

The Search – Chris Fluitt paper for intermediate interview

Mark Twain once said, “The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.”

At a young age I remember struggling with a belief that God was real. My parents said God was real. The man in the suit at church said God was real, yet I was still unsure. “How could one really know if God was real?” I was searching.

I remember on one occasion after a sermon I went forward to pray and ask God myself – “God are you real?” I got a most surprising answer that evening. I felt the Lord answer my heart with this reply – “I love you.” I wasn’t prepared for the emotion that took grip of my 8 year old heart and the tears that would flow from my eyes.

God’s answer to “Do you exist?” is “I love you.” This was one of the 2 most important days that Mark Twain referred to, for it was the day I was born again by the simple power of faith.

At the age of 8 I didn’t know much more than “God loves me.” I had no theological framework of the Godhead and nature of God. I didn’t understand the pre, mid, post, tribulation rapture arguments. Yet according to the book of Hebrews, I had something that was pleasing to God.

Hebrews 11:8 (NIV) And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

I believed God existed and that He was worth searching for. I continued to search for this loving God as I repented of my sins, was baptized into Christ, and was filled with His Spirit. A search for God has never left me disappointed and unrewarded.

The Search for Worship

Every time I open my Bible it is a search for Truth. When I open my mouth to sing it is a search for His presence. The questions of life, the doubts and confusion are merely opportunities to search for God’s wisdom. The prayer of repentance is a turning away from unworthy searches, and back towards the one worthy search of God.

I have had my faith tested before. Questions like, “Is the Bible truly God’s Word? What if someone tampered with the original scriptural manuscripts Bible translations? What if religion is a man-made device to gain power? What is the correct interpretation of the Word of God?” BUT ultimately my faith is not placed on the Bible or my understanding of the Bible, and I am aware that this might make some Christians nervous. What I mean to say is, my faith is built solely on a God who exists and is worth searching for.

There was once a group of magi who were practicing the unbiblical practice of astrology. A Religious mindset might describe them as pagans and heathens, but God saw them differently. God saw them as searchers, and God, who always rewards a good search, placed a star in the heavens that guided these magi.

The magi searched and do you know where their search led them? Of course, it led them to Jesus, but before it led them to Jesus it led them to scripture. God will lead your search towards truth, and these magi showed up in Israel quoting the words of a prophet named Micah. God used the star to lead them to scripture, and then God used the scripture to lead them to Jesus. They approached Jesus and worshipped Him.

Every Christmas we remember the “3 wisemen” and smile as our children dress up in robes and attempt to say “frankincense.” We love statements like “wisemen still seek Him,” and we should because it is true.

I have been a searching magi. I was searching for love, and God used it to lead me church, where I heard the Gospel, and where I ultimately found Jesus. God leaves us heavenly breadcrumbs to help us on our faith journey. God is always leading us to the feet of Jesus to worship.

My search for truth brought me into an encounter with the one who is “the way, the truth, and the life.” Jesus is worthy of a search. He reveals that I am loved by God. He shows me the scars and stripes are rightfully mine, and instead offers me healing. This Jesus is worthy of worship as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

God drew me to a place of worship. A place where I would know God and love God. By my best account, the important day of my spiritual birth was January, 24th 1988. The other great day of import, the day I would discover “why?” would come later after a continued search.

The Search for Fellowship

From worship God calls us to fellowship. As early as Genesis 2, the Bible teaches us “*it is not good for mankind to be alone.*” God has a family that He would draw everyone to join in fellowship. That family of God is the Church.

1 Timothy 3:15 (NCV) That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth.

Some have said “I don’t need a church. I just get alone in nature and worship God.” While it is true that the heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1) and that all creation points to a creator, there is a God given purpose that cannot be fulfilled independent of fellowship.

In Mark 12:28 they asked Jesus what the most important command was, and Jesus gave 2 commands that were the most important. #1 was to love God and #2 was to love your neighbor. You may be able to love God while isolated with nature, but you can certainly not love your neighbor unless you come together in fellowship.

The Church is that fellowshiping family of God. It is where we practice love, joy, peace, patience kindness... all the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The word Church is the Greek word Ekklesia and it means a gathering of called out people. We are those who have been called out darkness and into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). We are people of light, a city on a hill whose light cannot be hidden. (Matthew 5:14)

The Church is God's light in the world. It is a fellowship of healing, forgiveness, restoration, wisdom, strength, and love. The Church is the body of Christ and holds all the power of Christ within herself.

This search has brought us into a family of brothers and sisters yet this search is not nearly completed.

The Search for Discipleship

Christ spoke to some fishermen and said "Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people." (Matthew 4:19) This is the moment where Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to be His disciples.

Jewish history reports that a rabbi/teacher would seek out students to teach by walking up to potential candidates and saying the words "follow me." This is what Jesus did in Matthew 4, and what Jesus continues to do for us. We are personally called by Jesus to be his disciples.

A disciple would sit at the feet of the teacher and learn. We are invited to that humble yet honored position at the feet of the master. He invites us to "come and learn of me." (Matthew 11:29)

Jesus calls disciples and commands them to make more disciples. He commissions us to make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe everything Christ taught.

There were more than 12 disciples. I am one of His disciples. Are you? Your search for God will bring you to the feet of the greatest teacher the World has ever known. What more will the Lord have his disciples do?

The search for Apostleship

Our purpose is not complete at the feet of Jesus. Jesus turns his disciples into apostles.

Luke 6:13 When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles:

A disciple sits and learns the ways of the teacher. An Apostle is sent to put into action all they have learned. The word apostle means – "sent one." In Luke 6 Jesus turns his 12 disciples into 12 apostles when He sends them out to minister. Everything that Jesus ministered, He empowered his apostles to do. They saw the sick healed, the dead raised, and demons cast out. How powerful it is to search for Jesus!

The search will bring us to more than book knowledge. Jesus does not bring us dusty old lessons but brings us power and authority to minister His lessons to others. Every believer is called to sit at Jesus' feet and is then sent out to preach the good news.

Jesus has called his Church to go into all the world, teaching, baptizing, and witnessing the power of God's Spirit. (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16, Luke 24:47, John 20:21, Acts 1:8)

Who can be a disciple? Anyone! Who can be an apostle? Anyone!

Women were apostles. Just ask Junia! (Romans 16:7)

Murderers were redeemed by Jesus to be His vessel to the world. Just ask the apostle Paul.

Your continued search will bring you to place of servanthood where you are likewise sent by Jesus into the world to minister.

The Search

Jesus is the ultimate servant. Those that learn of Jesus are sent to serve others. We are called to edify and build up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). We are called to feed the widow and orphan (Acts 6, James 1:27). We are led to take up our own cross and follow Christ, doing all the works that He has done.

Worship, fellowship, discipleship, and apostleship. Your faith search will bring you to amazing places. It will bring you worship God and fellowship in His family. Your search will take you to the feet of Jesus to learn as a disciple and call you from there to go to the ends of the Earth as His apostle.