



LESSON 1: Seeking God

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listen to these lessons and follow along in the guide before you study with
someone.

The Way of Discipleship Tutorials **by Robert Cox**

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2. [The Word](#) (33:19)
3. [Sin & The Cross pts. 1 & 2](#) (34:20)
4. [Discipleship](#) (40:51)
5. [Repentance & Rebirth](#) (41:40)

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STUDY #1 - SEEKING GOD

Study Goals:

- **To communicate God's desire to bless your student through a through a close, personal relationship with Him (Jeremiah 29:11-14, John 10:10).**
- **To give hope by showing that God has arranged this "time and place" to provide your student with a future filled with hope (Acts 17:26, 27, Jeremiah 29:11).**
- **To clarify what seeking God with all their heart involves (Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 13:44, Acts 8:26-40).**

READ:

Jeremiah 29:11-14

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 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, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

NOTE: This passage was written at a time when God's people were enslaved. Israel had forsaken God in almost every way imaginable and as always they paid an incredible price for their disobedience. Even so, God had not given up on them. They had rebelled against God, but there was (is) hope!

Jeremiah 29 v. 11 -----

? **From the verse we just read what do you think God wants your future to be like?** (prosperous, protected, an hopeful)

? Do you have a hard time believing that God wants to bless you or that He has great plans for your life? Why?

NOTE: One's personal history can make it hard to believe that God loves them and wants a relationship with them. Be sure to reiterate that this passage is speaking to people whose behavior had been incredibly evil! The person you are studying with must understand that their rebellious or embarrassing past will not prevent God from giving them an exciting future. He is more concerned with their future than their past.

MENTION:

John 10:10

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

- Remind your student that Jesus came to give them a full life! Jesus has no desire to destroy our lives, he wants to bless them.

Jeremiah 29 vs. 12, 13, 14 -----

- God's promises always have a premise, therefore the student must understand God's premise to enjoy God's promise.

? What promises does God offer in this verse?

- "I will listen to you."
- "You will find me."
- "I will rescue you."

? What are the premises? (I will do this if you...)

- You will find me when...
you seek me with ALL your heart.

? What does God mean when he asks you to “seek him with all your heart?”

? What is something that you have sought after with “all your heart”?

NOTE: This kind of “seeking God: is rare and probably foreign to your student. Helping them understand what it means to seek God with all their heart in a practical way is difficult but essential. It is safe to assume that while they've never committed to God in this way they have committed whole heartedly to athletics, education, achievement, being popular, or to a dating relationship. Use whatever “whole heart” commitment you discover that they've made to clarify their understanding of what it means to seek God with all their heart.

? How could someone tell that you were “seeking _____ with all your heart?”

- It was my first priority.
- I thought about it all the time.
- I talked about it a lot.
- I hung around people who shared the same goal or interest.
- I gave up other stuff for it.
- I persisted, refusing to give up.
- I _____.

? How does this relate to the way you should seek God?

- God wants me to seek Him like I sought _____.

READ:

[Matthew 6:33](#)

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given

to you as well.”

NOTE: Jesus’ promise to take care of our daily needs is dependent on our willingness to “seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness.”

? We have discussed seeking first, that is “seeking with all your heart”, but what do “his kingdom and righteousness” mean?

- In seeking his kingdom first I seek his rule in and mastery over my life; in seeking his righteousness I seek to do right the things he wants.

NOTE: Allowing Jesus to control your life is an exciting, positive thing. He wants to bless you, knows how to bless you, and has the resources to bless you. Jesus can and will bless your life if you will allow him to “call the shots.” Remember God cannot bless that which he cannot control. This next verse discusses just how valuable Christ’s ruler-ship in our lives is.

READ:

[Matthew 13:44-45](#)

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.”

? What did this man give up in order to get the field?

? Why would anyone do what he did? Was it a sacrifice?

? What might this man’s friends or family have thought about his radical actions?

NOTE: This man sold everything because he knew that the treasure he had found was more valuable than all he had. In the end he comes out ahead. If he didn’t put the treasure first he would lose it! If he didn't “sell out” he would miss out. Let your student know that others may think their new found priorities are over the top simply because they don’t realize what a treasure they've found.

READ:

Acts 8:26-40 -----

NOTE: Set the stage that in this passage we see God pulling Philip the Evangelist away from a very successful Samaritan revival that was reaching multitudes so that he could teach one individual. Why? Because God had a promise to keep: “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you declares the Lord.” In this passage we find an incredible example of a “with all your heart” God seeker. This man can help move your student from concepts about seeking to practical application of those concepts. Before you begin to read the text ask the person you’re studying with to stop you whenever he/she notices something that shows that the Ethiopian was seeking God with all his heart.” Many times your student will see only the very obvious (if that). Let them know that you will add any seeker traits that they might miss. This may result in this part of the study being more of a monologue than a discussion. Be sure to emphasize personal application of this section. Your student must know how to be like the first century Eunuch in this century. Remember the goal is transformation not simply information.

The Ethiopian seeker gives us four imitable traits.

A “whole heart” seeker of God will...

Acts 8 v. 27 -----

#1 ...Sacrifice to get close to God.

- This ‘God seeker’ travels approximately 1300 difficult miles (one way) and will not get to enter the temple courts. (see Deuteronomy 23:1)

? How could this trait show up in your life?

Acts 8 v. 28 -----

#2 ...Read / Study his /her bible on his own.

- Not just doing it as an assignment or requirement!
- Not just relying on a teacher's words or effort.

? How could this trait show up in your life?

Acts 8 vs. 31-34 -----

#3 ...Be humble enough to ask for help.

- "How can I..." "Come help me." Great Humility.
- More interested in learning than looking good.

? How could this trait show up in your life?

Acts 8 v. 36 -----

#4 ...Quickly do whatever God wants him /her to do.

- Doesn't procrastinate but obeys immediately!

? How could this trait show up in your life?

NOTE: Mention that the eunuch was reading Isaiah 53 (from the Old Testament) as he traveled on his long journey. Explain to your student you will briefly look at the passage he was reading.

Read:

[Isaiah 53:7-8](#)

"⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her

shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken."

- One could assume that the Ethiopian continued to read from Isaiah after his encounter with Phillip and conversion to Christ. If this assumption is correct imagine how excited and honored this man must have been to discover the following text only a few pages ahead of where he had been reading.

Read:

Isaiah 56:4-5

"For this is what the LORD says:" To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant-- ⁵to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off."

- Though this eunuch may have felt that God had no plans for his life, the opposite was actually true. The Ethiopians' heart, his love for God allowed God to do the incredible things in his life that he had always wanted

Read:

Acts 17:26-27

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. ²⁴ "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him..."

Acts 17 v. 23-25 -----

? How could someone who was/is “very religious” not have a true relationship with God?

- By not knowing about the true God (god of our fathers = tradition)
- By not being willing to seek Him out.

Acts 17 v. 26-27 -----

? What did Paul think was the reason those in the Areopagus had been given the opportunity to hear his message?

- God wanted a relationship with them & was giving them an opportunity to seek Him.

NOTE: Paul did not think that his presence at the Athens was an accident or coincidence, he believed God arranged it!

? Why do you think that we met?

- God wants a relationship with you & is giving you an opportunity to seek and find him.

CLOSE

Close each Bible study by calling the student to a commitment and a challenge.

Commitment: Will you commit to seeking God “with all your heart”?

Challenge: Set the date and time to study again. _____?