

Lest We Drift Away
Seeking God
by Hendrik Joubert

In **Hebrews 11:6** we learn that ***without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*** This statement powerfully demonstrates that man is *not* justified merely by believing in God as it illuminates the role faith plays in his salvation. This fact is then illustrated in the lives of the individuals listed. Using the definition of faith in **Hebrews 11:1**; being *convinced* of God, whom he has not seen, and being sure of the rewards hoped for, it becomes the motivating power behind the effort to seek God, and to seek Him *diligently*.

What does it mean to seek God? To seek God is to seek His counsel in order to please Him. When God revealed the plans for the ***ark of the Lord***, it included specific details making it obvious that it was to be carried upon the shoulders by the Levites. (**Exodus 25:9-22; Numbers 7:1-9**) At one time the ark was captured by the Philistines, but after they suffered God's punishment they decided to return it to Israel. Because they considered it a serious matter they sought the counsel of their priests and diviners to learn how they were to return it. Their advice was: ***Now therefore, make a new cart, take two milk cows which have never been yoked, and hitch the cows to the cart; and take their calves home, away from them.*** (**1Samuel 6:7**)

When David had the privilege of moving the ark into the place prepared for it, he decided to use the same counsel. They rejoiced before the Lord as they went along until the oxen stumbled and Uzzah reached out towards the ark. He was struck dead. David was upset because God killed Uzzah, but he was also afraid of God and arranged for the ark to remain in the house of Obed-Gittem, where it stayed for three months. (**1Samuel 6:1-11**)

When he decided to move it the second time he gave the following instruction: ***Then David said, "No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever."*** (**1Chronicles 15:2**) And in verse 13 he adds: ***"Because you did not carry it at the first, the LORD our God made an outburst on us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance."***

Notice the phrase ***for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance.*** Because salvation is as a result of God's grace many fail to consider this principle, that seeking God means that we entreat Him for His favor in the way He determined for us to. Before we call His Name over anything we do, we need to make sure that it is what God *counseled* us to do. (**Colossians 3:17**) We may do things jubilantly, as David and the people did, however if we do not seek God according to the ordinance revealed in the New Testament of Christ, we will fail as they did because they ignored the Old Covenant.

Consider what is said of the Grace of God: ***For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,...*** (Titus 2:11-12) The gospel, God's message of grace, is the counsel of God on how to be saved. When we seek *Him*, we need to demonstrate that by following His counsel without change.

What does it mean to be *diligent* in our seeking of God? Notice the inspired advice David gave Solomon: ***"As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.*** (1Chronicles 28:9)

The Lord is able to look into our hearts to see the very motives by which we do things. Approaching Him in a legalistic way, checking off what we were instructed to do, does not reflect a proper understanding of the seriousness of our sins and the great love with which He loved us. On the other hand, if we ignore the graciously simple things He commanded for us to do in seeking forgiveness, such as being baptized for the remission of sins, we fail to seek His counsel. Sinners need to obey from the heart the doctrine delivered, and live accordingly. (**Romans 6:17-18**)

Now consider the phrase ***He will let you find Him***, as we noticed in the advice of David. This suggests that God will allow Himself to be found by some, but not by others. We have already noticed the reasons. When we seek Him from impure motives, or when we seek His favor by doing what men direct us to, we will not find Him. (**Matthew 15:9, 2John 9**)