

## Study 15 - A Passion to Seek God's Presence II

“Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house, and the place where Your glory dwells.” (Psalm 26:8)

### Study Questions

... Continuation from last week:

#### Part III: Paul's Intense Desires for Intimacy with Christ

What did Paul desire to know? (Philippians 3:10)

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(a) What did Paul consider to be loss compared to the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord? (Philippians 3:8a)

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(b) What reason did he give for counting these things “as rubbish”? Complete the following: Verses 8b – 9a: “...[I] count them as rubbish, \_\_\_\_\_.”

Paul showed his longing for the return of Jesus Christ, and for being in His presence, by the statements he made in relation to Christ's coming. Complete the following:

Philippians 3:20b: “... we also \_\_\_\_\_ for the saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 Timothy 4:8b: “... to all who have \_\_\_\_\_.”

#### REFLECTIONS ON KNOWING GOD

In the original languages of the Bible, there are several words that were used for the verb “to know.” Gnosis – a Greek word that indicates experimental knowledge or knowledge acquired by practice or experience; at the personal level, it refers to having intimacy with another individual or knowing that person intimately. Yada—a Hebrew word that means to have intimate knowledge of or to know someone at the intimate level. The will of God is for every believer to have experiences of Him—intimate, face-to-face encounters with Him. What Paul was expressing in Ephesians 3:18–19 (“to know the love of Christ”) is that we should reach the epignosis, the love of Christ that exceeds all gnosis.

#### Part IV: Thirsting for God

15. (a) As a review, what kind of “cisterns” had God's people hewn for themselves instead of relying on God? (Jeremiah 2:13b)

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(b) What kind of fountain did the Lord call Himself, whom the Israelites had forsaken? (Jeremiah 2:13a)

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16. (a) For whom did the psalmist thirst? (Psalm 42:2a)

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(b) How did the psalmist express his spiritual thirst to God? (Verse 1a)

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17. What did Jesus say we should do if we are spiritually thirsty? Complete the following: John 7:37b: “If anyone thirsts, \_\_\_\_\_.”

18. (a) What will occur in the lives of those who believe in Jesus? (John 7:38b)

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(b) To whom was Jesus referring with this metaphor? (Verse 39)

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**Part V: A Passion for God Leads to Revealed Knowledge**

19. (a) What kind of a man was Simeon? (Luke 2:25a)

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(b) What had he been waiting for? (Verse 25b)

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(c) Who was upon Simeon? (Verse 25b)

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(d) What had the Holy Spirit revealed to him? (Luke 2:26)

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(e) By whose direction did Simeon go into the temple? (Verse 27a)

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(f) After Simeon had recognized the infant Jesus as the Messiah, taken Him in his arms, and blessed God, with what words did he affirm that God had fulfilled the revelation He had given him? (Verse 29)

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20.(a) How is Zacchaeus described? (Luke 19:2b)

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(b) In his yearning to see who Jesus was, what did Zacchaeus do, since he was short? (Verse 4)

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(c) What did Jesus tell Zacchaeus when He saw him in the tree? (Verse 5)

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(d) After Zacchaeus received the revelation of who Jesus was and repented of his sin, what did Jesus say to some sceptical onlookers? Complete the following: Verse 9: "Today \_\_\_\_\_, because he also is a son of Abraham."

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(e) Jesus told Zacchaeus that He must stay at his house that day. To what might He have been referring in a spiritual sense, a truth we looked at in the previous study? (John 14:23)

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Being aware of our need for the presence of God keeps us hungry and thirsty for it.

21. (a) The Samaritan woman at the well came into the presence of Jesus, and this led her to develop a greater thirst for God. What did Jesus tell her about what will result for the person who drinks the water He gives? (John 4:14a)

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(b) What will the water become in him? (Verse 14b)

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(c) What deep truths about God and His true worshippers did Jesus express to the Samaritan woman when she inquired about the correct way to worship? (Verse 24)

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A hunger and thirst for God activates His provision. He will not manifest where there is no need.

Part VI: Develop a Passion for God

22. In what way can we show our passion for God? (Matthew 22:37)

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23. On what can we build our love for God? (1 John 4:19)

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24.(a) With what kind of love has God loved His people? (Jeremiah 31:3a)

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(b) What action has He taken toward His people because of this love? (Jeremiah 31:3b)

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25.(a) With loving but firm chastisement, what did God tell the Laodicean church He would do because of their lukewarm spiritual state, or their lack of passion for Him and His ways? (Revelation 3:16 NIV)

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(b) What did He tell them to do in response to His chastening? (Verse 19b)

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(c) How did David describe the Lord's attitude toward His people? (Psalm 103:8)

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26.(a) When are we encouraged to seek the Lord and to call upon Him? (Isaiah 55:6)

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(b) What will God do when we repent and turn to Him? (Verse 7b)

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27.(a) What did the psalmist pray that sums up his passion for God? (Psalm 73:25)

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(b) Even when our flesh and our heart fail, what will God be for us? (Verse 26)

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***The key to getting something you really want is to be willing to risk anything to get it.***

### **Conclusion**

We must ask the Holy Spirit to give us the desire and thirst for God's water of life. When we are baptized with the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of speaking in other tongues, rivers of living water will begin to flow in us. Yet baptism with the Holy Spirit is only the initial infilling by which we experience the supernatural power and life of the Holy Spirit. Afterwards, we must seek to be continually filled. This filling enables us to walk in the Spirit at all times—for the long run. Otherwise, we will dry up, regardless of how great and powerful that first infilling was. We should never stop seeking to be filled by the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, it is also not enough to be touched by the Holy Spirit or to receive a blessing from Him ourselves. Once our thirst has been fulfilled, we can pray for the sick, testify of Jesus, and become effective instruments of God that will bless many other people. But, to maintain these ministries, we must keep returning to Jesus to "drink."

Strangely, when believers do seek God, continually returning to drink of His living water through fasting, prayer, worship, and intercession, they are often regarded as fanatics. Yet many of these seekers understand that multitudes of people in the world are lost, and they desire to help them. They know that some people are trapped in addiction, some are confused, some are despairing, some are suffering from broken homes, and some are on the verge of committing suicide. They need to receive a revelation of hope and restoration, and they can do so through our witness as we are continually filled with the Holy Spirit and with power.

### **Prayer of Activation**

Father of glory, our greatest desire is for You. Like David, we set You always before us. We commit to seeking Your face. Our souls thirst for You, as in a dry and thirsty land. Quench our thirst with Your living water. May it flow out of our hearts to bring salvation, healing, and deliverance to the multitudes who need You. In the name of Jesus, amen.

**Action Steps**

- If you have only a remote desire to seek God but want to exchange it for true passion, pray that the Holy Spirit would descend upon you with His fire and fill you with His passion. Ask God to free you from spiritual lethargy and to ignite within you a flame of spiritual love and zeal for Him.
- A passion for God usually begins with a commitment—not a feeling. And it is maintained by a continual renewal of that commitment. Make the decision to meet with God every day in a quiet place, free of distractions. Pour out your heart before Him, praise Him for what He has done in your life, and then wait quietly in His presence in a spirit of worship. As you do this each day, with sincerity and the knowledge that God's Spirit will help you in your human weakness, then your passion for God, your loving heavenly Father, will continue to grow.