

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE

Watching for God-Winks

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Various Scriptures

SYNOPSIS

We can learn to see God in the mundane.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ Watching for God-Winks

I enjoy riddles, brainteasers and mind puzzles, so I often see those in my Facebook feed. Here's an ☞ example. **[Picture] How many faces do you see?** At first, you probably notice two at the bottom, but there's more. Then, maybe you'll notice a couple more in the middle.

☞ But, here's the **[Picture] reveal**. There's actually ten. But to see all of those, you have to do more than just a quick glance. A few are readily obvious, but you have to intentionally look for the others.

It's the same with the things of God. Some of the things God does are obvious and super easy to see. Others, not so much. You have to pay attention. You have to look deeper.

From last week in Lamentations 3... when you're down and discouraged, remind yourself of God's character, quote the Word to yourself, and look for God in every situation.

The easy thing to do is to only look for God in those big moments, where he does something spectacular, like a healing. Sometimes we only look for God during worship, in Bible reading, and answers to prayer. And, that's all good, but he can also be seen in the mundane. If we only look for God to move in big ways we may inadvertently miss his gentle whispers. When God does something in the everyday, little things, we call it God Sightings, or God-Winks. It's his gentle whispers.

☞ 1 Kings 19:11-12

11 The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And **after the fire came a gentle whisper.**

God could have spoken through any of those big events and Elijah would have been ready. But he didn't miss the moment when God actually spoke through the gentle whisper. And, if we set limits on the way God must speak, we can miss out. Do we hear him in the way he is speaking to us? Do we find God in those still, small moments?

There are times God comes through in a big way, and we love those times. But he also speaks to us in small moments: in those tiny nuggets over a kitchen sink or while on the job or while washing our car. For me, it's often while driving that I hear his voice. The difference is in the listening, not the speaking!

☞ In **1 Chronicles 22:19** we read, "**Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the LORD your God.**" Seeking God means devoting your heart and soul to finding him in every situation, in every moment of every day. It means walking outside, taking in nature around you and seeing the Creator. It means looking at little kids and seeing God, their Maker.



Seeking God also means that when you are in an uncomfortable confrontation at work or at home, you can see beyond the circumstances how God is orchestrating the situation for your very best. Part of the process is knowing and trusting that God is always working for your good.

Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Seeking God definitely includes studying his Word, praying and obeying. But when we set our hearts on seeking God, we can find him in everything we do. He speaks and reveals himself in many ways, but often we miss out because we are improperly focused. How many tend to just go about your day, doing your job, running your errands, and such, without looking for God in action?

☞ Psalm 5:3

in the morning I lay my requests before you and **wait expectantly**.

☞ The Hebrew word for 'wait' here is 'tsaphah' and it means **to keep watch, spy, watch closely**. Are we watching? Are we looking for those God-Winks throughout our day? We can miss that still, small voice in the busyness of life. I know that has happened with me. Busy got in the way of hearing the Spirit speak.

If we take the time in our day, asking him to speak with us, and we make a point of searching for the Lord in the everyday things, he will reveal himself to us! In **Jeremiah 33:3** God says, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." What I love about this verse is that it says he will tell us great and hidden things that we have not known! Sort of like that opening picture with the hidden faces. There's more there!

What if I told you that finding God in the moments of each day required no more knowledge than you currently have? In fact, it requires no additional time, beliefs or doctrines. Are you in?

Luke 10 tells us about Mary and Martha. Martha was upset that Mary wasn't helping out with the household chores, but Jesus said that by listening to him, Mary had chosen what was better. Now, this is not an "either-or" situation... "*either*" take care of responsibilities "*or*" sit at Jesus' feet. It's both.

☞ **It's about focus**; about seeing God in every moment. Jesus challenged Martha's **focus**; her focus on preparations for Jesus kept her from seeing and hearing Jesus. She was distracted. And, if we live distracted, then finding God in the moments of each day will remain an elusive dream. Unless we see past the distractions, we miss out on some God-Winks. The noise of everyday life drowns out the gentle whisper of God.

--From an online contributor... I struggled with the dilemma of this verse for a long time. The implication doesn't speak of shirking responsibilities to sit reading our Bibles all day. But neither does it speak of a specified "morning" devotion time that we check off and then handle the rest of the day. What it does speak of, is the priority of seeing and hearing God. Literally, finding God in



the moments of each day. This hit home for me when I read John 14:9, Jesus' response to Philip when he asks to "see" the Father. "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me?" Like Philip, my prayer for some time was to "see" more of God. The realization of His presence already there, but undetected by me, pierced my heart.

You see, I did seek God at the "scheduled" times mentioned earlier, but the daily moment by moment, NO. I sought God in prayer and Bible reading to start and end my days, and at the occasional tough spot during my day. But all of the moments in between, I figured fell to me to handle after the blanket prayer of giving God my day during morning devotions. Often feeling overwhelmed by demands, I barely thought about God, much less saw Him in the moments of my day.

Finding God in the moments of each day transforms everyday tasks and obligations into Divine appointments. Instead of reserving particular times to "meet" God, we welcome him into each ☞ moment with thanksgiving for whatever it holds. When we **seek him first**, he allows everything else to fall into place. **Matthew 6:33** says, "**But seek first his kingdom** and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

☞ **Colossians 3:1-2** adds, "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, **set your hearts on things above**, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your minds on things above**, not on earthly things."

Interestingly, there's actually two different words that are translated as "set." In verse 1, the word is "zeteo," which suggests to "keep on seeking with your heart." In verse 2, the word is "phroneo," which suggests to "keep on thinking with your mind." It's an ongoing, purposeful action. Choose to keep on seeking; choose to keep on thinking about the Lord.

I mentioned **Matthew 7:8** last week... he who seeks finds... **We tend to find what we are looking for...** if you're looking for flaws in people, you'll have no trouble finding them; if you're thinking everything is falling apart, you'll tend to see every detail in that light. This is not necessarily based on truth at all, but simply on what you are focused on; what you are seeking. These kinds of things draw us away from seeing the Lord in all situations. But you don't go into a gold mine to look for dirt; you look for gold!

Jeremiah 29:13

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

☞ Just like Jeremiah from last week in Lamentations, we should **be intentional** about hearing and seeing God in everyday situations. You can choose what you focus on.

John 10:27 is an important verse on this topic: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." The word "listen" in the Greek is present, active and indicative. This means that listening is ongoing; it's a purposeful choice; and, it is more than just wishful – it actually happens. So, we can **make a choice to purposely listen and look for God continually**. And, when we do, we will find him in everyday life.



☞ Then, if you're still stuck, unable to see God in everyday life, simply **ask God to help you**. **Proverbs 20:12** says, "Ears that hear and eyes that see--the LORD has made them both." So, even the basic ability to perceive the Lord comes from him. So, ask him to help.

And, in **Ephesians 1**, Paul says he keeps asking for the eyes of our hearts to be enlightened. We can pray a similar prayer: "Lord, help me to hear and see what you are doing all around me." In **Matthew 13**, Jesus talked about people who hardly hear and have closed their eyes all because their hearts were calloused. So, we can pray for a soft heart that doesn't shut off God.

Watch for God-Winks. We sing the song "Way Maker," which has the lyrics, "Even when I don't see it, You're working. Even when I don't feel it, You're working." And, that's a great statement of faith – knowing that God is always working, and we trust him with our lives. However, we can ☞ boldly ask him to help us see what he is doing. **Lord, help us see your God-Winks!**