Seek the Lord while He may be found
Isaiah 55.6.7

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, or he will abundantly pardon. Isaiah 55-6-7vs.

If the Bible be true the subject of religion is the most important that can possibly engage our attention. From this sacred volume we learn that there is a Great First Cause, eternal, independent, and Self-existent the maker and preserver of all things in heaven and in earth, who will finally judge the human family according to the deeds done in the body, and with Him there is no respect of persons. Those who by patient continuance in well doing Seek for glory, honor and immortality, will be rewarded with life eternal; but indignation and wrath, tribulations and anguish will be the portion of every soul that doeth evils, of the Jew first and also of the gentile.

What will be the precise condition of the two great classes of mankind hereafter we are compared to say, but we are assured that the ungodly will be confined forever to some dreary abode of darkness and horror where they will suffer the most exquisite anguish both of body and of mind without the most distant prospect of relief or escape.

But the righteous will be received up to that high and holy place, where their sorrows will be ended, where their joys will be immortal, & where the saints of all ages will surround the throne of God, and unite in the same delightful anthem. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be forever and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

If there any way has been provided by which we may escape the punishment of the wicked and obtain the reward of the righteous, it is doubtless a subject of the deepest interest to every child of man. We learn from God's most holy word that a free and full salvation has been provided for all our race through the death and intercession of our Lord, and Saviour, Jesus Christ. An all who come to God with true repentance and unshaken confidence in the atonement of Christ will be saved from the quiet, the power and consequences of sin, and obtain life everlasting, hereafter.

But the privileges of the gospel are limited to the present State of existence. If we die unprepared, we shall be lost and ruined forever! And when we consider the uncertainty of human life, and the danger of procrastination, and the momentous consequences involved in our future destiny, it behooves us to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Hence we are exhorted in our text “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found &c.”
We learn from this subject

I. That there is a period beyond which the mercy of God will not be extended

Although this idea is only implied in our text, it is clearly and distinctly taught throughout the scriptures.

1. Our probation will certainly be closed with the present life. If we die without a suitable preparation, our condition hereafter will remain fixed and unalterable forever. If the wicked could be favored with another opportunity to seek the salvation of their souls, after they have discovered the place of their torment, their case would be more hopeful. They might dismiss the subject of religion from their minds, and enjoy the pleasures of sin as long as they live in the world. They might resolve to escape the infernal regions, after they have discovered in the light of eternity that there is an awful hell where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. But we are assured in the language of inspiration that the mercy of God will not be extended beyond the present life. There is no intermediate state where we may suffer out the penal sanctions of the divine law, but “in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be” that is to say, as we learn the world, so we shall remain forever. The hopeless soul will be bound to the bottom of the flaming XXXX pool, though loath and ever loud blaspheming, owns his justly doomed to pour eternal groans.

The day of death therefore will in a very important sense, be to us the day of our final decision. And alltho the happiness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked not be to exquisite, until after the consummation of all things, yet both parties will be conscious of their eternal destiny the moment they pass beyond the curtain of time. When we remind the ungodly therefore that they must die, they should associate with the idea, the tremendous realities of the last judgment, All that point of time, they should contemplate the close of all their privileges and view themselves as standing upon the brink of endless ruin, but a moments space betwixt them and the abyss of eternal night.

How dreadful then the condition of those who have died in their sins! Let us remember that there is a period by which the mercy of God will not be extended!

2. But we may render ourselves incapable of seeking the Lord, incapable of repentance and morally insensible before we are required to exchange worlds. The Almighty Saints to the Antediluvians, “my spirit shall not always thrive with man”, and we learn from the New Testament scriptures, that those who believe not the truth, and take pleasure in unrighteousness, shall be visited with strong delusion, that they may believe aX lie and be damned. Hence when the inhabitants of the old world became universally corrupt the Almighty said that he wd. Destroy man whom he had created from the face of the earth. Hence, when Pharaoh the King of Egypt had become totally corrupt, and incorrigibly wicked, the Almighty withdrew his restraining influence from him, and left him to become more callous
and unbelieving until he was swept into eternity by a sudden and overwhelming calamity while pursuing the people of God. And when the antient Jews abused their privileges, and provoked incurred the displeasure of God, they were left to glide smoothly down to hopeless ruin. When the blessed Saviour approached their devoted city on a certain occasion, we are told that he was affected to tears, and exclaimed in the language of regret “If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day the things which belong to thy peace but now they are hid from thine eyes” And there are thousands at the present day who are given over to hardness of heart & apostacy of mind
3. Whatever may be (?) present period of life, we would exalt you to seek the Lord while he may be found or call upon him while he is near. If you have any good desires remaining, you are yet within the reach of mercy; and if you had been given over to hardness of heart, you would hardly have been at the house of prayer to-day. But we fear after all our efforts some will put off their return to God until it shall be too late forever.

4. And so much depends upon our conduct in the present world, and as human life is so uncertain, we should the Lord immediately.

II. We learn from our text in the second place that there is a time when we may seek & obtain the favor of God---although we are fallen creatures, and by nature exposed to the righteous displeasure of Almighty God, yet we are not left to grope our way down to eternal night. The word of God proclaimed salvation to the lost, uncovering of sight to the blind, and the year of Jubilee to those who are in bondage to sin and Satan. But there is a period within which we must prepare for eternity or we shall be condemned in the final day.

1. This important measure of time extends from the period of our moral accountability to the close of our probation, whether by death or a state or the stupefying influence of sin. Some few are permitted to live perhaps three score years and ten, and then obtain the favor of God, but thousands are called to give an account of their Stewardship on the morning of life. We should therefore endeavor to improve our time and talents to the glory---What our hands find to do, we should do with all our might.

2. But there is in the life of every individual a favorable opportunity to seek the salvation of his Soul. Hence we should call upon God while he is near. Such a period is the morning of life---the days of our youth

3. We are in great danger of hoping the limit of God’s mercy by the sin of procrastination.

III. We shall notice in the the third place the proper method of securing the favor of God.

1. We must begin with the abandonment of our sins. “Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts.” If the anxious inquirer has been a Sabbath breaker, he must learn to keep holy the Lord’s day; if he has been a profane swearer, he must take the name of the Lord in vain no more; if he has been given to habits of excess, in eating, drinking, or sleeping, he must thrive to become temperate in all things; if he has been guilty of injustice and taken advantage of his neighbors ignorance or necessity, he must endeavor to do unto others, as he would that they should do unto him. He hath shewn thee O man what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. When
Zacharias felt the need of Salvation, he exclaimed behold Lord, and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation I restore him four-fold.

If we hope to obtain favor in the sight of God, we must give up our darling & bosom sins though they may be as dear to us as a right hand or a right eye

2. We must learn also to correct our sinful thoughts. If we forsake our evil ways, and suffer our thoughts to dwell with delight upon the pleasures and amusements of the world, our hearts are yet entirely unprepared for the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit. If we feel the importance of a reconciliation with God as we should do, our reflections will frequently turn upon our spiritual condition—We shall delight to dwell upon the goodness of God—We shall delight to investigate and study the plan of salvation—We shall delight to contemplate the time when our sins shall be pardoned, and the Holy Spirit shall hear with our spirits that we are the children of God.

If we cherish sinful thoughts in our hearts if we roll iniquity beneath our tongues as a sweet morsel, the Lord will not hear us. Let us strive to give up every sinful practice and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, then shall we have power to believe and to take God for our portion.

3. We should not only forsake our evil ways and correct our sinful thoughts, but we should return unto the Lord—we should approach the throne of his grace.

This we should do.

1. With humility. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted—
2. We should return unto the Lord with fervent prayer—“Call upon him”
3. We should seek the Lord with faith in Christ. We must believe that he was the Son of God—And when we have abandoned our sinful course, when we have corrected our unholy thoughts and imaginations—When we have returned unto the Lord with humility of heart, with fervent prayer, & a firm reliance upon the atonement of Christ, the mercy of God will be excited in our behalf—Our pardon will be granted in the council of heaven. The angel will inscribe our name in the Book of life—the heavenly throng take down their harps and begin to tune them—the Holy Spirit descends with its dove like influence and ?

That we are (?) of God—the heart is suddenly full with joy (?) and full of glory—We Christian believer can now explain, whereas I was blind now I see—being justified by faith he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He has now nothing to do but to go on his way rejoicing—He has now nothing to do but to go for heaven and immortal glory, and by and by, he will be taken to the (?) of the skies, to the home of the Christians and the bosom of God.