

Song Of Solomon 3:1-5

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[0 : 00] I'll be in the Old Testament this evening in the Song of Solomon.!

The congregation of males and females. I disagree with that. And I'll tell you why. Because it is part of the closed canon of Scripture. And as Brother CJ brought up a couple of times this morning, that's part of the whole counsel of God.

And so I can find no instructions within the Bible that says the whole counsel of God exempting the Song of Solomon.

But I'll tell you all, like my daddy told my brothers and I on several different occasions about several different things, if it's dirty to you, it's because you've got a dirty mind.

And a dirty mind needs to be cleaned up. Song of Solomon is actually a beautiful book. Very beautiful book. It ranks right up there as far as beauty and finesse and exquisiteness with the book of Ruth, in my opinion.

[1 : 29] But in the first two chapters of Song of Solomon, we see this love. We see a love that is budded between these two people.

Between a king or a shepherd. And between a young lady. Some people refer to her as a shepherdess. The Shulamite. But anyway, it's a love between two people.

That's budded. And this woman in chapter 1, she describes her own unworthiness. However, her lover, he affirmed his love for her.

And you go on to chapter 2. And there's other things that happen to all this. I'm just trying to condense the first couple of chapters. We're going to be in the third chapter this evening. But the second chapter, we see this affirmation.

And we see the lover bringing the young woman into his banquet house. It says, His banner over me was love. And she rested under his shadow. And all these other things.

[2 : 38] Just a beautiful picture of this affirmation that we're talking about here. But in the midst of all this, in chapter 1 and in chapter 2 of Song of Solomon, and or Song of Songs, however your Bible lists it there, in the midst of all that, there's some tension that builds.

And the tension is because we also read about hints of hesitation. We read about hints of distance. We read about these things. And the beginning verses of chapter 3 is what we'll be reading this evening.

And it kind of culminates into that. Now, the Song of Solomon is written like a drama. Almost like a musical drama. That's pretty much how it's accepted and been accepted for thousands of years by not only the Jewish people, but by the church as well.

There's parts of it that are spoken by the king. There's parts of it that are spoken by the Shulamite woman. There's parts of it that are spoken by the chorus. Or the women of Jerusalem.

But it's written like a musical drama. And there's parts of it that are supposed to be acted out as they are happening. There's parts of it that are dream sequences. And things like that.

[3 : 56] And you need to keep that in mind anytime that you're reading through the Song of Solomon. It can be used, though, allegorically. And that's how the church has used it. Y'all have heard me say multiple times, you read something in the Old Testament, find a hard time trying to apply it to the New Testament church, you've probably interpreted it wrong.

And that's how the Song of Solomon is read by the church. It's an allegory of Christ and His love for the church. And in turn, the church and her love for Christ.

So, all those things in mind. Song of Solomon in chapter 3 will begin in verse 1. It says, By night on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth.

I sought Him, but I found Him not. I will rise now and go about the city and the streets and in the broad ways. I will seek Him whom my soul loveth.

I sought Him, but I found Him not. The watchman that go about the city found me, to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth.

[5 : 10] I held Him and would not let Him go until I brought Him into my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the rows and by the hinds of the field that you stir not up nor wake my love till He please.

Back to verse 1 in chapter 3. It says, By night on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him, but I found Him not.

And again, literally speaking, in this drama that Solomon here has written, this would be the Shulamite girl. It would be her on her bed in the night and she is seeking Him whom her soul loveth. But folks, if we leave it at that, we're not going to get anything spiritual out of it. She says, By night on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth. I saw Him, but I found Him not.

Folks, this verse begins in darkness with those two words, by night. It begins in darkness. And folks, I will tell you now, church, Christians, those of you that have been saved for a year, those of you that have been saved for 40 or 50 years, if you have not experienced a dark night of the soul, as a Christian, you will experience a dark night of the soul as a Christian.

[6 : 31] It is coming. It's unavoidable. These things will happen. She says, By night. Folks, that's a sign of darkness. It's a sign of bleakness.

It can be a sign of spiritual dryness. Folks, but Jesus Christ Himself, He suffered a dark night of the soul, did He not? He suffered the blackest night that could possibly be suffered in the middle of the day, in the middle of the afternoon, on a cross at Calvary.

Jesus Christ suffered the darkest night that you and I could not have endured upon that cross. He suffered worse than you or I. Either one possibly could. But this says here, By night on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth.

Folks, this is not just a fleeting thing. This is not just a puppy love as we might call it nowadays. She says, By night upon my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth.

Not only was it night, not only was she in darkness, but she was upon her bed. Folks, this bed being symbolic of a place that is a picture of peace, it's a place that is a picture of rest.

[7 : 40] But this young girl here, she had anything but peace. She was in distress. Why? Because her loved one was not there. The one whom her soul loveth was not there with her.

Folks, again, in chapters 1 and chapter 2, we see them running about. We see them talking amongst each other, talking to each other, talking about one another.

And you can see the love, and you can feel the love, and you can read about the love that they have. Folks, she was sitting here on her bed in the middle of a dark night, and she did not have her love.

She did not have His presence with her. She was not satisfied with the memories that she had of chapter 1 and chapter 2. She wanted His physical presence there with her, rocked in, in that darkness on her bed.

That night, we as Christians, need to seek Jesus in the same way. We don't need to be happy with what Jesus done for us 20 or 30 years ago. We need to continue seeking Him.

[8 : 40] Continue looking for Him. Continue in the way toward Him. Don't be happy with just the memories. That leads to complacency. That leads to contentment.

And when you become complacent in your walk with Jesus Christ, you will become stale as a Christian. You will become of none effect as a Christian when that happens. You need to continue on your way, folks.

What has caused her to feel this way is because the physical presence of her dearly beloved was not there with her. Now, folks, I'm telling you now, I praise God for the promise that we have in Scripture that He will never leave us, nor will He forsake us.

I praise God for that promise that we have. But sometimes, Christ veils Himself for just a little while. Sometimes, Christ will veil Himself. He will hide Himself. Hey, Job said it Himself.

Job said, I go forward, but He is not there. I go backward, but I cannot perceive Him. I look to my left hand where He worked, and I cannot behold Him. I look to my right, and He is hidden Himself.

[9 : 44] Sometimes, sometimes God hides Himself, not because He doesn't want you to find Him, but because He wants you to deepen your relationship with Him.

It's to refine us. It is to refine us. It is to refine our walk. It is to cause us to seek after Him. And if He done it for Job, He can do it for us.

He can hide Himself from us just as much. Not because He's upset. I'm not talking about, folks, you've committed some sin, and God has turned His back on you. That's not what I'm speaking about here.

I'm talking about sometimes, sometimes we say a little 30-second prayer, we'll read a verse or two of Scripture, and if we don't feel God, we give up on Him. We say, well, that's it for this day. Maybe better luck tomorrow. Folks, we need to seek after Almighty God. We need to seek after Him with our entire heart. We need to seek after Him with our entire heart, our entire body, our entire soul, and all of our mind.

[10 : 45] We need to seek after God and His Christ. The problem is, the problem is, we grow so content and so expecting of the blessings that we forget about the One who gave them.

That's the problem with much of Christianity. That's the problem with much of the church world. We love the gifts and we adore the gifts, but we forget all about the giver of those gifts.

By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him, but I found Him not. This seems to go contrary to some of the things that we find in Scripture, but folks, it's not contrary at all. It seems to go contrary to Jeremiah 29 when God says Himself, if you seek Me and seek Me with your whole heart, you shall or you will find Me.

It seems to go against what Christ said Himself in the Gospel accounts when He said, ask and ye shall receive. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be open-tuned to you.

[11 : 46] Folks, it is not contrary to these things. Just because the Scripture says, I sought Him, but I found Him not. Folks, keep seeking. That's what we read in these five verses just a little while ago.

She was not content with just laying there on her bed in misery in the night. Verse 2 says, I will rise now. She was there on her bed. It was dark.

And she missed her dearly beloved. She missed the one whom her soul loved. And she says, I will rise now. She didn't wait until morning. She didn't wait until this happened or until that happened.

She says, I will rise now. She said, I will rise now and go about the city in the streets and in the broad ways. I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him, but I found Him not.

Folks, she immediately rose up when she realized what the problem was. Hey, we can learn a whole lot from this Christian church. We can learn a whole lot from this woman right here. She did not hesitate.

[12 : 45] She rose when she realized what the problem was. And sometimes God feels so distant in our lives. Sometimes Christ feels like He's a blue billion miles from wherever we are.

And we get upset with that. We get upset with God. We do this and do that or don't do this and don't do that when all we need to do is get up off of our backsides and seek Him.

Seek Him. Seek Him who gave you salvation. Seek Him. Seek Him who saved your soul. Seek Him who sought you. That's the beauty of salvation is that it is not that you went looking after God.

this Shulamite girl here, again, the love for her has already been affirmed in chapters 1 and 2. This is not the language of some pagan, heathen, unbeliever here.

This is someone who has had her beloved set His love upon her. And God has set His love upon us. And His banner over us is love.

[13 : 52] And that banner is written in the blood of Jesus Christ. And I praise God for that. But she says, I will rise now. I will rise now and go about the city in the streets.

And then the broadly said, folks, she was not worried about her dignity. She was not worried about what she looked like. She was not worried about where she went. She was not worried about what she had to do.

Folks, her main concern was the one whom her soul was completely and totally wrapped up in love for. in her dearly beloved and the one whom her soul loved.

I will rise now and go about the city in the streets and in the broadways. I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. Folks, it has not changed from verse 1 into verse 2. She says, in verse 1, by night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth.

In verse 2, she says, I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. But again, she says, I sought Him, but I found Him not. And again, how many Christians would give up at this point?

[14 : 56] I sought Him on my bed. He didn't come. I bowed my head in prayer for a few seconds. I begged God, I shed a couple of crocodile tears and still I don't feel Him.

And then, we have the rising. I will rise now and I will go into the city, into the streets, and into the byways. Folks, this is not just happenstance.

She isn't just going here and there for no particular reason or hoping that she just happens. She is diligently and purposefully seeking out her beloved.

This is exactly how Christians need to do. Again, folks, it will happen in our lives. It may happen tonight. It may happen next week. It may be next month or next year.

But it will happen in our lives where Christ does not feel near. But seek Him. Seek Him. And seek Him like this Shulamite girl here is her beloved.

[15 : 54] Seek Him just like this. Don't worry about how you look. Don't worry about what the world thinks about you. Don't worry about any of these types of things.

You seek Him whom your soul loves. I will seek Him whom my soul loves. I sought Him, but I found Him not again. She finds Him not.

But we have verse 3. The watchmen that go about the city found me to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? She asked the question to these watchmen.

These watchmen over the city. What was their charge? What was their purpose there? They were the watchmen. They were the overseers. They were the guardians. They were the protectors of the city.

At night, as we read about in verse 1, to make sure no mischief was going on. And she says here, the Song of Solomon says here, the watchmen that go about the city found me.

[16 : 50] The watchmen, the guardians. Now, in literal context, again, these are the overseers of the city. But if we want to apply this spiritually, namely, if we want to apply this to the church, we can apply this to the overseers of the church.

We can apply this to pastors. We can apply this to teachers. We can apply this to those who oversee the people. And she asked them a question. To whom I said, saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? Notice, folks, she didn't go to them and ask for advice on life. She didn't go to them just to seek a little bit of encouragement.

She didn't go to them asking any of those types of things. She went to them and actually, they found her. And when they found her, she asked them about Him.

Folks, these watchmen here, again, over the city, that was their number one cause. That's what they were charged with by the people or by the king or by the mayor or by the governor or whoever it was.

[17 : 53] They were charged with overseeing the city. But, spiritually speaking to the New Testament church, the watchmen are the ones that guard your souls.

The watchmen are the ones, like I said, pastors, teachers, deacons, preachers, in general. They're the ones that are charged with doing this. But like Brother C.J.

brought up this morning, folks, we can't be Jesus for you. We can point you in the way. And these watchmen here, they could have pointed her in the way had they known. And we, preachers, pastors, missionaries, whomever, we can point towards Jesus Christ.

But folks, she did not go to them again. She didn't go to them looking for a pep speech. And when they found her, they didn't give her a pep speech, nor did she want one.

She asked about Him. And that should be our number one desire. It's Him. He being Jesus Christ. He should be our desire. He should be the love of our heart.

[18 : 54] He should be the one whom our soul is completely and totally wrapped up in. He should be our dear treasure. He should be all of our concern. Just as Shulamite will concern was her lover.

The watchman that go about the city found me to whom I said, saw ye Him whom my soul loath? Now folks, you can go all kinds of different directions with this. You can go from people, again, pastors, teachers, preachers.

You can go to the preached Word of God being something that guides by one of those pastors, preachers, or teachers. You can go by ordinances.

You can go by all kinds of things. And those things are great and wonderful in their right will and in their right respect. But you keep in mind, they do not substitute Jesus Christ.

None of them substitute Jesus Christ. All of these are means that God can and does use to point people to Jesus Christ. But the means are not an end of themselves.

[20 : 00] Christ is the end of the means. We need to keep that in mind. There's a lot of preachers out there right now who think that they're the end of the means. They think that they're Jesus Christ or something awfully close to it.

There is nothing further from the truth. The watchman that go about the city found me. To whom I said, saw ye Him whom my soul loveth again, folks. It has not changed.

Her concern is whom her soul loveth. And she is seeking Him diligently. She is seeking Him intentionally. She is seeking Him fervently.

And again, we can learn a whole lot from this young girl here. How hard do we seek after Him? How hard do we seek Him? When the dark night of the soul comes upon us?

Or when everything's going great and finding well in our lives, folks? We should seek Him constantly. Constantly. Whether we're on the mountaintop or whether we're in the valley, we need to be seeking Jesus Christ.

[21 : 01] I'll tell you why. For one, we're instructed in the Bible to do so. We're instructed in the Bible to do this thing. But folks, when we're up there on the mountaintop, that's when it's easiest to forget Almighty God and to forget Jesus Christ and to forget what He has done for you.

But folks, we ain't going to be up there on the mountaintop the whole time. And it's down there in the valley where this girl was. In the night, verse 1, by night, she was upon her bed.

We're going to be there at some point. And we need to be ready to cry out to God when we are. And if God doesn't answer immediately, we need to continue seeking.

That's the problem that a lot of Christians, a lot of people have. They cry to God, like I said, very briefly, if at all. And they get mad when God does not answer.

And they say, that's it. I give up. We'll see what tomorrow holds. We'll see what next week holds.

And folks, people like that, honestly, I question their salvation. I ain't their judge.

[22 : 05] I ain't their judge. But if you give up that quickly on God, I don't see how your soul could be saved. I don't see how the Spirit of God could allow you to go on the rest of your life without feeling conviction about that.

Anyway, verse 4, it was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loved. Praise God. It was but a little. Now folks, this isn't always the case.

In this case, in this drama that we are reading here, that is unfolding before us, the watchmen that go about the city found me, to whom I said, saw ye him whom my soul loved. I read nothing in the next verse.

Nothing. It says, it was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loved. I don't see where those watchmen guided her in the right direction.

It is not written here in the Scripture. Therefore, I don't think that they had anything to do with it.

Now, they could have. They may have. But she says, she passed from them.

[23 : 02] And she just had to go a little way further. She just had to go a little while more. And she found him whom her soul loved. Hey, Christian, I'll tell you now, keep pressing forward.

Keep going forward. Keep moving on for the cause of God to the glory of God. Find Jesus Christ. Seek him and he will be found.

We give up too soon. We give up too soon. Because we've been conditioned to do so. We've been conditioned to be instantly gratified in this age that we live in right now.

God does not work in that kind of timetable. God works in his own time. Again, folks, sometimes, sometimes Christ will veil himself. Christ will hide himself.

Think about those two on the road to Emmaus. Christ comes up. Christ is walking with them. Right there next to them, holding conversation with them. And they even said later, did our hearts not burn within us?

[24 : 05] Did our hearts not burn inside of us? But Christ kept himself hid until he broke the bread and he blessed it and their eyes were open. Why did Christ do that?

To draw them into a deeper understanding of himself. God may just be doing the exact same thing with you. God may be doing the exact same thing with any of us at any time.

He may veil himself. He may hide himself for just a little while. But folks, we need to persevere just like this Shulamite girl here. We don't need to give up. We don't need to depend upon watchmen.

We don't need to depend upon others. We need to seek after and depend upon Jesus cross and none other. It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth.

I held him and would not let him go. Not only did she find him, but what did she do? I held him and I would not let him go. Folks, this is a soul that has seen some things.

[25 : 09] This is a soul that has experienced some things. This is a soul that has experienced the felt absence of her beloved.

But when she finds him, now listen, we cannot credit her with finding. I understand she's the one that said, I will rise up now.

She's the one that went out into the streets. She's the one that went to the byways. She's the one that did this and did that. I understand that. But folks, Jesus Christ will reveal himself to whom he wants to, when he wants to, regardless of their pursuit.

But a Christian should always, always, always be pursuing him. And it is up to God when he reveals himself.

You think about a little Canaanite woman that come to Jesus. In Matthew chapter 15, it's also recorded in the Gospel of Mark. A Syrophenician woman.

[26 : 10] She came to Christ. She said, my daughter is grievously vexed with the devil. A Gentile come to Christ saying this. And the disciples, those Jewish disciples following Jesus around, said, Lord, make her go away.

She's calling after us. Tell her to go home. And it said, Christ answered her not a word. She didn't turn around and go. She kept pursuing.

And Christ finally said, it's not me for me to give that which is meant for the children to the dogs.

And this is after he had told her, I'm not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

But he said, it's not me for me to give that which is meant for the children to the dogs. And how did she answer? Yes, Lord. But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table.

Christ commended her on her faith. But folks, when the scripture says he answered her not a word, almost like Christ was brushing her off, what was he doing?

[27 : 14] He was drawing her in. Not only was he drawing her in, but he was also showing the faith of a Gentile as opposed to the faith of the Jews. But folks, she did not give up.

That's my point in saying that. She did not give up. She continued to pursue. She continued to persist. And Christ commended her faith and granted her want. And she went home and her daughter was made whole from the same hour, I believe is how the scripture puts it.

That devil had been cast out. But she persisted. Here, the shoe of my girls persisted. It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth. I held him and would not let him go.

How many of you have been here? How many of you have experienced just not feeling Christ like you thought that you ought to? Not feeling his presence? I'm not saying that he has left you.

I'm not saying he has forsaken you. I'm saying you just haven't felt him as you wanted to. But the next time you do, you grab hold of him and you hold on for dear life and you say, never again am I letting go.

[28 : 23] I've done it. And chances are you have too. But unfortunately, unfortunately, sometimes our grip, we let it go.

we let it go. But praise God for his patience. Praise God for his long suffering. Praise God that he knows we are but dust.

Praise God he knows us. And just as Paul says in his writing, he says that he wanted just to know him, to know Christ.

Christ. We preached that not too awful long ago when Paul said that. The man that wrote half of the New Testament, the man that knew Christ better than probably any of the original twelve disciples that walked with Christ for three years, said, I want to know him.

And we need to have that attitude. We need to have that attitude to know Christ. And when we find him, when he reveals himself, when he allows us, when he allows himself to be found, in other words.

[29 : 32] Christ ain't lost, folks. I'll promise you, as far as this drama goes, if this was real life, and there was a real Shulamite girl, and she went out into a real city searching for a real, whom her soul loved, a real shepherd, a real king, however you want to phrase that, and whatever part of this drama we're in, if you had found the one whom her soul loved, in that city, before she reached him, if anybody had gone to him and said, are you lost?

Do you not know where you are? He said, I know exactly where I am. Folks, Christ allows himself to be found by his own.

Now, I understand the Bible says there is none that seeketh after God, there is none that doeth righteousness, no, not one. And as far as salvation is concerned, that is true. That is absolutely true.

None of us were seeking Christ when Christ found us. But folks, over and over in the Old Testament, over and over in the Old Testament, we see God telling whom?

His people. Not telling the Moabites, not telling the Parasites, not telling the outside nations, not telling the pagans, but he's telling his own people over and over, seek me!

[30 : 53] Seek me! Why do we think it would be any different with us being born again children of God? Folks, we are to seek God. We are the only ones that can seek God.

Because God has already found us, but we are to stay in constant pursuit of Him. What does that intimate to us? What kind of picture does that paint? If we are in pursuit of God, don't get in front of Him.

Let Him lead the way. Let Him make the trail. Let Him blaze the path. You stay behind Him and you continue pursuing after Him.

He's not running trying to get away from you. He is running, guiding you in the way He wants you to go. You seek Him and you pursue Him. Just like this Shulam I saw her beloved.

I found him whom I so loathed. I held him. I would not let him go until I brought him unto my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me. Folks, this is beautiful.

[31 : 53] Until I brought him to my mother's house. What is significant about that? What's great about that? Folks, that's where she felt secure. That's where she had meaning. And she says, into the chamber of her that conceived me.

That's where she belonged. That's her place of origin. That's where she felt wanted. And she brings Him there.

This is Him abiding with her. Just as Christ says in John chapter 50, abide in me and I in you.

This is the beloved abiding with this young girl. That's what the picture we have here is of. And she was comfortable doing that.

Folks, we should be comfortable. We should not want God in our lives. In any aspect of our lives.

We should want Him in everything in our lives.

[32 : 57] We should want His direction. We should want His guidance. We should want His love.

We should want His compassion. We should want all of these things in every aspect of our lives.

But folks, we should also want His rebuke in our lives. We should want His chastisement in our lives. I praise God that He chastises us when we get out of line.

Because that is confirmation to me that I belong to Him. Hallelujah. I praise God for His chastisement. I ain't saying I enjoy it. But folks, if I wouldn't do stupid stuff to deserve the chastisement of God, I wouldn't feel the chastisement of God.

But just like you, I do stupid stuff. And therefore I get chastised. Just like when we were kids. 95% of the times we got whooped when we as youngins, if we just listened to mommy and daddy, that would have never happened.

But no, we're stupid and we go out and we do what we want to. We do either what we want to or do what they don't want us to. And we get in trouble and that brings on chastisement. Verse 5 and we'll be done.

[34 : 03] I charge you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the rows and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love till He please.

Now folks, in this immediate context, I understand I charge you, O you daughters of Jerusalem.

Again, these daughters of Jerusalem throughout this drama, they are the chorus.

But she's charging them. That's how this whole passage ends. With a charge. I charge you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the rows and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love till He please.

Again, in this immediate context, that's exactly what is being conveyed here. It is not to stir up love before love is ready to be stirred up.

Not to be premature with love, in other words. And she charges them by the rows and by the hinds of the field. Folks, deer, gazelle, creatures like that, they are easily, easily spooked.

[35 : 05] They are easily disturbed. And they'll take off running. And that's why she's charging by those particular things. But she charges them by the rows and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love till He please.

But folks, if we just leave it at that, that love has a timing that we need to wait on, what are we going to get spiritually out of this?

Not a whole lot. And I'll tell you what I get out of this verse here. You cannot manufacture the presence of God. You cannot make it.

You cannot mold it. You cannot do it. You cannot conjure up on your own the presence of Almighty God.

God will do this in His time, in His way, in His fashion, with whom He wants, when He wants, and He will not ask yours or my permission to do it.

[36 : 08] He is the sovereign Lord God of the universe. He is the creator. He is the maker. He is the master of it all. And He can do anything He wants when He well pleases.

And needs no one's permission to do it. Folks, there's a lot of people out there right now, namely in the charismatic movement. But, I've seen it in Baptist churches too, that make a scene, and say that it's of God.

thinking that if they do enough, if they shout enough, if they shake that tambourine enough, if they roll around in the floor enough, if they do this enough or do that enough, that God's going to come in on the scene.

Folks, that is not how God works. It is not how He has ever worked. It is not how He will ever work. God manifests His presence. To whom?

What have we read about these five verses? To those that seek Him. And He allows us to feel His presence.

[37 : 19] To those who seek Him. Folks, if you in your entire Christian walk have felt God 100% of the time, God bless you.

God bless you. But I'll tell you now, it has not been that way for me. But, praise God, I know from the Scripture, it is not because God has left me.

It is not because He has deserted me. It is not because He has abandoned me. More often than not, it's because I've forgotten about Him.

But even so, even so, hey folks, we might be walking the straight and narrow. We might be doing everything right. We might be memorizing the Bible.

We might be attending all the church services. We might be taking part in all the sacraments. We might be doing everything as well as we know how to do it. But if God chooses, if God chooses to hide Himself for just a little while, who are we to question that?

[38 : 29] Maybe God wants you to seek Him. A little bit harder. A little bit deeper. A little bit further. Maybe you have gotten too comfortable with Him.

Like I have in my life. Maybe you've gotten too comfortable with where you're at. Maybe you think that you've arrived. Maybe you think you've done that good. I'll remind you again, none are good. No, not one. None of us deserve salvation, folks. None of us deserve God. None of us deserve the presence of God in our lives. If we deserve anything from God, it is an eternity in hell.

And that is all we truly deserve. But Christ gave His life that you and I would not have to go to that awful place. Christ gave His life on a cross.

He took the wrath of God upon Himself. He bore your guilt. He bore your shame. He bore your transgressions. He bore your iniquity. He bore it all on your behalf.

[39 : 30] And Christ, again, as I said at the beginning, Christ suffered through the blackest night that none of us could have endured so that you and I would never know what it was like to be abandoned.

Christ knows what it's like to be abandoned. Why do you think that He said, My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me? He knows what abandonment feels like. He knows what it's like to have everybody that called themselves His friends scattered.

He knows what that feels like. But He suffered what He did so that when we are in our own dark night of the soul, again, as I said at the beginning, that we will not be completely alone.

And while we might not feel Him all the time, it's good when we do. But folks, we cannot base our salvation, in fact, we can't base really our relationship with Christ on what we feel.

We have to base it on what we know about the Word of God and what we know about our own lives, what we know about the Gospel of Jesus Christ, what we know about being shown that we are sinners, what we know about Christ saving us, what we know about that great day of salvation in each of our lives.

[40 : 49] I don't always feel saved, but I know that I am. Because I can go back in my mind to a time when God saved my soul. And I base my salvation and I base my relationship with Christ on that.

On what does say at the Word of God and my personal experience with Jesus Christ. And I hope that you've had a similar experience with Jesus Christ. If not, no better time than the present. Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. That's tonight's message. God bless you all. I appreciate your attention.