

## ***GOD IS THE SEEKER – MANKIND IS RESPONSIBLE***

God is always the seeker. God always takes the initiative. Left to ourselves people never seek after God (Rom. 3:11). However, as God “seeks” and brings about conviction people are responsible to respond. Left to themselves they can’t respond. But when God reveals truth to people, they are responsible to respond and are held accountable for it.

After Adam sinned it wasn’t Adam who went looking for God. Rather, it was God who called to Adam and said, “Where are you?” (Gen. 3:9) This is always the direction. God is ever the seeker. Jesus came to “seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk. 19:10).

When Cain was upset that God didn’t accept his offering it was God who went to Cain and reasoned with him about the choices that lie before him and emphasized that while sin’s desire was for him he “should rule over it” (Gen. 4:6-7). Cain did not seek after God, but God came after him. Cain was responsible for the revelation given but sadly did not heed it.

In Genesis 6:3, the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever”. Here we see the work of the Holy Spirit in the pre-Flood days. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts and restrains concerning sin. The Spirit worked through preachers such as Enoch (cf. Jude 14), and Noah (cf. 2 Pet. 2:5), as well as the conscience.

In Isaiah 1:18, God invited the “sinful nation” (Isa. 1:4), saying,

### **Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)**

**18** “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

God continually sent prophets to His wayward people calling them to repentance for which they were accountable. In 2 Chronicles 36:15 it says, “the Lord God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place.”

### **Jeremiah 26:4–5 (NKJV)**

**4** And you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord: “If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you,

**5** to heed the words of My servants the prophets whom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending them (but you have not heeded),

The problem was that the people refused to listen. God pursued them relentlessly, but they refused to respond in a positive manner.

As Christ came to the close of His earthly ministry, He wept over Jerusalem (Lk. 19:41-42) and said, “**How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!**” (Mt. 23:37) Christ was willing, but they weren’t. People are accountable for their response.

Stephen, the first martyr of the Church with great boldness said to the Jews, “**You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.**” (Acts 7:51) The problem was that they in their stubborn rebellion always resisted the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was at work. God’s truth was revealed to them, but they rebelled against it.

In Romans 1 we find that people are without excuse because “**what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.**” (Rom. 1:19). The problem is that people “**suppress the truth**” (Rom. 1:18). And if people persist in rejecting the truth there comes a point where God lets people go in their sin giving them over to a debased mind (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

All the way through we find that people are responsible for the light that is given them (cf. Lk. 12:48). Jesus said to the people, “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become the sons of light.” (Jn. 12:36).

In 1 Corinthians 2:14 we find “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” On his own, the unsaved man neither seeks nor can he know the things of God. Apart from divine intervention, the situation is hopeless. However, when God shows people the truth they are then responsible for it. In Hebrews 3:7-8 it says “the Holy Spirit says: ‘Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts’”. People are accountable for the voice of God. Judgment is based on REJECTION of the truth that is presented.

Peter says of those turning from the truth, “it would have been better for them not to have known the ways of righteousness, that having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.” (2 Pet. 2:21) The problem was not a lack of knowledge but rather rejection of the truth.

The writer of Hebrews addresses those who have known the things of God and yet have not entered into salvation. These people are described in Hebrew 6:4-5 as having been “enlightened”, “tasted the heavenly gift”, “become partakers of the Holy Spirit”, “tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come”, and yet for all that he indicates that this is not descriptive of salvation (Heb. 6:9).

In Hebrew 10:26 he says, “if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins”. Right there is the ultimate issue. They had the knowledge of the truth but rejected it. 2 Thessalonians 2:10 speaks of those “who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”

The last invitation in the Bible is given in Rev. 22:17.

### **Revelation 22:17 (NKJV)**

**17** And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

The invitation is given to come with accountability for the response left to the individual. Whoever DESIRES is invited to come and partake freely. All the way through from Genesis to Revelation we see the reality that God is the initiator who seeks and invites, who convicts and reveals, and then people are responsible for how they are going to respond to the revelation and working of God.

This is what the final judgment of the lost is about. It’s about their rejection of God’s plainly revealed truth. In John 12:37 we read “although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him”. The issue is never a lack of evidence. It is that people reject the light that is given and are accountable for that rejection (Jn. 3:19-21).

### **John 3:18 (NKJV)**

**18** “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.