

Program Transcripts

May 2022



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY®

SEARCH PROGRAMS

May 2022

Topics subject to change without notice

MAY 1 – A LESSON FROM JOB

Suffering has been a part of all our lives, and we wonder why God would allow this suffering to take place. God did not answer Job when he asked why, but Job did see a magnificent and wise God to whom he surrendered.

MAY 8 – WOMAN OF GOD

It's only right on a mother's day that we take a look at what it means to be a woman of God. The Bible speaks often of godly women, who loved the Lord and served Him. The Lord treasures and honors such women.

MAY 15 – GOD'S INSPIRED WORD

Some think the Bible is full of myths and fables. Is the Bible a human product or did it come from God? There are many good reasons to believe the Bible records real historical events, because the Bible came from God Himself.

MAY 22 – NOTHING CAN STOP JESUS

Though the resurrection of Christ may seem impossible to some, nothing could stop Jesus from rising from the dead. The Jewish and Roman officials couldn't, the grave clothes couldn't, and the soldiers couldn't. Nothing can stop Jesus.

MAY 29 – WORSHIP WITH THE CHURCH

The pandemic has kept many people at home from worship for more than a year. While most congregations are now assembling, many individuals are not assembling with them. Here are reasons to get back to worship at church.

"A Lesson from Job"

Suffering has been a part of all our lives, and we wonder why God would allow this suffering to take place. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Stay with us and we'll explore the problem of suffering.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. God's word opens the door to understanding the greatest questions of life. It teaches us where we came from, what our purpose in life is all about, and what will happen to us after we die. While we may never know why specific things happen, the Scriptures do give us a broader perspective on why we suffer at all. Some can hardly understand why things happen, but it helps to know that our suffering is not in vain and actually has some valuable benefits in life. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

For many months now we've suffered with the problems caused by COVID-19. While many of us have survived the virus, others have passed away, leaving their families in pain and sorrow. For many life doesn't seem fair. They wonder if God is picking on them. They wonder if God really loved them why He allows so much unexplained suffering. Obviously sin, crime, and war have brought much suffering. The sins of others and our own sins have caused much heartache. We also realize our own imperfections, weaknesses, and ignorance bring suffering. But this doesn't explain the natural disasters like hurricanes, tornados, fires, snow storms, and volcanoes. Nor does it give us reasons why diseases affect the innocent. So we ask why.

We ask why, but we don't always get an answer that will satisfy us now. Some things we'll never know in this lifetime. Perhaps a better question when we hurt is "What now?" What will we do to alleviate the pain? What will we do with our faith. After more than fifty years of preaching, I know that trusting God always helps. You can let suffering make you bitter or make you better. What you do matters!

We'll now worship in song, read from 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, and explore the question of suffering.

Our reading today comes from 2 Corinthians chapter 1 verses 3 to 7, and Paul gives people comfort and hope. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort." That's a reading that gives hope and help to those who are going through tough times.

Let's pray together. "Father we're thankful for the comfort You give to us each day. We're thankful for Your promises, for Your blessings, and for the hope we have of eternal life. Father, be with us and strengthen us, and help us always to do Your will. In Jesus Name, Amen."

Things happen to us all, and we don't know why. Some people assume God may be picking on them, but hard times and heartache come to us all. No one is exempt. Some folks suffer in silence, and we never know what heartaches and afflictions linger inside. When I preach, I remember that people have hurts, frustrations, temptations, weaknesses, and fears. They've come to worship God and to find strength, wisdom, comfort, and hope!

Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5:6 to 11, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to

devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you've suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who's called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Suffering does indeed come to us all, the righteous and the unrighteous. The Old Testament tells an ancient story of a man who loved God but endured great suffering. And his name is Job. Job feared God and turned away from evil, but that fact didn't keep him from heartache and physical pain. Though he was the greatest man of the East, he lost nearly everything in a single day. Soon after that he was afflicted with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. His wife and his friends became miserable comforters, blaming Job of sin that caused his suffering. Job, however, held fast to his integrity. Job wanted to face God and ask Him why this happened to him.

God never answered Job's question of why. Now we know so much more than Job knew. Job never knew of the discussion in the heavenly council, but we do. Job never understood Satan's false charge against God or the part that Job played in the dispute, but we can know. More than that, we know of Jesus, of his cross, of His forgiveness, and of heaven. We're blessed with a Bible and the church; Job never had either. And though we have so much more understanding than Job had, we may never fully discover the reason that some tragedy strikes us.

While God did not reveal an answer to Job, God did reveal himself in a whirlwind. Then the Lord said to Job in chapter 40, verses 1 to 2, "Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let him who reproves God answer it." God further says, "Now gird up your loins like a man; and I will ask you, and you (that is Job) you instruct me. Will you really annul my judgment? Will you condemn me that you may be justified?" (this is verses 7 and 8). When then God asked Job dozens of questions that Job couldn't answer. Job must have stood there dumbfounded until he grasped the unspeakable majesty and the wisdom of God.

At last Job responds in Job 42:2 to 6, "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." Later he says, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."

How easily we take God for granted. We would make Him like ourselves, with our limitations and faltering insight. We forget the height and depth and length and breadth of his wisdom. God doesn't need our counsel—we need his! Paul exclaimed:

"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and unfathomable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became his counselor? Or who has first given to him that it might be paid back to him again? For from him (that is God) and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:33 to 36). Job learned that God had considered matters far beyond our understanding, and there are matters greater than ourselves.

Job surrendered to God, who knows what we don't know and sees what we can't see. Job's God could see the end from the beginning, as Isaiah said in Isaiah 46 verses 8 to 10. Could Job have ever imagined that thousands of years later men would still be talking about his suffering and the righteousness of God? Could Job have known how much comfort others have gained through his faith and patience? Job surrendered to God's wisdom and sovereignty. And he learned that God is wise and capable in ways beyond our understanding. We think we must understand it all and understand it right now, when what we really need is to trust our Father.

It's quite human to question the will of God in times of pain; and even Jesus wished for His cup to pass, so He wouldn't suffer in Matthew 26:39. But in the end, Jesus surrendered to the will of the Father. And His ultimate prayer was, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done" (Verse 42). Now that wasn't easy for Him to pray, nor is it easy for us.

Nothing may fully satisfy our heartbreak at the time that we hurt most. Because we don't know why, we must have the faith to trust in God, who sees beyond the present. Paul said with confidence and faith, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Romans 8 and verse 18). God is able to take the most unpleasant present and turn it into an insignificant past. When we walk by faith in the promises of a loving God, the overwhelming pains of the present grow softer.

Now pain can lead us to fight against God. Let's face it: we want our way. Isaiah reminds us, "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). We don't like suffering and we can't see at the time any value in pain; but God's thoughts are not our thoughts and his ways not our ways (Isaiah 55 verses 8 and 9). We must learn to trust the wisdom of God to work things out. And just as God rewarded Job for his patience, so He'll keep his promises to us. Paul said, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8 verse 28). Pain and suffering are not good, but God can cause good to come out of them. God's dealings with Job give us hope. The good was not only his but ours as well. God's power is truly amazing.

Surrender to the Lord is an unconditional thing. Jeremiah said, "I know, O Lord, that a man's way's not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). We're not always content to surrender unconditionally. We reason that we'll surrender "if" or "when" God does what we want. Yet, we're in no position to negotiate with God or to call God into question. Job tried. When he faced God in the whirlwind, Job found he wasn't so wise and took back his charges against God.

Many people say much about God's unconditional love but they say little about the need for unconditional surrender. Jesus surrendered unconditionally to his suffering in the garden of Gethsemane. Unlike Job, Jesus knew why he was to face torture and the cross. And in agony He wept loudly in the garden (Hebrews 5 verse 7); His soul was deeply grieved to the point of death (Matthew 26:38). But in the end, however, he prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not as I will, but as you will". Jesus surrendered because of His love for His Father (John 14:31) and His love for you. We too must surrender in love and trust our will to the will of the Father, even when his will is a bitter cup. Had Jesus not willingly given His life as a sacrifice upon the cross, surely we all would remain in our sins. We may never know what good God does with our suffering, but we can trust him to do what is best.

The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had 14,000 sheep and 6,000 camels and a 1,000 yoke of oxen and a 1,000 female donkeys (Job 42 verse 12). God gave Job seven sons and three beautiful daughters; he lived another 140 years and died an old man full of days (Job 42:12 to 17). James said, "Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You've heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful" (James 5 verse 11). God restored Job's possessions twofold and gave him a marvelous family.

If I ever write a book on suffering, I will entitle it, The Last Chapter Has Not Been Written. So often we consider the moment of our suffering the whole story. In chapter 3, Job wished he'd never been born, wondered why he didn't die at birth, and questioned why the suffering are even allowed to live. In chapter 23, Job was ready to call God to account and present his arguments. In chapter 30, Job cried out to God but felt unanswered. Job couldn't understand the present or see his future like we do. He lived the tragedy and waited some time before chapter 42 became reality. We, too, must wait upon God. For some

the last chapter is not in this life. They stoned Stephen, beheaded James and also killed Paul, and crucified Peter according to tradition.

At the close of his life, Paul said in 2 Timothy 4 verses 6 to 8, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I've fought the good fight, I finished the course, I've kept the faith; and in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his appearing."

We need to remember Romans 8:35 to 39, which says, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we're being killed all the day long; we're regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we're more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Let's pray. "Father we're thankful that You love us through good times and bad, that You're always with us. And Father we're thankful for the promises and the hope that we have for the future, bless us and strengthen us, and help us everyday Father to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen."

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, endured rejection and pain during his entire ministry. He saw people reject the Lord's warnings and pleas to repent. He saw Jerusalem fall and Solomon's temple destroyed. He experienced one heartache after another. And in spite of it all he held fast to God. He wrote in Lamentations 3:22 to 24, "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

Not one of us is exempt from suffering. From the time of Adam and Eve when they sinned and left the Garden of Eden, we've had a world where suffering exists. Our physical bodies weren't meant to last forever; decline and death comes to us all. And after death comes judgment (Hebrews 9:27), and we must prepare our souls for the day that God calls for us. We must keep the faith, endure in hope, never stop loving God, and rejoice in our salvation. Peter observed that our faith, though tested by fire, is more precious than gold and results in the salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:6 to 9). For the faithful, the last chapter is always the best. What will your last chapter reveal? Will it be one of blessing, or will it be one of judgment?

If you wish to draw close to God, place your trust in Him, turn from sin to His ways and repent, confess Jesus Christ as God's Son, and be baptized into Christ. And when you're baptized, God will forgive you and wash away your sins (Acts 2:38). He'll make you His child (Galatians 3), and add you to His church (Acts chapter 2). Get right with the Lord today, because you don't want to be wrong with Him, you want to be able to give with Him forever.

Well, we'll be back next week, Lord willing. Remember to tell a friend about the program. And as always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.

"Woman of God"

It's only right on a day like today, that we take a look at what it means to be a woman of God. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." The Bible speaks often of godly women, and the Lord treasures them.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Lord God in the beginning created both man and woman and gave each one a precious soul. One can see in the four gospel accounts the important role that women had in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Women, both single and married, served the Lord and proved to be loyal and faithful disciples. We want to examine their commitment, hoping it will encourage our hearts to draw closer to God. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

After the Lord, my family is the most important thing in my life. Those who know me realize that I have been blessed with many females. I have a beautiful and godly wife, sweet Jackie, who is the mother of our four precious daughters. We also have twelve grandchildren. Now eleven of the twelve are girls, so I've been richly blessed. I've treasured each of my family members and wanted them to live as faithful Christians, devoted to God and His word. I've learned much as I watched them grow in faith and love. And one of the greatest blessings of my life has been to have these precious and godly people in my life.

What makes a woman become a woman of God? How is she different from other women in this world? King Lemuel in Proverbs 31 listened to the oracle that his mother taught him. Thankfully, there are many wise women from whom a man can learn much about women. I was pleased, my oldest daughter, Christa Bryant, wrote a book, *The Treasured Woman*, and gave several profiles of women in Scripture based on Proverbs 31. The Scriptures teach many valuable insights about women, and I'm grateful for the wisdom that comes from the women of God.

We'll now worship in song, read from Proverbs 31:25 to 31, and explore what it means to be a woman of God.

Our reading today comes from Proverbs 31:25 to 31. Proverbs 31 is the words of King Lemuel, and he talks about a description of a worthy woman. Verse 25, "Strength and dignity are her clothing,

And she smiles at the future.

She opens her mouth in wisdom,

And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

She looks well to the ways of her household,

And does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up and bless her;

Her husband also, and he praises her, saying:

'Many daughters have done nobly,

But you excel them all.'

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain.

But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

Give her the product of her hands

And let her works praise her in the gates." That's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray together.

"Father we're thankful for Godly women who love you and who live righteous lives and who teach their children well. Father we pray that we may honor them and that we may help them in every way. And Father help us to do Your will always. In Jesus name, Amen."

Godly women prove true and loyal to God and true to their families. Proverbs 31:10 to 12 says, "An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life." Men who find a godly woman finds blessings their whole lives. Proverbs 12 and verse 4 says, "An excellent wife is the crown of her

husband.” Godliness makes both men and women trustworthy people, who enjoy happy marriages. A godly woman is a faithful wife who seeks to please her husband. Godly wives seek for their husbands and their children to be godly as well.

Many women of ancient times devoted themselves to God. I think of Hannah, who had been childless for years and wept. 1 Samuel 1, verse 11 says that Hannah made a vow and said, “O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.” God granted Hannah’s request, and Hannah took her son, Samuel, to Eli the high priest and dedicated him to the Lord for as long as he lives.

Mary the mother of Jesus had a heart devoted to the will of God. And when the angel informed her when she was a virgin that she would conceive and bear a son who will be great and be called the Son of the Most High and sit upon David’s throne, she wondered, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said that the Holy Spirit would come upon you, and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. Mary replied, “Behold, the bond-slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1, verse 38). Godly people please the Lord and do His will.

Two unmarried sisters who loved God served Jesus during His earthly ministry; they’re Mary and Martha. Luke 10:38 to 40 says: Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.” While different in their own ways, both sisters loved the Lord and wanted to please Him.

Martha and Mary’s brother, Lazarus, you remember he died; and Jesus four days later came to Bethany to their home. Martha came out to meet Jesus, and John tells of their conversation. John 11:21 to 27 says: Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” And Martha said to him, “Well, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. And whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.” We too need faith in good times and in hard times. Martha had a strong faith in Jesus Christ, even when her heart was broken.

John 12:1 to 3 tells of Mary, the sister of Martha, and this was after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead: Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

Well when Judas and other disciples saw what she did, they objected and wondered why this perfume was not sold and then given to the poor, the money. Well the Lord Jesus responded to them in Matthew 26:10 to 13, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.” Mary knew how to thank and to bless the Lord Jesus at a time when He needed it.

I think of many women who gave of themselves in sacrificial and wonderful ways. When sweet Jackie and I had four little girls under the age of four, a kind lady named Doris Edwards, used to come and sit with our baby girls for a while just to give Jackie a break. As time passed, she took them to the farm and gave them her

amazing patience and love. Our girls loved “Edwards.” And Jackie and I will always remember her for her gracious and kind ways. She gave of herself and blessed our lives. Revelation 14:13 says, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.”

Another woman of God is a precious woman named Priscilla. She cared for the lost and served the church with her husband Aquila. Acts 18:24 to 26 says, “Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. And he had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.” Priscilla along with her husband Aquila were soul-winners. They wanted Apollos to know the way of the Lord more accurately. We need more soul-winners who will help those who don’t know the whole truth to learn about God.

We learn other facts about this husband and wife, Aquila and Priscilla. Romans 16:3 says, “Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well.” Now Prisca is short for Priscilla. And we don’t fully know what they went through, but we know that Paul spent time with them at Corinth and at Ephesus. Paul also mentions in 1 Corinthians 16:19, that “Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. Among his last records, and his last words in 2 Timothy 4:19, Paul told Timothy to greet Prisca and Aquila. This faithful couple won souls, protected Paul, and had the church meeting in their own home. No wonder they meant so much to God, to Paul, and to the early church.

Some women win their husbands and others to Christ by their godly lives. Others see their godly ways and want to imitate them. 1 Peter 3:1 to 4 says, “Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.”

Numerous mothers are mentioned, but special attention is given to a grandmother and a mother, Lois and Eunice. Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:3 to 5, “I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy. For I’m mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.” Where would we be without the faith dwelling in our parents. Since Timothy’s father was a Greek, he learned about God from his mother and his grandmother.

2 Timothy 3:14 to 15 explains even more, Paul says “But as for you, Timothy, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” Godly, Christian mothers teach us the fundamentals of life from the sacred Scriptures. From our parents we learn about God, about right and wrong, about respect, and about love. From the Scriptures we have a solid basis for our faith. The word of God is settled in heaven (Psalm 119:89) and endures forever. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24 verse 35, that “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

The greatest need of our day is godly Christian parents, who spiritually train their children in the Scriptures. The social problems of our time are great because many parents themselves are no longer following the teaching of God and, sadly, no longer spiritually training their children. Over the last few generations we’ve seen God and His moral teaching missing in the lives of millions of families. More than 63 million babies have been aborted in America since 1973. Two of every five children born in the United States are born to unmarried women. Drugs, violence, pornography, permissive sex outside marriage, and gender

confusion have led many to vilify the morals found in Scripture and turn away from organized religion. Some would rather hold to ungodly ways than to embrace the moral and spiritual wisdom of God.

Godly mothers and fathers, from the time their children come into this world, follow God's teaching and teach their children to follow God. When parents live lawlessly outside the teaching of God, they have little moral authority to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. When parents see little need for God in their lives, their children will follow in their steps and see no need for God at all. Mothers, you can't lead your children to a place where you're not going; you can't show them a lifestyle you don't live.

Our world needs godly women who will give themselves to the Lord, whether as single women, wives, or mothers. No matter who you are, turn to the Lord and follow Him all the days of your life. Never let anything keep you from serving Him from the heart. We also need godly fathers who will help raise their daughters to be pure and godly women. We must strive to serve the Lord Jesus from the heart.

Let's pray. "Heavenly Father help us to turn to You, to follow Your ways, to love You with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen."

Some women might say, "Well, I've done too many bad things in my life for God to want me." To you, I say, do you recall Rahab the harlot? Christa Bryant wrote, "She was a foreigner to God's people. She had nothing the Israelites wanted or envied. But she still believed in God and trusted His promises." Hebrews 11:31 says, "By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies." Matthew 1 verse 5 mentions Rahab as the wife of Salman and the mother of Boaz, who married Ruth, she was the great-great-grandmother of King David and recorded in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

You see God can transform sinners into saints. He can wash transgressors and make them holy and righteous. God can forgive our past and give us a rebirth with a future. The Lord Jesus in John 4 offered the Samaritan woman at the well, a woman who had married five times and was then living with a man, that she could have living water, a "well of water springing up to eternal life." He gave her hope and told her God the Father is seeking worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. Your past doesn't have to determine your future. You can change.

To become a Christian, love the Lord Jesus and trust in Him. Turn from wicked ways and follow His teaching. Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water. You're buried and raised with Jesus Christ, united with Him in His death and His resurrection. And then you become a child of God, added to the church (Romans 6:3-7 and Galatians 3:26 to 27). Why not do it today!

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everyone needs a church family. And there's probably a church of Christ near you. Now if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We want you to have friends there and to be part of that congregation. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.

"God's Inspired Word"

Some think this book, the Bible, is full of myths and fables. Is the Bible a human product or did it come from God? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." Today we're going to explore the concept of God's inspired Word. Stay with us.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's Holy Word for the Lord's Way. The Bible is more than just another book; it's the Divine Word of God. No other book in all of history is like it. It contains the greatest hope and the greatest message of all time. The Bible blesses and improves life wherever it goes. Without the Word of God, our lives would be empty, darkened, and futile. We need God's Holy Word. And that's why we study it each week. We've always been delighted to spend this time with you. And we hope you'll make us a part of your life each week.

Some people think the Bible was written to another culture in another age and says little or nothing to us today. They think it has no relevance to us and deny it has any authority over our lives. Some think the Bible is merely a sentimental book of old stories and myths. They believe its concepts of sin and righteousness are out-of-date. Some today are ready to discard the Bible altogether.

But, what if the Bible is divinely inspired? What if it gives us the spiritual truth and the moral guidance that we need? And what if it is authoritative and has the standard by which God will one day judge us? If the Bible is indeed God's word, it contains a message that we must know. It has a history that affects us. It has a message that will make a profound difference in how we see ourselves, our world, and our Lord. Now this is easily the most important question of our day. Can we put our trust in the Word of God? So...what proof do we have that the Bible is from God? Well we're going to take some time today looking into God's Word to see its nature and its proofs.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from 2 Timothy 3:16 to 17, and we'll explore the idea of the Bible as God's inspired Word.

Our reading today comes from 2 Timothy 3, verses 16 and 17, and there the Apostle Paul is encouraging Timothy to give himself to the scriptures and he reminds him why. He says in verses 16 and 17, "All Scripture is (given by inspiration, or) inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

That's the way the Bible is, it gives us all that we need to know for life and Godliness. Let's pray together. "Father we're thankful for Your Word that is able to do so many things in our lives, to teach us, to reprove and correct us, and to train us to do what's right. Help us to always do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen."

The Bible points to God as its source. The apostle Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:20 to 21, "knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." Peter is saying that no person made up the Bible and put it into its own interpretation. Men of God spoke or wrote these words as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Should you hear me say that Paul or Peter or James or John or any of the other writers of the Bible said something, let me be clear: God was behind the writing of it! The Bible carries with it the authority of God.

Paul said clearly in 2 Timothy 3:16 to 17, that "All Scripture is breathed out (inspired) by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent (that is adequate), equipped for every (every) good work." God breathed out Scripture. Its source is first and foremost in Him, God inspired the writing of every Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. God gave us the Word to train and equip Christians to do every good work. The Bible

equips us for doing good works by teaching us, reproofing us (that is, telling us what's wrong), correcting us by showing what's right, and training us in righteousness. God's word has an undeniable power to change people's lives.

On another occasion Paul declared, that "If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I'm writing to you are a command of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37). Paul said he was speaking at the commandment of the Lord Jesus. And his writings were not his own, but the Lord Jesus was behind them, and those who read them needed to obey them. The power of the Bible is not that it's just a good book or a wise book or a classic. The power of God's word arises from the fact that it is from God.

King David, who was also a prophet, said in 2 Samuel 23, verses 1 and 2, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and his word was on my tongue." Now David was saying that his words were not his own but the Lord spoke in and through him. Paul explained in 1 Corinthians 2:12 to 13, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words." The Bible reveals that God's words and thoughts are His.

And so, the Bible uses phrases like, "Thus says the Lord," or "God spoke," or "The Lord testified." And those phrases can be found some 3800 times. In Jeremiah 1 verse 9 God tells Jeremiah, "I have put my words in your mouth." And even Jesus gives God the Father credit for His words. The Lord said in John 12:49 to 50, "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; and therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me." Now this is why Jesus holds His words and His teaching to be authoritative and why that word will judge us in the last day.

Now someone says at this point, "Phil, just because the Bible claims to be inspired doesn't mean it's divine. Many books claim to be inspired but are human products. What proof do you have that the Bible is inspired? Surely you don't believe in Adam and Eve, some might say, or believe in Noah and the Flood, or Jonah being swallowed by the fish as actual historical events?" Well these are important questions, and yes I do believe in these historical accounts recorded in the Bible. There is indeed evidence supporting the inspiration and divine character of the Bible, and you should know why I believe.

Well let's talk about the evidences for the Bible. First, the Bible provides many prophecies about Christ and about other matters as well. God has made a test in Deuteronomy 18:18 to 21 for us to know if the message has come from Him. He said, "I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words, which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And you may say in your heart, 'Well how shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?' Well, when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing, which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Now only God knows the future; and many who pretend to know do not know at all. God said in Isaiah 46:8 to 10, "Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.'"

In all the writings of Buddha, Confucius or Lao-tse, there's not one single predicted prophecy. In the Koran (that is the Islamic writings of Mohammed) there is one instance of a specific prophecy, a self-fulfilling prophecy, that Muhammad would return to Mecca. Well he did; but this is quite different from the prophecy of Jesus that He would return from the grave. Muhammad could easily go back to Mecca on his own ability, but it takes God for one to come back from the grave.

Modern so-called prophets like Jean Dixon, who was famous, make some clever guesses; but do they come true as the Bible prophecies do? In 1952, 1956, and 1960 Dixon prophesied who would be the presidential candidate in each major party and who would be elected President of the United States. Well how did she do? Well she missed every candidate and every election. By the test of Deuteronomy 18, we have presumptuous people not prophets.

Historians know how difficult it is to predict the future, because the events of life turn on so many "ifs." Ecclesiastes 7 and verse 14 says, "In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider—God has made the one as well as the other, So that man may not discover anything that will be after him." The Bible further says in Ecclesiastes 9 and verse 11, "I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability; for time and chance overtake them all." We don't know and can't know the future as humans. We don't even know our own future on this earth. We must depend upon God and his Word to tell us, and His grace to allow us to live.

When I consider the number of prophecies and how specific those prophecies are, it seems clear the Bible does indeed come from God. Some scholars say there are more than 300 prophecies in the Old Testament. Now these prophecies cover much of the life of Jesus, and about many other facts. Many of the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled were totally beyond the power of human control, such as: (1) the place of birth in Bethlehem, (2) the time of his birth in the kingdom of the Romans, (3) the manner of His birth by a virgin woman, (4) his betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, (5) the manner of death in crucifixion, (6) people's reactions at his death, (7) the piercing of his body, and (8) His burial with the rich. Now as you read the prophecies, you can't help but marvel at God's ability to see the future and how He inspired these prophets.

Now concerning these eight prophecies I just mentioned, Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks* estimated the probability of anyone fulfilling all of them is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That would be 1 in 100 quintillion, seventeen zeros after the one. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates by supposing that we take 10 to the seventeenth power, that number of silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and then you stir the whole mess of dollars, all the mass of them thoroughly, all over the state. And then you blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes anywhere he wants, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one?

I tell you, only God could have made these prophecies, and only God could have fulfilled these prophecies in one person. God was giving us evidence that Jesus is truly His Son. Christ viewed Scripture, all Scripture, as utterly true and trustworthy; and so should we. Our attitude toward the Scriptures shows our attitude toward Christ. We can count of the words of the Bible, we can count them as inspired, we can count them as infallible, and we can know that they are authoritative, because they come from God. For Jesus nothing could break the Scripture, nothing could change it, nothing could be added to it, or taken from it. He claimed that it would last forever.

Several times Jesus built His whole teaching on a single word or phrase of Scripture. Surely this indicates the importance of studying every word of Scripture carefully, for every word is sacred. Christ

considered the word of God to be authoritative. Thus, when we read the Bible Jesus knew that it is God who is speaking to us! And we should read this Word carefully, and consider its message, we should live by its teaching, and share it with others.

Hebrews 2:1 to 4 says, "Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect so great of a salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will." The message declared to us "proved reliable." And we should not doubt the truthfulness of God's Word. God spoke the truth to us, and for that reason we must pay much closer attention.

The Holy Spirit confirmed the teaching of Jesus by the signs and wonders that He and His disciples performed. The Holy Spirit proved the message to be "reliable." If we fail to listen to that word, we will neglect our great salvation purchased by the blood of Jesus. When you reject the Lord Jesus, you're also rejecting the forgiveness He offers. You're turning down your salvation and the promise of eternal life in heaven.

When you stop paying attention to the Bible, when you ignore Christ, when you leave the church, and live an immoral life, you're only hurting yourself. You're saying the cross doesn't mean anything to you. You're risking your soul. You can't say no to the Bible and at the same time say yes to Jesus. When you reject the gospel of Christ, you're rejecting Christ himself. Oh, build your house on the rock by hearing and obeying the words of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray together. "Father we're thankful that Your word is trustworthy and true. Father help us to put our trust in You and in Your word, and to follow You, and to do Your will always. May our love for You grow more and more, as we see all of Your blessing. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen."

The gospel saves us, but it also trains us to be God's people. The Bible gives us the mind of Christ. And it sets the example for us in how to think, to love, to live, to speak, and to serve. When God's Word touches our lives, we're enriched in every way. God uses His Word to reshape our lives, so that we may be conformed to the image of Christ. When people study and meditate on the Word of God, it transforms them from being ungodly to living godly, from selfishness to service, and from being agnostics to becoming believers. Believe and live your faith!

When Christians fail to listen to the Word, they fall away from Christ. The New Testament tells of Christians who had become dull of hearing and allowed sin back into their lives. I hope you haven't done that or haven't become a non-practicing Christian or a Christian in name only. We must stop drifting away from God; we must return to Him. The Lord's message of the cross and the resurrection matters! It's the source of our life, our hope, and our future with God.

Now if you're not yet a Christian, believe in Jesus Christ with all your heart, turn away from anything sinful, confess Him before others, and be baptized. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Now when you obey the gospel of Christ, God forgives your sins and adds you to his family, the church. Now stay faithful to the Lord. And don't let anything stand in the way of serving Him.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And there's probably a church of Christ near you. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.

"Nothing Can Stop Jesus"

The Scriptures teach nothing is impossible with God, and that's true! Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Yes, the things that seem impossible are not impossible to God. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We know God's word never fails, because God Himself never fails. Skeptics may question and doubters may doubt; but God's word is settled in heaven (Psalm 119:89) and cannot be broken (John 10 verse 35). Things impossible with men are possible with God. And God is able to do more than we ask or think. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

My preacher friend Paul Shero of San Angelo, Texas tells the story of his four-year-old grandson wanting to look through the scope of his hunting rifle. When his grandfather asked why, the boy replied he wanted to see the cross in the scope. The little boy saw what he was looking for and then explained the crosshairs in the scope reminded him of the cross of Jesus Christ. The grandson told his grandfather the story of Jesus' suffering at his trials, his scourging, and the tragic death of Jesus upon the cross. Paul Shero, seeing the pure heart of his innocent grandson and remembering what the Lord Jesus suffered felt tears fall down his cheek. Paul called for his wife to hear what the grandson told him. The tender love of a four-year-old boy for a dying Savior touched her heart, and she too shed tears.

The little boy seeing them weeping did not fully understand the heartfelt commitment of lifelong servants of God; he didn't understand the heart of grandparents who see their grandchildren know the Lord. What happened next surprised and delighted them. The little boy wanted to comfort them. And so he said, "Don't cry; He's alive! Nothing can stop Jesus!" Of course, the grandparents knew Jesus had arisen; but the reminder from a grandchild encouraged their hearts. Parents who teach their children the glorious gospel can find hope.

We'll now worship in song, read from Matthew 28, 1 to 7, and see how nothing could stop Jesus.

Our scripture reading today comes from the gospel according to Matthew chapter 28, verses 1 through 7, speaking of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. "Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." Oh what a marvelous thing, Jesus arose from the dead, just as He said.

Let's pray. "Father we're thankful for the gospel message which gives us hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And Father we pray that we may set our hearts upon serving You, and enjoying the hope that You have given to us, of one day being able to rise from the dead ourselves. Bless us and be with us, and help us to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen."

Jesus predicted both His death and His resurrection. Matthew 20:17 to 19 says, that "As Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up.'"

What Jesus told the twelve disciples that day was to confirm what had already been spoken through the prophets of old. We know from the prophets that Jesus was to die for the sins of His people. Isaiah 53:4-6 says, "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the

chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” We also know from David’s prophecy in Psalm 22:16 that they would pierce his hands and feet. The prophets clearly proclaim the Lord Jesus was also to rise from the dead. In Acts 2 verse 29 to 32, you remember that Peter declared this on the day of Pentecost: “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.” Now Peter is here quoting from Psalm 16 verse 10.

Predicting a bodily resurrection from the dead was quite bold! If Jesus failed to rise on the third day as He predicted, we probably would never have heard of Him; and there would never have been a church. The testimony of the angel, the women, and the apostles argue that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead. The fact that the doubting apostles were convinced of His resurrection and willing to suffer for their faith is undeniable. Now these facts reveal that Jesus overcame death, just as He predicted. What’s interesting in our study are the number of things that caused the death of Jesus and wanted to keep Him in the tomb.

First, the officials of the Jews and Romans couldn’t stop Him. After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the Jewish officials regarded Him as a threat to their place and their nation and planned together to kill Him (John 11:53). After they arrested Him at the garden of Gethsemane, they illegally tried and condemned Him. Because the Jews did not have the power to execute Him, they brought Him before Pilate. Pilate more than once proclaimed that he found no guilt in Jesus worthy of death, and even tried to release Him. The Jews, however, continued to insist on His death until Pilate handed Him over to be crucified. The Romans scourged and crucified Him. After his death, a Roman soldier “pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out (John 19:34). There can be no doubt the efforts of the Jews and Romans caused the death of Jesus. They wanted to destroy Him and keep Him from building His kingdom, the church. But nothing could stop Jesus!

Second, the crucifixion of Jesus couldn’t stop Him from coming back to life or building His church. When Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Lord Jesus replied to Matthew in Matthew 16 verse 18, “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.” Now Hades is that place where departed spirits go at death. In Acts 2 and verse 27 reminds us that the soul of Jesus was not abandoned to Hades, neither did He undergo decay. Now death and Hades did not prevent His resurrection. God raised Him up! Nothing could stop Jesus.

Third, the grave clothes that wrapped the body of Jesus couldn’t hold Him. Mark 15:42 to 46 says that “When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and he went in before Pilate, and he asked for the body of Jesus. Well, Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.” Well, Matthew 27:60 describes the stone as a “very large stone.” It would take several men to move that stone back out of its place.

John 19, verses 39 to 40, says that “Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound Him in the linen wrappings with spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.” The body of Jesus was bound up with linen wrappings and a lot of myrrh and aloes. The myrrh and aloes would be spread on and between the wrappings to kind of form a seal from the outside. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany, you

remember he “came forth bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped with a cloth” (John 11:44). Now others were told to unbind him from the wrappings.

John 20, verses 1-9 says, “Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “Well, they have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve laid Him.” So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; and stooping looked in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he didn’t go in.

“And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed. For as yet they didn’t understand the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead.” The wrappings and the folded face-cloth that bound Jesus were left in the tomb. Jesus left them there, because He no longer needed them; He was no longer dead. Some say the disciples stole the body of Jesus, but we wonder why the disciples would leave the grave-clothes. I tell you, nothing can stop Jesus.

Fourth, the tomb of Jesus couldn’t hold Him. The Lord Jesus was buried in a new tomb, a new tomb in which no one before had ever been buried. The tombs of ancient Judea were often cut from a hillside made of limestone. They were made to hold several family members. The large stone covered the door to a cave-like structure cut out from the rock. And they would have a place where a new body could be laid down, the place where they could clean and prepare the body. And this body would usually lay in place for a year or so until the body was only a skeleton. At which time the family would move the large stone, enter the tomb, move the bones to another place in the tomb, and prepare the place where the body laid for another when the time came.

Now the Jews condemned Him, because He was authentically able to work miracles and became a threat to their power. Once He was dead, they didn’t want anything to challenge them from beyond the grave. And they thought by turning Him over to be crucified and keeping Him in the tomb, they could triumph and the threat of His being the Messiah would simply go away. And so they took extraordinary measures to end any support to the One who claimed to be the Son of God. They wanted to demoralize the disciples; but they failed.

Matthew 27:62 to 66 describes how the Jews determined to keep the body of Jesus in His tomb until the third day. They knew that He raised Lazarus from the dead just days before, and they took His prophecy seriously. They feared the disciples might steal the body and claim that He arose. And so Matthew wrote: The next day, that is, the day after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.” So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

Now the Jewish leaders were taking no chances; they asked Pilate for a guard. And the guards were there specifically to keep anyone from disturbing the grave. The guard at the tomb and the seal of the governor is strong evidence. The location of the tomb would have been evident to all, because of the guard and the Pilate’s seal. And we shouldn’t imagine that the guards were weak or incompetent. Since they knew His prophecies about rising on the third day, they only needed to protect the tomb until the third day. Pilate said again, “make it as secure as you know how,” suggesting the number of guards would have been strong enough to stop any threat from the disciples. They wanted maximum security and a guarantee that nothing would disturb the tomb. Well, a normal Roman guard would have about sixteen soldiers. Now Roman soldiers were

well-known for their discipline. The penalty for negligence while on duty (that is falling asleep or abandoning their post) was execution.

The Romans also secured the tomb with the governor's seal. Now to break the seal was a criminal offense against Rome, carrying harsh penalty. They sealed the stones in the presence of the Roman guards who were left in charge. They sealed the tomb to prevent anybody from tampering with the contents. The guards would inspect the tomb, roll the heavy stone into place, and stretch a cord across that stone. And they fastened the cord at either end with a sealing clay or wax, and stamped both packs with the official signet of the Roman government. Now, Craig Keener a scholar notes, "Sealing the stone made it impossible for anyone to enter the tomb while the guards slept and then replace the stone." Now any unauthorized persons who broke the seal defied the authority of Rome and could be punished by death. Guards and governor's seals though were not strong enough to stop Jesus. God raised Him up! Nothing can stop Jesus!

Let's pray. "Father we're thankful for the many evidences we have of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that nothing could stop Him. And Father we are grateful for the hope that that gives us. Help us to live with faith and trust. In Jesus name, Amen."

If nothing could stop Jesus from rising from the dead, nothing can stop Jesus from keeping His promises. He promises to save those who trust and obey Him. Hebrews 5:8 to 9 says, "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." The Lord is looking for people who will follow Him and say, "Your will be done!"

He promises to come again and raise the dead. The Lord Jesus said in John 5:28 to 29, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, and those who committed evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." Yes, our bodies will one day come forth from the grave and He will give us eternal life, if we do what is right.

We can believe the risen Lord, and we must believe Him! With our trust, we must repent of our sins and take up our crosses to follow the Lord Jesus. We must confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and we must be baptized into Christ. The Lord Jesus said you must be born again (John 3 and verse 7), and being born again means being born of water and the Spirit (John 3 and verse 5). Now that's a reference to baptism in water. When the people at Pentecost were baptized they were forgiven of sin and added to the Lord's church (Acts 2:38 to 41, and verse 47). Now baptism is the time when sins are washed away (Acts 22 verse 16). And baptism is when we become children of God (Galatians 3:26 and 27). Now I hope you'll take these promises seriously and become a child of God.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everyone needs a church family. And there's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word, and tell a friend about this program, tell them you're watching. And as always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.

"Worship with the Church"

The Lord Jesus purchased the church with His own blood, because He loves people. But many today think church is unimportant. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a bible study In Search of the Lord's Way. Let's find out what God says about worshipping with a church.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way, where we search the Scriptures to find the Lord's way to be saved and to live the Christian life. Thanks so very much for spending this time with us. We love knowing that you're watching or listening. And we want to be a part of your life each week.

Pew Forum researchers say nearly 60 million adults in America identify themselves as having no affiliation with religion. In all there are nearly 100 million Americans who are "unchurched," that is, they haven't been to church in quite a while. Even though they're not going now, most of the unchurched used to go to church. Many folks feel that you can be a good Christian and not associate with any congregation. The Bible, however, places a high priority on active membership in church.

In Psalm 122 David sang, I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" David and others would sing this song as they were walking up to Jerusalem to observe the feast. It was a psalm of ascent. Many people would walk for days to worship God. They had no car or chariot, but they wanted to be in the temple in the presence of God.

When brothers and sisters in Christ assemble for worship, they're also meeting with God and with Christ. The church belongs to the Lord; it's His family. Of course, the Lord wants to meet with every member of his family regularly. He loves each of you. And when you stop coming to church, the Lord and His people miss you. We're here to encourage you to live the Lord's way.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Hebrews 10:22 to 25, and explore the need to be an active at church.

Our reading today comes from Hebrews chapter 10, verses 22 to 25. "Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Here, the Hebrew writer is encouraging us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

Let's pray together. "Oh Father, we're thankful that You have been faithful, that Your love is everlasting. Father help us to be committed to You always, to stay faithful, and to never forsake being with You. In Jesus name, Amen."

Recent studies say that large numbers of young adults have stopped attending church. Some find church boring or irrelevant. Some say the church is full of hypocrites or filled with judgmental people. Some don't feel as connected as they would like, and others say they're just too busy to go to church. Life can certainly become difficult, but attending and participating in church offers an amazing opportunity to find spiritual strength and help with the most difficult tasks of life. I want to spend some time responding to some of the objections people give for not going to church.

First, they say there are hypocrites at church. A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be something that he doesn't intend to be. Yes, there are some pretenders at church; but most people come to church because they love God and want to live good lives. Christians are sometimes weak; everyone sins; but that doesn't mean that they're pretenders or actors. It means they're human. Jesus told the apostles at the garden of Gethsemane, that "the spirit is indeed willing but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41); and you know that's still true of people today.

Think with me: before we start pointing fingers at others, perhaps we should look at our own lives. Do you really want to let someone else's behavior separate you from God? It seems much wiser to let God deal with

the hypocrites and to make sure that we remain right with God. The Lord Jesus had to deal with hypocritical Pharisees during His entire ministry, but He never let their hypocrisy keep Him from doing what was right! He kept right on teaching and preaching in the synagogues and loving people. Don't let someone else's sin infect your heart and turn you away from God.

Second, church is boring or is irrelevant, some say. When people use the word "boring," they're describing their perspective or attitude. Any activity can be boring or exciting, depending on the attitude of the person speaking. People usually get out of worship what they put into it.

Give me the Word of God to nourish my soul. David describes the "law of the Lord" in Psalm 19, verse 10 as, "More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb." Now this inspired psalmist was speaking about the Law of the Old Testament, which can be found in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. He found them desirable, valuable, and sweeter than honey. He found them so important because they were meaningful to him.

My friend, the Word of God should be meaningful to you. It will teach you where you came from, why you're here, and where you're going after this life is over. The Bible has the words of eternal life (John 12, verse 50) and the truth that sets you free (John 8 verse 32). The gospel is the message of grace, hope, peace, and love. It will teach you how to live victoriously in this life and how to face God on the Day of Judgment with confidence. The Bible is God's message of love and truth. It will teach you how to avoid the pitfalls of life and will give you purpose and direction. As the Divine book, the Bible will open the Lord's will for your life. And a sincere study of God's Word can never be boring to one who wants to know and to please God.

Third, some say that the people at church are judgmental. It may seem that way, but I want you to think with me. Actually, people everywhere are "judgmental." Have you ever been to a ball game where an umpire made a controversial call? Well everyone gets excited about the call. Was he "in" or was he "out"? One group thinks the referee is blind, while the other group defends him. Conservatives judge liberals, and liberals judge them right back. Everyone makes judgments. And one of the great ironies of our time is the way people view judging. It goes like this: well I can judge you, but don't you judge me!

As for judging, the real basis for making judgments about right and wrong is still God's Holy Word. The Lord Jesus said in John 7:24, "Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." Now if God calls something sin, it's sin whether we agree with God or not. God knows His will, and He only calls things sinful because they are evil or hurtful. God said through the prophet Isaiah, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5 and verse 20).

Now the people at church love others enough to tell them the truth about sin. That's not being "judgmental"; it's being kind. Sin will cause a person to lose his soul. Romans 6:23 says, "the wages of sin is death." Now if I care about your soul, I'll talk about sin and salvation. Now I don't say this to be hateful, but because I know how dangerous sin is to your soul. If I didn't care about you, I'd simply ignore the subject of sin and let you bear your consequences. I'd tell you sin is "no big deal"; "there's nothing to worry about!" I tell you, to remain silent about sin or to lie about sin is cruel, cruel, cruel, and very uncaring. Telling people the truth about sin is kind. Don't be so quick to judge your neighbor at church.

Fourth, someone says I'm so busy I don't have time for church. When I hear people say this, I find it's usually an excuse. Most people can determine their priorities and their schedules. If you're too busy to add God to your schedule, just remember one day time will be no more. God will require your soul of you, and you'll wish you could go back in time to change things.

The Lord Jesus knew people would be busy making a living and needing food and clothes and shelter. The Lord said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Putting the Lord first means spending time with Him and His family. We're going to be at church, and you're going to worship and to serve Him because You love Him.

The Bible says in James 4:13 to 17: "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we'll go to such and such a city, and we'll spend a year there and engage in business and will make a profit.' Yet you don't know what your life will be like tomorrow. You're just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. And instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.' But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin." My friend, the right thing to do is to attend worship with a church.

Fifth, some say, "Well I don't feel connected." Well some folks find it hard to make friends at church the way that they would like. The best way to make friends is to be a friend. Proverbs 18 verse 24 says, that "A man that has friends must show himself friendly." If you come to church, and you late and then you leave as soon as the final "amen" is said, you'll probably never make as many friends at church as you'd like. Instead of waiting until everyone comes to you, you reach out to others. Get involved at church in some good work. Learn people's names. Attend Bible classes. Volunteer.

People say they aren't as close to God as they used to be. Well we ask the question, "Who moved?" Did God leave you or did you leave God? People can easily drift away from God and the church. The Bible says in Hebrews 2, and verse 1, that "we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it." You know it's easy to allow the world and its ways to cause our love for God and His church to grow weak. And I hope that you haven't done that.

Through the years I've grown close to a number of people who came back to church after being absent for a long time. They were always so glad they came back. From the time that they left they felt empty and distant from God. They were miserable and spiritually unfulfilled without Him and they needed to find their way home.

When people return to church, they find that they grow closer to God. The Lord wishes all people "might grope for Him and find Him, though He's not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our very being" (Acts 17:27 to 28). God is the Father of your spirit (Hebrews 12, verse 9). And He created you and has heard your prayers all your life. God gave His Son Jesus for your sins because He loves you. He gave you the Bible so that you might know Him and love Him. And church will help you know Him even better.

When people return to church, they find that they improve their personal understanding of what the Bible teaches. The Word of God is an amazing book filled with hope and truth. And a lifetime is not enough to know everything the Bible teaches, but many people waste their minds on everything else, but this great treasure of spiritual knowledge found in the word of God.. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2 and verse 15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth." If you want to know God's Word better, attend Bible classes and worship at church.

When people return to church, they find help in the religious training of their children. Now raising children in our society, that's nearly a pagan society is really tough, and parents need all the help they can get. The church provides an environment where people want to serve the Lord and to live righteous lives. Now churches provide moral and spiritual examples that make a lasting impact on young lives. And every child needs a church family. Churches provide Bible classes, camps, retreats, and youth gatherings with opportunities to be around other Christian young people.

When people return to church, they discover ways of handling daily challenges better than before. The Bible says in 1 Peter 5 and verse 7, "casting all your anxieties (all you little worries) on him, because he cares for you." Now at church you can pray with brothers and sisters in Christ and learn from the Bible how the faithful people of the Bible dealt with their problems. I've found people at church are "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another" (Romans 15 and verse 14).

Now Christians everywhere face struggles. They've found the comfort of God and are able to comfort others and help them through their struggles. The apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 1:3 to 4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all

our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

The church is a blessing to us all. The Bible says in Ecclesiastes 4:9 to 12, that “Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if we lie down together, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.” The church can keep you spiritually strong, able to resist all the temptations and pitfalls of life. My friend, you need the church. And if you’ve wondered away, come home.

Let’s pray together. “Father, we’re thankful that You have given us the church Your kingdom, Your family, a temple. And Father we’re thankful that we can be a part of it, and to be Your children. Help us to be faithful to you. In Jesus name, Amen.”

Hebrews 10:24 to 25 says, “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking (now forsaking is not missing, but quitting), not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Church is where people build each other up spiritually and grow close to God. We all need that strength and encouragement that comes from being around the people of God.

Occasionally I hear of someone who’s had a bad experience at church. Someone has offended them or overlooked them. They react to this disappointment by quitting the church. Now if someone wrongs you, rather than quitting the church or quitting the Lord, why not try a different approach. The Lord said in Matthew 18:15, that “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. And if he listens to you, you’ve gained your brother.” This is the Lord’s way.

When you quit church, you’re actually letting something come between you and God. When you push Christ out of your life, you also put your soul in jeopardy. Listen again to Hebrews 10:25 and then 26, “not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.” My friend, don’t push the Savior out of your life. Who else will shed His blood to save you?

Now God wants to bless you. And if you’re not yet a Christian, come to the Lord in faith and come with love by repenting of your sins, confessing the name of the Lord, and by being baptized. Now in baptism the Lord will wash away your sins and adds you to the church. It could be as a Christian you’ve become one of the unchurched. Come back to the Lord, come back to His church. Don’t let your heart grow hard. Come back and find the love of God, and be right with Him.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God today by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And there’s probably a church of Christ in your area. And if you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll be happy to help you find one. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God’s Word with us and tell a friend about this program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.