOU. Means letting go of the idols that we are still desperately clinging to. And choosing instead to seek Him and Him alone to satisfy, to provide, to strengthen, to encourage, to comfort, to heal, to lead, to fill, to empower, to use.

C.S. Lewis once said, *"It would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."*

But, in the words of Tozer, for the children of the burning heart, they will not be satisfied with anything less than a deeper revelation of Jesus. Than a deeper dying to self. Than a deeper sense of the life of Jesus living through them.

They will not stop thirsting for the Living Water alone. They have refused to go this world's broken cisterns any longer.

The LORD confronted His people through the prophet Jeremiah with these words:

¹³ *"My people have committed two sins:
They have forsaken me,
the spring of living water,
and have dug their own cisterns, (or wells)
broken cisterns that cannot hold water.*

Today is a day for repenting of those broken cisterns.

So, what are the broken cisterns in your life? What is it? What in your life are you saying, "Unless I have this, I can't survive, or I won't be happy, etc. I NEED this in order to... etc."

Story of Rich, Young, Ruler (Matthew 19:16-23)

Ask, Seek, Knock (Luke 11:1-13)

Blind Bartimaeus: *Jesus, I Need You!* (Mark 10:46-52)